

Creating a Foreign Policy

PRENTICE HALL

Chapter 9, Section 2

- How was American opinion divided over the French Revolution?
- Why did Washington want the nation to remain neutral in foreign affairs?
- Why was it difficult for the United States to remain neutral?



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American Opinions of the French Revolution

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The French Revolution

- In 1789, the French rebelled against their king. The peasants and the middle class paid heavy taxes, while nobles paid none. Reformers wanted a constitution to limit the king's power and protect basic rights.

American Views Favoring the French Revolution

- Americans knew what it meant to struggle for liberty.
- France had been their first ally.
- Americans admired the Marquis de Lafayette, who had fought with them in the American Revolution.

American Views Against the French Revolution

- The revolution turned violent. The king, queen, and tens of thousands of others were executed.
- Hamilton and Adams: Democracy can't be created through widespread violence.



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Washington Wanted to Keep the Nation Neutral

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- Following the French Revolution, wars broke out between France and England.
- Washington had to decide on a foreign policy—the actions that a nation takes in relation to other nations.
- Washington knew the United States had signed a treaty with France that made the two countries allies. He worried that the United States could not honor the treaty and still remain neutral, or not take sides.
- After much debate, Washington issued the Neutrality Proclamation, which stated that the United States would not support either side in the war. It forbade Americans from aiding either side.



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Difficulties Over Neutrality

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- Warring European nations seized American ships.
- John Jay negotiated a treaty with Great Britain. Jay's Treaty said:
 - Britain had to pay damages for seized American ships.
 - Britain agreed to give up its forts in the West.
 - Americans had to pay debts owed to British merchants.
- Many Americans protested Jay's Treaty because it did nothing to protect the rights of neutral American ships.
- When Washington retired, in his Farewell Address he advised Americans to stay out of European affairs.



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