

G. washington's precedents

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As the First President of the newly created United States of America, much of what George Washington did, would set the stage for future presidents. Here are some of the precedents set by George Washington during his time in office

- o Established the Cabinet within the Executive Branch by appointing Thomas Jefferson Secretary of State and Alexander Hamilton Secretary of Treasury, a body that was not outlined within the Constitution.
- o Supported innovative fiscal concepts such as the Bank of America and a national debt , which would be later adopted
- o Introduced a policy of neutrality pertaining to foreign wars that was followed up until WWI
- o Set the precedent for a two term limit of Presidents that was followed until Franklin Delano Roosevelt and then turned into the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution
- o Established relations with Great Britain with Jay’s Treaty. To this day England remains one of our closest and strongest allies
- o Established the tradition of a Presidential farewell address , An excerpt from his in 1796 can be found below “...In looking forward to the moment which is intended to terminate the career of my public life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my beloved country for the many honors it has conferred upon me; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me; and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances

sometimes dubious, vicissitudes of fortune often discouraging, in situations in which not unfrequently want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism, the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows that heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence; that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual; that the free Constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained; that its administration in every department may be stamped with wisdom and virtue; that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these States, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete by so careful a preservation and so prudent a use of this blessing as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and adoption of every nation which is yet a stranger to it. " (Credit <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/washing.htm> for the text) Over 200 years after Washington's presidency he remains beloved and exalted amongst great Americans. Many people every year visit Mount Vernon or the Washington Monument every year to get closer to our first president. No matter how many years pass by, George Washington will be remembered as a father, husband, general and perhaps above all our First President.