**Talking Points**

The Presidency of John Adams

**AP Focus:**
After Washington’s administration, the Federalists passed legislation that restricted civil and political rights. A response in the form of the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions offers a states’ rights challenge to questionable federal laws

**1796 Presidential Election**



[Historical Context - The Election of 1796](http://www.270towin.com/1796_Election)

The Constitution in 1796 required presidential electors to place the names of two individuals on their ballots; the candidate with the highest vote count, if a majority, became the president and the runner up the vice president.

**The results were not anticipated by anyone.** Adams won with 71 electoral votes, but was followed by Thomas Jefferson with 68 votes; Thomas Pinckney trailed the leaders with 59. The president was a Federalist, but the vice president was the leader of the Democratic Republicans opposition – an untidy situation.

[Slaves Build the new White House](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B0PE_kC-3EYe)

[Three Minute Summary of Adams Presidency (YouTube)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqAt8A0W204)

Sectionalism (see map above)

Placing the interests of one region over those of the nation as a whole. The Election of 1796 illustrated this > the North voted for Adams; the South voted for Jefferson.



[XYZ Affair (1797)](http://apushcanvas.pbworks.com/XYZ-Affair-%281797%29)  **“Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute”**Requests of bribes in exchange for negotiations by France.  French ships were seizing U.S. vessels carrying British goods since the two countries were at war.  1797  President Adams sent a delegation to Paris in 1797 (including John Marshall). The U.S. delegates secretly approached by three French agents- XYZ . They demanded a large loan and a bribe of $250.000 for the  privilege of talking to French foreign minister Talleyrand. Negotiations broke down and Marshall came home—seen as a hero  War hysteria swept the U.S.

Alien & Sedition Acts

American citizenship requirements raised from 5 –14 years; jail time or fines for anyone expressing opinions damaging to the government; President could deport violators. Foreigners (immigrants, French and British radicals), and members of the Democratic – Republicans   What about the [Bill of Rights](http://apushcanvas.pbworks.com/w/page/60135716/Bill%20of%20Rights)?



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xUH-xtkovxg>

Nullification

Principle that states had the right to nullify, or consider void, any act of Congress that they deemed unconstitutional. A major factor in the march toward Civil War.

[Virginia & Kentucky Resolutions](file:///%5C%5Cms%5CHSteachershare%24%5CSocial%20Studies%5C01%20US%20Videos%5C3-NewNation%5CResponse%20to%20the%20Alien%20and%20Seditin%20Act.wmv)

These states viewed the Alien & Sedition Acts as unconstitutional because they violated the 1st Amendment and deprived citizens of their rights . Showed the balance of power between the states & the federal government remained a controversial issue.

**THEMES TO FOLLOW**

*“History Doesn’t repeat itself, but at least it rhymes”*

**Alien and Sedition Acts 1798**A series of 4 laws enacted in 1798 to reduce the political power of recent immigrants to the U.S., who tended to favor the anti-British Democratic Republican Party.

**RESULTS:** Federal government prosecuted and jailed Republican editors, publishers, and politicians

**Espionage and Sedition Acts 1917**

A person could be fined up to $10,000/20 years in prison if they interfered with the draft, obstructed the sale of bonds, or saying anything profane, disloyal, or abusive about the war effort

**RESULTS:**  6,000 arrests for loosely defined anti-war activities (1,500 convictions)
House of Reps refused to seat a Socialists Congressman critical of the war Supreme Court hears *Schenck v. U.S* case in 1917

**The Alien Registration Act of 1940 (Smith Act)**

The act, which made it an offense to advocate or belong to a group that advocated the violent overthrow of the government.

**RESULTS:**This was the basis of later prosecutions of members of the Communist and Socialist Workers parties.

**The Patriot Act 2004**

**P**roviding **A**ppropriate **T**ools **R**equired to **I**ntercept and **O**bstruct **T**errorism

 **RESULTS:**Momentum is growing for change - for a rewrite of the USA PATRIOT Act that respects the need of federal law enforcement to fight terrorism while providing the necessary safeguards to protect constitutional liberties, strengthen congressional oversight, and protect the free expression and privacy rights of citizens. Without such reforms, the terrorists will achieve their greatest victory by undermining the very freedom that has been so vital to the success of American democracy.