

George Washington's strong leadership brought stability to the young government.

Trouble in the New Nation

SS.8.A.3.12, LA.8.1.6.2, LA.8.1.6.3

What challenges on the frontier did the new government face?

Washington faced difficult challenges while in office. Britain and France were pushing the United States to get more involved in their conflicts. President Washington stood firm against this pressure. Native Americans, aided by the British and Spanish, fought the westward advance of American settlers. In addition, there was growing unrest from within the American population.

The Whiskey Rebellion

The new government wanted to collect taxes on some products made in the United States. In 1791 Congress passed a tax on the manufacture and sale of whiskey, a type of alcohol made from grain. Western Pennsylvania farmers were especially upset by this tax. Their anger turned into violence in July 1794. An armed mob attacked tax collectors and burned down buildings. This protest, called the Whiskey Rebellion, alarmed government leaders. They viewed it as a challenge to the power of the new government. Washington sent federal troops to meet the challenge. His action sent a strong message to the public: The government would use force to **maintain** order.

Challenges in the West

Washington worried about ongoing European interest in the Northwest Territory. The British and Spanish were trying to stir up Native American anger against American settlers in the region. To block these efforts, Washington signed treaties with Native American groups. Yet American settlers ignored the treaties and moved onto lands promised to Native Americans. Fighting broke out between the two groups.

Again, Washington decided to use force. He sent an army under General Arthur St. Clair to restore order in the Northwest Territory. In November 1791, St. Clair's army met a strong Native American force led by Little Turtle, a Miami chief. More than 600 U.S. soldiers died in the battle. It was the worst defeat U.S. forces had ever suffered against Native Americans.

Americans hoped an alliance with France would help them achieve full control in the West. The possibility of French involvement led Great Britain to take action. In 1794 the British urged Native Americans to destroy American settlements west of the Appalachians. The British also began building a new fort in Ohio.

Native Americans demanded that settlers who were living north of the Ohio River leave the area. In response, Washington sent Anthony Wayne, a Revolutionary War general, to the region.

In August 1794, Wayne's army defeated more than 1,000 Native Americans under Shawnee chief Blue Jacket. The Battle of Fallen Timbers, near present-day Toledo, Ohio, crushed the Native Americans' hopes of keeping their land. In the Treaty of Greenville (1795), Native American leaders agreed to surrender most of the land in what is now Ohio.

Analyzing Why did Washington's efforts to gain the peaceful cooperation of Native Americans in the West fail?

Florida CONNECTION

Moving to Florida

In the 1790s, some Americans were moving south as well as west. The Spanish government of Florida offered land grants to Americans who were willing to move to Florida. However, Spanish limits on trade with the United States discouraged many Americans from making the move.

Problems with Europe

SS.8.A.3.12

Why did Washington want to remain neutral in foreign conflict?

In 1789 France erupted in revolution. Americans cheered at first as the French rose up against their king. The French struggle against royal tyranny was familiar to them. By 1793, however, the revolution had turned terribly violent. Some Americans were horrified by the bloodshed. Public opinion became divided.

When Britain and France went to war in 1793, some Americans sympathized with France. Others supported Britain. Washington hoped that the United States could stay neutral and not take either side.

Washington Struggles to Stay Neutral

Staying neutral proved difficult. The French tried to draw the United States into their conflict with Britain. They sent Edmond Genêt (zhuh • NAY) to ask American volunteers to attack British ships. President Washington **issued** the Proclamation of Neutrality, which prohibited Americans from fighting in the war. The proclamation also barred French and British warships from American ports.

Britain also challenged Washington's desire for neutrality. The British captured American ships that traded with the French. Then, they forced the American crews into the British navy. Americans were outraged by this practice of **impressment**.

Washington sent John Jay, chief justice of the United States, to discuss a solution with the British. The result of this negotiation was called Jay's Treaty. In the treaty, the British agreed to withdraw from American soil. There was no mention of impressment or British interference with American trade.

Few Americans approved of this treaty. Washington also found fault with it but believed it would end the crisis. After fierce debate, the Senate approved Jay's Treaty in a close vote.

Pinckney's Treaty With Spain

Spanish leaders were nervous about Jay's Treaty. They feared that the United States and Great Britain would now work together against Spain in North America. Washington sent U.S. diplomat Thomas Pinckney to Spain to settle differences between the nations. In 1795 Pinckney's Treaty gave the Americans free navigation of the Mississippi River and the right to trade at New Orleans.

Washington Leaves Office

After eight years in office, Washington decided not to seek a third term as president. In his Farewell Address, Washington urged his fellow citizens to "observe good faith and justice toward all nations. . . . It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances." These parting words influenced the nation's foreign policy for more than 100 years.

Washington also warned against something he saw as a growing threat to the young nation: political parties. You will read about this threat in the next lesson.

Explaining What was the significance of Jay's Treaty?

LESSON 2 REVIEW

Review Vocabulary

1. Use the word impressment in a sentence about the United States during Washington's presidency.

LA.8.1.6.1

Answer the Guiding Questions

2. **Describing** Describe the Whiskey Rebellion and the government's actions in response to it.

SS.8.A.3.12

3. **Explaining** What role did foreign nations play in President Washington's relations with Native American groups?

SS.8.A.3.12

4. **Summarizing** What was Washington's approach to foreign policy, and why was it complicated?

SS.8.A.3.12

5. **PERSONAL WRITING** A tribute is a speech showing respect and gratitude. Write a one-paragraph tribute that you might have delivered on President George Washington's retirement.

SS.8.A.3.12