

Free essay on presidents john adams and thomas jefferson

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The first American presidents of the newly formed republic of the United States faced some of the first tribulations of the office. These included both political events as well as negative economic incidents. The presidents' roles about policies for American expansionism directly affected their individual policies. In this academic exercise, the background on political, economics, and American expansionism remain the focus for both Adams and Jefferson presented in the following.

John Adams

As a lawyer/politician, John Adams was as an independent thinker with a quick and blunt speaking manner. This often put this political leader, at odds with others while at the same time gaining him a respected reputation among his peers. His role as a Massachusetts delegate to the Continental Congress from 1774-1777 as well as gaining experience as an American diplomat in Europe during 1778 to 1788, and finally, as George Washington's vice president brought valuable pragmatic experience to Adam as second president from 1797- 1801) (Miller Center. org. 2014; Sturgis 2007).

Understanding the cultural and philosophical underpinnings of the American political scene brings a clearer picture of the role, influence of, and about Adams actions as president. The requirement for political participation in the United States at the time of Adams presidency meant being a landowner. Adams vehemently believed in this and his focus as a political leader to assure this as the status quo remains historical. His view of the wellborn, rich, and able person as the only one qualified for representing the United States (or any nation for that manner) framed much of his political participation policy. During his office, one mitigating international

circumstance this president faced lay in the avoiding war with France. The outcome of this brought about Adams signing the Alien and Sedition Act - an action that drew strong criticism from different political peers. Believing war was the last diplomatic option politically, he reluctantly signed to Act revealing his legacy as a leader of virtuousness, compassionate, as well as a vigorous if not cautious foreign policy (Genovese 2001; Kurtz, 1957).

John Adams, though a staunch federalist, often found himself isolated politically because of his independent nature. His foreign policy actions such as the Alien and Sedition Act as a Federalist supported law focused on the immigrants and that the tended becoming Republicans greatly affected Adams' standing with the Republicans at home. The outcome shows American Republican members responding with both Virginia and Kentucky resolutions challenging the federal authority as legitimate over the authority of the states' rights on such matters (Kurtz 1957). This included ideas of expansionism of the United States.

At the time of the signing of the Bill of Rights, the Articles of Confederation, and as significantly, the United States Constitution, the issue of expansionism of the American continental territories was always at the forefront along with the issue of slavery. Adams remained a federalist and when his ideals clashed with the more organized Republican philosophies embraced by Hamilton it cost Adams the 1800 presidential election to Jefferson and his Republican party. Throughout serving his presidential office, Adams faced an increasing front of opposition to a strong central government even among his own party (Genovese 2001).

Thomas Jefferson

Though politically led by different views, Jefferson and Adams were lifelong friends. The consequence of this proved the diversity of the ideology of American early leadership. In the Jefferson Administration, the foreign policy dilemma proved one with Great Britain in particular. In this, Jefferson would look at the effectiveness of a trade embargo with Great Britain proving worthwhile.

On the issue of gratifying her expansionistic ideals, Americans failed after the Revolution succeeding because of the emerging relationship between America and Great Britain in the Post-Revolution time culminating in around 1783. The fact the provinces of the new nation contained enemy bases manned by Great Britain instead of France led the impact of the situation dictating an expansionism defences for securing American borders. At the same time, these enclaves provided the means for potential American union recruiting among the populace suggesting a major push to expand its ranks of republicanism. Economically, America's provinces offered clear opportunities for farming, furring, trade, and lumbering with few of the Americans this effected seeing any unforeseen difficulties in making this work for them (Stuart 27).

Another consideration during the Jefferson Administration looked at the provinces offering a refuge for those Americans located on the nation's northern borders who remained discontent with the evolution of the newly formed United States government. What evolved according to Stuart was a " British military power reinforced the paper border and blunted calls for northward territorial aggrandizement that punctuated the era of defensive

expansion" (27).

At the same time, commercial, demographic, as well as intellectual movement as part of the expansionist activities remained easy. " Lawful immigrants, merchants, and printed matter freely passed the frontier. There was, however, far more to the relationship between American expansionism and the British North American provinces than mere territorial and ideological ambition, as the ensuing decades would show" (Stuart 27).

Fundamentals of the Two Presidents

The most pragmatic way to look at the presidencies of both Adams and Jefferson relies on the nature of the nation in its ongoing evolutionary process (still in motion in the 21st century). Following in the footsteps of Washington, Adams took on issues domestically and foreign policy that already had decisive lines taking sides. The fact whether his peers agreed with him or not was often secondary to the fact his lifelong devotion to making America a new nation of new ideas about individualism and liberty kept him in the political spotlight. Jefferson, by his own ilk an independent thinker sat in the role of leader with little effort of his own volition. This made the two men, though different characters, nonetheless on the same path of understanding the value of personal liberties, of the role of having options as free men to live a life worth living. Both idealisms imbued in their philosophies - Adams believing in federalism and Jefferson as a Democratic Republican - clearly wanted the same thing in freedoms for the American citizen while coming to terms with the best way to assure this.

Conclusion

As posited in the introduction the background on political, economics, and American expansionism focused on both Adams and Jefferson highlighting the issues both men faced with foreign policies and domestic controversies. The fact both men came from two different ideologies of the way they believed America needed led - Adams a centralized government and Jefferson a more representative government - only proves these are ongoing ideologies existing in the 21st century. With the ebb and flow of the political influences across time into the 21st century of America, the actions of these two presidents during their terms reflects a fundamental characteristic of the American political ideology of today. This microcosm presented here adds to a clearer understanding of how ideologies carries forward as they adapt to the political and economic facts of any age in the evolution of government as takes place in America.

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