

Warnings in George Washington's Farewell Address:

Parallels in policies from the 18th century

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1. Introduction

As some Americans would agree, George Washington is among one of the most iconic of men and one of the most influential of men in the modern history. He was the general that led a group of ragged and undersupplied colonists to victory against their colonial overlord, the vast British Empire, and forged the identity and character, as well as the rules and proper form of conduct for the President of the United States for years to come. It is therefore without a doubt understandable that his final address to the people of the United States was meant as a word of caution, and of aid to assist the future leaders of the fledgling nation in the struggles ahead.

The Farewell Address (Washington 1796) was at first published to the people of the nation and was never articulated by Washington to public or private. It was also a product of long and arduous work by many individuals throughout its long path to becoming the iconic work that it is now, and was highly influenced by Washington's second term rather than the first. Containing many warnings against disunity, disruption and cravings that the political environment produces, it was a work that remains relevant today as many parallels can be drawn from its contents.

Not always did the situation allow for Washington's guidance to be adhered to, and not always was it useful for the politicians to heed them. Therefore a section of this thesis is reserved for examining Washington's Farewell Address from an opposing point of view where spirit of the party is defended as a democratic process, alliances given an opportunity to work in defence of the nation, and the impartiality of trade in Washington's time questioned.

While discussing the address in terms of its concepts will create a bulk of this thesis, its major aim is to help create parallels in the political environment of today and of the past. For this purpose, I will be discussing the historical context of the early republic up to the War of 1812,

and additionally in sections that require it (such as in section 7, which looks at earlier interpretations of Washington's Address as it is read before the Senate around Washington's Birthday).

Lastly, I will evolve the discussion of the parallels through examples that highlight key concepts of Washington's address and how they behave in real-life. Such concepts include the party spirit and how it is an integral representation of the democratic process; how the identity and duty discussed by Washington led to the creation of the American identity; and how Washington's warnings of commerce as a tool of foreign interference are still pertinent to achieve greater success in achieving change within a foreign government. Before I can begin with the discussion, however, I will begin with the early history of the United States and the life of George Washington.

2. George Washington and the history of the early republic

Politicians are normal for any society, and thus are nothing unfamiliar to anyone in a modern setting. Throughout history, however, these politicians have been men of power that have changed the world without being politicians per se—kings and generals of a nation. George Washington can be considered to be such a man: he was born a planter's son, chose to become a soldier over the mundane life, and ended becoming a civilian leader of a whole new nation. His view of the world would have been very different from men like Kennedy and Nixon, and he built many of the precedents that his successors would follow (Cook & Klay 2015). Although, as Washington proceeded to his second term in office, his standing became less and less like that of a coveted general leading an army and more of a politician with a base following that he aimed to please.

His second term was a hectic one, and his growth into a politician rapid. Many of his ideologies were formed in the aftermath of the French revolution, which invigorated some of his radical thoughts as he began to strategize his decisions according to set principles of a portion of his country. He either did not see this happening, or regretted it, as can be seen from the inconsistencies between the Farewell Address, and the history I am about to repeat.

Furthermore, it is evident that his partisanship was not yet complete at the end of the first term, as an outspoken critic of many of Washington's policies, Thomas Jefferson, pleaded for Washington to apply for a second term in 1792 (Jefferson to Washington, May 23 1792). Though it is important to note that Jefferson feared the nation would tear itself apart without Washington in their crucial first few years, as the two parties present in the political environment at the time,

Federalists and the Republicans, drew each others ire as one supported the British and the other the French (Binkley 1968: 29; 72).

This section of the thesis will summarize the history of the United States and that of George Washington. Looking at major events prior to Washington's rise to fame, I will seek to establish a continuum through which to explain the rebellious nature of the colonies. I will then proceed to a more in-depth examination of Washington's personal life, his struggles and experiences.

Through his lens, I will discuss the history of the United States, mainly the events and decision-making that took place during his two presidential terms. Finally, I will discuss briefly the time after Washington's retirement in 1797, and the major events in United States history that will be pertinent for understanding many of the concepts Washington discussed in his Farewell Address.

As United States history is a broad subject, easily a thousand pages long, I must subtract much of the historical discussion and focus on the main issues at hand. Therefore, it is appropriate that the base material referenced in this section is Susan-Mary Grant's (2012) *A Concise History of the United States of America*, which has gathered these major events and discusses them fluidly as a singular, interconnected piece. As for George Washington's history, the main source is John Ferling's (1988) *The First of Men: A Life of George Washington*, which examines Washington's life from his early youth, through adolescence filled with adventure and adulthood plagued by illness up to his death.

2.1. Pre-Washington era

While the United States may not possess a written history that can be tracked back for thousands of years—possessing only art and artefacts that were left behind by the many native civilizations that inhabit the land and not many persistent structures or bountiful libraries—it is not a light

history. In fact, United States might possess one of the most bountiful histories in the world, considering the brief amount of time in which it has accomplished so much and become so intertwined in the affairs of the whole world. Many of us might also believe that we know the history of the United States: first the land of acquisition, second the land of prosperity and then the land of freedom. However, the overall image cannot tell the whole story, and the world into which the United States of America was born no longer exists. Same goes for the nation itself: the changes and struggles of the 19th and 20th century changed the country in many ways, and not in all dimensions equally. To answer the question: What is the United States of America, we must begin at a time before the founding of the states and discuss the people that inhabited the land.

Prior to the establishment of the federal government, a unified nation an unfounded dream, there was still an air of independence within the colonial states themselves, and amongst the people. Even since Virginia was first inhabited by Englishmen in 1607, the settlers had battled for their land. This is best highlighted by Bacon's Rebellion of 1676, in which a man named Nathaniel Bacon used the excuse of poor leadership by Berkeley, the then governor of Virginia, and native attacks to challenge the leadership for the region (Grant 2012: 62—5). This rebellion led to the destruction of Jamestown, as well as many farming communities due to native retributions. While the rebellion was short-lived thanks to the death of its leader in the autumn of 1676 (p. 64), it showed the capacity of the colonies to explode in violence against British manners of rulership. It also proved that there was a divide between the colonists and the colonizers, as much of the support for Bacon and his rebellion came from those that could not afford to live within the nice, plentiful coastal region which was used by the exuberantly wealthy to enrich themselves, while simultaneously dismissing the woes of those living in the frontier, out in the

periphery of their lands (Binkley 1968: 5—7). Whether it is a coincidence that the leader of the Revolution came from the same region as them, is a matter of ardent debate. However, it would not be the only repetition of history that has occurred since.

In the following century, the colonies would be set underneath heavy taxation thanks to the empty coffers of the British Empire. This was especially increased during, and in the aftermath of the Seven years' War¹ (Grant 2012: 97—8), which worked as catalyst for the larger events to unfold. The increased control over the economy of the colonies, their exports, while dismissing some important issues that afflicted the outlying colonial possessions, similarly to the Virginian governor Berkeley's dismissal of the frontiersmen, led to an opposition that was increasingly reinforced by British neglect and use of force. Though, as Grant (2012: 100) notes, it was not a predetermined path to revolution, but merely an awakening call to many great people that rose to the occasion to fight for that same freedom of decision that had been shown by Bacon's Rebellion nearly a century earlier. But in this case it was not in the form of force of arms, at first, but in an organized manner of congregation of elected members of society that stood as the Stamp Act Congress of 1765 (Grant 2012: 100), which released a "Declaration of rights and grievances." As history notes, the Stamp Act was repealed but soon replaced by another charter, which declared British dominion over all its colonies and the right of the Parliament to implement laws within the Americas as it saw fit. It would only take a few more years, but subsequent interference in the colonial affairs would eventually lead to mass sedition by the thirteen colonies, and the rise to power of a man called George Washington.

¹ In the United States this is known as the French and Indian War, featuring the dual opponents that the Americans had to combat.

2.2. Washington's early life and first term

George Washington can be considered to be one of the greatest presidents in the history of the United States. He was the man that led the nation during its hours of founding, and was the man that inspired its future foreign policy for a century and a half to come (Nordlinger 2001), though it can be argued otherwise. Nevertheless, prior to becoming that man, he was first and foremost a farmer turned soldier turned businessman, and finally a politician. The following is a chronological examination of Washington's life with a mixture of colonial history and the history of the United States as the two are deeply intertwined. The purpose of this section is to give insight into Washington's character and standing for his warnings present in the Farewell Address as many of the aspects he spoke of, he lived through and formulated over a long period of time. It will begin with an inspection of Washington's early career and military exploits before turning to his role in the rise of opposition against the British. This section will end with a review of Washington's first term, as the second term focuses more on the political aspects of Washington's character.

Born in February of 1732, George Washington was raised in an affluent family of colonial origin. His official education was minimal (Ferling 1988: 5), and throughout his life, Washington tended to experiment and learn by doing, rather than serving under or learning from someone more experienced (p. 67—71), as he did with his agricultural knowledge, and attempts at growing tobacco later in life. His early life, however, was not focused on farming nor tending to his vast inheritance. He spent much of his life surveying different landscapes—a skill that proved useful time and time again throughout his life both as a soldier and a businessman, as in the first he scoured for defensible and advantageous terrain, and in the latter profit. Then, after a few surveying treks into the wild, sponsored by an affluent neighbour and county (p. 12—3),

Washington sought a position as an adjutant general of Virginia (p. 17). Though he did not gain the position he wanted, he did achieve it through lobbying in 1753.

This was Washington's first foray into a life as a soldier. It was not, however, one that provided him with much experience. He did not even spend that much time within the areas he was in charge of. Therefore, his life as a soldier can really be considered to have begun in 1753, when he saw his chance for fame and prestige in delivering a royal decree to the French.

At this time, political issues between Britain and France were beginning to stir, and the French were pushing their claim to the territory in the northwest of Virginia. As a response, the governor of the colony, Dinwiddie was tasked with giving the French an ultimatum, and if it came to it, to drive out the French from the region by force (Ferling 1988: 18). Washington, bold as he was and all too eager to gain some recognition for himself, offered his services to the governor. What followed was a difficult trek for Washington, but nevertheless a successful one for his own prestige, as his suggestion for a fort placement was soon approved by the governor upon his return, and he wrote an account of his mission to Governor Dinwiddie, who was quick to have it printed to garner support in defence against the French. And he was indeed rewarded for his actions, for he was selected an officer and ordered to gather troops for the coming bout. This proved exasperating for the youth, however, and troublesome as few recruits were willing to take up arms. Around this time, Washington sent a strong missive to the governor, threatening to resign—a feat he used more than once during his time soldiering—after he was slighted for command of the troops he had gathered. He was granted the rank of lieutenant-colonel, made second-in-command of the army, but this did not satisfy his vanity. Nonetheless, this was to be how he would march to war. (Ferling 1988: 19—25).

Following the expedition and pursuit to gather troops against the French, Washington soon found himself back in the wilderness. This was to be Washington's first experience of war and defeat, and the fickle nature of politics. His first success came when he ambushed a group of Frenchmen, finding the battle exhilarating (p. 27), and soon after began a building of a fort to prepare against the, now inevitable, French counterattack. While preparing for the French counterattack, Washington exchanged heated words with his patron, Governor Dinwiddie, in regards to Washington's officers and their demands for higher compensation for their services. Washington's response to the Governor is the most notable part of this exchange and circumstances, as it shows that Washington, even while expecting battle and furiously constructing battlements to prevent certain death, responded coolly, remembering the advice of his friend and neighbour (p. 27). It proves that Washington was not one to tirade when it could have endangered his honour and character, even though he stood by his earlier claims and position by reaffirming his words' sensibility. This sense of vanity would continue throughout Washington's life.

Continuing to fortify in preparation of the French counterattack, Washington received some reinforcements. These men were commanded by a commissioned officer, meaning that they outranked Washington and thus replaced them as the commander. This revelation outraged Washington, leading him to send another letter to the Governor complaining that he would not serve under a non-Virginian. This, once more, shows that Washington had strong character and that he was unwilling to be commanded around; he would not put himself as a subordinate to another. Whether or not this was because he considered himself superior to others, or if it was simply a quirk of his characteristic can be argued. (Ferling 1988: 27).

What is known is that Washington was an uncertain commander when left to make a final decision. Soon after reinforcements had arrived, Washington heard that many of the local natives had joined the French, and that the French army was massive in comparison to his. He attempted to persuade many of the native leaders to join him, but his persuasion failed and reports of the size of the French troops made him hesitant. He at first chose to make his last stand at a trading outpost where he had met with the native leaders. There do not appear to be any records on why he chose to place himself in this position, but it is known that he changed his mind after a war council and trekked back to his fort, Fort Necessity as he called it, which he reached tired and his men ill. The French arrived soon after. (Ferling 1988: 27—28).

The following battle was rather one-sided. The French overwhelmed the tired Virginians whom were all clumped up inside a fortress with little to no defences but small arms. Third of his army fell in the fighting by nightfall, and the French offered talks. Washington sent his translator to discuss the terms and he came back with a somewhat controversial result. Within the terms were placed a term “assassination” (Articles of Capitulation) of a French commander; such an acknowledgement at the time was embarrassing for the British, and the defeat was now both humiliating and the French counterattack justifiable to the rest of the world. With no option but to either fight and die, or surrender, Washington agreed to the terms whether or not he recognized what the French imposed with their choice of words. This allowed him and his men to withdraw safely, if battered. Backlash of the defeat, however, did not fall to Washington, but rather to his second-in-command that had withdrawn his troops into the fortress where they had been easily cornered, as well as his Dutch translator, whom Washington accused of not being quite as fluent in English as he should have. (Ferling 1988: 28—30).

Therefore, what we can learn from Washington's first expedition and year as the commanding officer is that he was a very headstrong of character, willing and capable traverser of the wilderness, yet not the legendary figurehead of militarism that he is often imagined and portrayed as. He was, instead, a young commander who had failed to defeat a superior, more experienced army. Behind it, however, his youth and vanity showed: he pushed aside the blame from himself and sought to push it upon someone who was not there to defend themselves².

After the battle of Fort necessity, Virginia was not in a position to push the French out, and further reinforcements pushed Washington out of the position of command once more. Furthermore, Governor Dinwiddie decided to reorganize Virginia's army, which would have demoted Washington from lieutenant-colonel to a captain. Therefore, Washington resigned and returned to a life as a planter, only a year into his life as a military commander. He would not remain a civilian for long, though, as word reached Washington that following year that a General Braddock was to arrive with an army to take Fort Duquesne. Eager to serve and prove himself, Washington joined this small force and set out for the third excursion into the frontier, his second ahead of an army. (Ferling 1988: 32—7).

Like his previous attempts, it would not go well, and Washington nearly died as Braddock did to a stray bullet. The British and French forces had met suddenly, but the French from a superior position outmatched the British troops and a carnage began that saw near-death hail of bullets pass by Washington and Braddock as both attempted to rally their troops for a counterattack. They did not manage to stop a full rout, but parts of the army did manage a retreat, an act that is sometimes credited to Washington, though what could also be credited to the fact that the French

² Washington's translator, van Braam, was taken as hostage to Quebec during the prisoner exchange promised in the Articles of Capitulation, and would not return to Virginia in years.

did not give chase. Later, long after the battle was over, Washington rode along the lines gathering remnants of the army until he passed out from exhaustion. (Ferling 1988: 37—9).

This was to be the second defeat for Washington in as many years, and his service period was coming to its end. After spending so much time in soldiering, his plantation and home had fallen to destitute, and he had yet to prove himself in war. As such it was not a surprise that the chaos of Braddock's expedition would not be Washington's last. After returning home, Washington was given command of Virginia's forces by Governor Dinwiddie, and he continued his life as a soldier for a few more years. This appointment showed a pragmatic side to Washington's character, as he was willing to accept a compromise: he accepted the command, but he would not be given free appointment of officers. Being a commander would not be an easy task, and Washington tackled the political side of an army commander with many stumbles, even receiving a harsh reprimand from the Governor (Ferling 1988: 50). He also failed to achieve a royal commission, which threatened his position of command, for any higher ranked colonial officer might take charge of him and his troops. Such did not occur, however, and his service ended in a success: Following the British General Forbes, Washington campaigned once more against Fort Duquesne and accomplished in pushing the French out of the Ohio in 1758. Following this victory, and the end of the French threat against Virginia, Washington married and retired from service the following year. (Ferling 1988: 40—60).

Marriage saw the end of Washington's life as a soldier and a new life for him began as a planter and a businessman, at least for the time being. By now he had also some experience in politicking. He had not only attempted some manoeuvres during his appointment as the commander of Virginia's army, which had not been all too successful, but achieved a post in the Burgess, in which served until the Revolution. He was not a very vocal politician, mostly using

the post to protect his investments and to acquire more wealth (Ferling 1988: 87), and as such his life as a planter and businessman surpasses that aspect of his life during this time between 1759 and late 1760s, when Washington would take a more prominent post in speaking for the American identity and freedoms. He spoke against British taxation and the means by which the British sought to overrule local administrations. Whether or not this was because Washington's self-interests were threatened by Britain's approach, or because he was a proponent of the American system is not known. (Ferling 1988: 57—101).

After retiring from the army, Washington tried his hand in growing tobacco. He failed many times to produce good crop, and felt swindled by his agents in Britain as he received lower than average price for his tobacco. For these reasons, and after finally accepting that Mount Vernon would not grow good tobacco, though still in public disputing the blame, Washington moved onto growing wheat (Ferling 1988: 66—67). This proved beneficial for him in the long term, as British importation taxation did not harm his business to the extent it did for other planters in the region. This could be read as a sign of Washington's commitment to American ideals and support the rationale that he fought for independence rather than himself when voting in the Burgess against the British implemented measures. However, more than likely it proves that Washington would not linger in failure, and would rather experiment with new things, such as he did when attempting to grow better tobacco and grain. As a characteristic of Washington, it is most important to note that he always preferred to move forwards rather than linger in the past. This was evident in his dealings with the British, as he was more than willing to let go of past enmities for the sake of survival. (Ferling 1988: 67, 93).

During his time at the farm, Washington gained prestige, wealth and fame as his name was not only recognized due to the military action of his youth, but also because of his fortune that he

had amassed in almost two decades since. He was now also a shrewd politician. Though less vocal than others, his occasional and on-point speeches gave him an air of level-headedness and responsibility amongst the Virginia Burgess. No doubt these qualities, his military reputation and resistance against the British taxation—a response to dealing with the debt garnered over the Seven Years’ War—got him chosen to represent Virginia in the First Continental Congress. Little headway was made during this first convention as delegations from different parts of the colonies relied differently on the British export-market. Only a slight nonimportation settled was agreed upon, while a non-exportation clause was pushed to the next year, if the matter was not resolved by then. (Ferling 1988: 100; 105—7).

While the next chapter in Washington’s life is one of his most exciting ones, it is too massive to fully explore within this thesis. As such, I propose that you learn of Washington’s further martial challenges and accomplishments, while I treat them with insufficient breadth and concise them to these few aspects: self-care and war of attrition. By self-care, I mean Washington’s handling of his own army and its morale. By war of attrition, I mean Washington’s strategy to maintain an army, rather than waste it in a needless squabble.

Before Washington could prove himself in war, and become the man most remember him as, he first had to gain command of the continental army. In short, in the second meeting of the continental congress, after the first shots of war had been fired in Lexington and Concord, he was elected to become the head of the Continental Army due to his prior military service and known qualities, a de facto leader of all things in defence of the colonies (Ferling 1988: 112—3). During his service as the head of the Continental army, he moved on to develop the army’s officer corp. and hygiene practices (p. 141). He was still controversial in some aspects of his command, for instance in cutting the salary of enlisted men, while lobbying for a raise for the officers (p. 138).

He remained with his troops throughout the first winter, showing a sign of change from his time as a military commander two decades earlier when he spent majority of his time away from the troops. He did also drastically improve the army's discipline, which had been lacklustre during Artemys Ward's command (Ferling 1988: 123—35).

His following career as a military officer was full of successes and failures, but nevertheless, he conquered the enemy through attrition. Grant (2012) notes that while Washington may have been rather pessimistic about the support he gained throughout the war, the supporters of independence were in the majority, and only a portion allied themselves with the British reason (p. 127—8). The British could not hold on to the rebellious colonies, while allowing their own economy to shatter, especially after France moved to aid the colonies in spite of their former hostilities. While the war continued, it eventually ended in the peace of Paris in 1783 (Grant 2012: 129).

After Washington's military career, he spent some time in retirement until called upon by the public office once more (Ferling 1988: 321; 371). The eight years of his life that he spent as president would see him attempt to make peace with Britain, whose vision of the rebellious colonies was not too amiable, and to ensure that the United States might stand on equal footing in trade (Ferling 1988; Grant 2012). His first step before even becoming the president, however, was to partake in the reformation of the Articles of Confederation that preceded the Constitution, to restructure it to a functional system of governance, especially in consideration with commerce and its taxation. One must remember that at this time period, there was no such thing as taxation as we know it; rather, a system of taxation was often based on commerce, and the Articles of Confederation left the power to command levies on the states rather than the Federal government. Naturally, this led to competition between the states, and since the Federal

government relied on state funding, it was not a functionally serving entity as it had no means to pay away its debt, or to accumulate funds for administrative duties (Irwing & Sylla 2011: 89, 93).

Changing the Articles of Confederation was not a simple matter, however. Questions lingered about the legality of the event. Washington as one of the main participants and highly requested men of the nation was wary of attending due to the convention's potentially illegal status. That all changed when Congress approved of the assembly and their goals (Ferling 1988: 354). Prior to Congressional approval, though, two situations had evolved that threatened the existence of the Union: a question of control over the Mississippi river, which Spain was eager to maintain control of, and the Massachusetts farmers' uprising (Ferling 1988: 350—1). These two showed a necessity for a strong Federal government, but it did not dictate its outcome.

The convention was able to produce a draft that was then sent for ratification, and would be amended later on in multiple occasions. It adjusted the Federal rights over the states in commerce, the courts by establishing the Supreme Court that oversaw the application of the Constitution, and of course established the Presidency. It is imperative to note Washington's role in these meetings, and how parts of the new Constitution were as if drafted for him. He was, after all, a leading figure of the nation. He was a man that had stood for the Union, and now sought to preserve it. It was no surprise then that Washington was offered the position of president, which he accepted.

This will move us on to the next chapter in Washington's life that is most precious for the shaping of the origins of the Farewell Address. It will help us recognize some of the major

turning points and decisions that Washington took while in office, and how some of his major legislation and policies helped shaped the early days of the Republic.

The first year of Washington's administration was quite slow compared to later administrations. There was nothing for Washington to do, as many of the positions defined in the Constitution had yet to be formed. Similarly, presidential etiquette and power was yet to be established; these would all come in time, and Washington knew that his actions would set a precedent for leaders to follow (Ferling 1988: 377; Cook & Klay 2015). The new Constitution was also immediately drawn into debate, and new positions were formed, each which had to be filled by suitable people. Washington's first year, then, was taken by reviewing candidates for different federal positions and getting acquainted to the new position he found himself in. This was not necessarily an easy task, as he did not have much political experience. Despite being a member of the Virginia Burgess for years, he had not taken an active position in its functions, and had little knowledge of the intricacies of law and the tension that created vitriol in the political world—an aspect he would come to recognize as a threat. Due to the business of his personal schedule, he was not very active in these early days of his administration in driving his own goals, giving much leeway to Congress to formulate the Republic's main functions. Meanwhile, he followed his Constitutional duty to appoint people to the positions established to clear some of the blockades that still hindered the Federal government.

The nature of his starting presidency is best described by the issue of national debt. Washington was the man to appoint the treasury secretary, and thus was unlikely to stand opposed to any of their propositions. He was content to stand aback while the Congress deliberated the matter, and then approve what was produces by their opinion (Ferling 1988: 388). For this job he elected

Alexander Hamilton, a man that would become a close confidant to the president and that established the basis of United States economy for the first decades of the nation.

Though Washington did not partake actively in composing laws, he did not idle in his spare time. Apart from reviewing candidates for the myriad of positions still open the first months, he took advantage of this time to tour the country, and to recover from a plethora of ailments that fell upon him. Washington throughout his life was a man plagued by many ills, and some would hinder him significantly during his presidency.

Some of the important acts that Washington overviewed were the creation of the Bank of United States, which Hamilton defended as a means to protect the Constitution, saying: “it must be flexible. If it was interpreted inflexibly, Congress's authority would be suffocated and the new government would collapse as surely as had its impotent predecessor” (Ferling 1988: 396).

Another was the selection of the site of the new Federal City, the future capital, which was highly unorthodox due to Washington making the decision well out of bounds of his authority as he selected the location without advising the commission established for doing so.

His motives for selecting the location for the future capital were highly distrusted. While he was not directly confronted for the decision, he was suspected of favouritism and personal gain (Ferling 1988: 398). In 1780s, he had purchased extensive shares in the Potomac Company, which sought to make financial claims of the river, and acted as its president when making the selection for the site (Ferling 1988: 334; 398). This was a man that had in the past arranged for self-benefit in the distribution of bounty lands that had been promised for the soldier that fought in the French and Indian War (p. 71—2). As such, Washington’s decision cannot be seen being above personal gain, even though his decision may be argued to be for the benefit of the nation:

some argued that the chosen location was to lock Virginia's place in the Union, as well as maintain a direct route to the west (p. 397). One could see parallels in the function of the Potomac in unifying the inland with the coastal states, similar to how the Nile connected a long stretch of ancient Egypt together into an empire. It is therefore not possible to eliminate either from consideration.

Within his first term, Washington also succeeded in creating an army for the Union. Its first foray, however, ended in failure when attempting to secure the north-west from the natives that inhabited the land, and whom the Americans feared were supplied by the British as a means to overwhelm and subdue their lost territory without open warfare. The troops were killed in similar fashion to General Braddock's expedition, in a quick ambush that left few survivors. (Ferling 1988: 407).

Furthermore, Washington's first term fortified the political ideologies and began to polarize the north and south. The political rivalries of Hamilton and Jefferson were beginning to emerge, as Hamilton garnered much attention from Washington, and manage to gain his support in many subjects that began to fragment the very ideals of republicanism by structuring an elite ruling class over an otherwise fallible population. His leadership at the treasury also suggested the government begin a move to turn the north into a haven for manufacturing; the south, being heavily reliant on plantations and agriculture, was not keen on the idea and the Federalist's push would be no benefit for them. These factions and their bases of support would continue to diverge in Washington's second term. (Ferling 1988: 411—2).

In the end, Washington's first term saw great many changes. His policies toward the natives in the north brought about a standing army for which he had argued for decades. Furthermore, his

policies structured the economy and provided support for the fledgling nation. Yet, during his first term in office, he also managed to drive political personages away from one another and produce factionalism, the same kind of party spirit that he would later cry against in his Farewell Address.

2.3. Washington's second term and final years

Washington proved himself to be many things, and highly popular amongst the people. His support appeared endless. Yet, one question of Washington's remains: Was he partisan? For a man that spoke against partisanship, he himself did take many actions that would be seen as partisan today.

Indeed, when considering the history of the United States from his point of view, his decision were a must. History would not have unravelled in the same manner as it had, had Washington not chosen to make peace with Britain for the time being, had his ideals not shown interest in western expansion, or had his vision of the "public good," (Ferling 1988: 417) aligned closer to Jefferson's Republicans. However, even giving him the benefit of the doubt, his vision was more aligned with that of Hamilton and his Federalists. It was shown in the leniency shown by Washington for Hamilton's statutes, and to his unwavering push for Federalist ideals in a range of issues. He did not intervene when Hamilton enforced his position and pushed aside the Republican woes. His second term would come to define Washington's agenda, and what he truly believed in.

While Washington started his second term on a very brief note, his inaugural address lacking any mention of foreign policy, it was undoubtedly in his mind (Ferling 1988: 429). Prior to choosing to stand for a second term, he had received news of war between France and Austria, and Prussia

(p. 424). In the final days before his second inauguration, France executed King Louis XVI, and France and Great Britain entered into a war. He had also received news of the First Terror, and saw the French Revolution descend into chaos. He knew that his decisions would not decide the fate of the European continent, but he understood that meddling in it may bring about an unrecoverable loss to his own (Ferling 1988: 429; 439).

To prevent such a loss, Washington sought to remain neutral in the war, though this had many meanings amongst his cabinet. Jefferson, who had served in France as a diplomat and was a key to gaining French support for the American Revolution, and was now in support of maintaining the Treaty of 1778. Hamilton, on the other hand, sought to consolidate the Anglo-American relations by not following through upon the treaty, and instead supported creating a commercial pact with Britain. Hamilton, while unsuccessful at this time to produce a concrete treaty with London, did achieve his goals in negating the alliance with France, as Washington agreed to a document which dissuaded American citizens from showing favouritism toward either belligerent nation. (Ferling 1988: 430—431; Bemis 1934; DeConde 1957).

The treaty led to deep internal strife within the United States, and to problems in the diplomatic front with Britain. Actions taken by the French, as well as pro-French American citizens, to change the administration's opinion brought the United States close to war. To further agitate Washington's spirits, the French sent ambassadors to try and appeal his mind, and then set the people of the United States against the British (DeConde 1957; Ferling 1988: 432—3). These events will be discussed further on in relation to the aspect of foreign influence present within the Farewell Address in section 5.4.

Furthermore to agitate relations with France during his second term, Washington did send an ambassador to London, but not to forge an alliance. His goal was to protect American commercial interests, even enforce them with an accord with Britain that would allow business to continue. To do this, he sent John Jay, under advice from Hamilton, to negotiate this treaty in 1794. This treaty, too, will be discussed extensively in section 5.4 as it plays a significant part to Washington's ideals of neutrality.

Personal issues were also plenty during the turn to his second term, and in the first months into it. His nephew died, leaving his Mount Vernon estate without a formal appointed caretaker. Washington's long term worker, Whiting would fill this position while his nephew was sick, and then to his death in autumn 1793. After this Washington hired a caretaker, William Pearce, after careful consideration, who took great care of his estate allowing his focus to return to political affairs (Ferling 1988: 441; 453).

In the middle of 1794, Washington was faced by an armed revolt for a tax on whiskey, a situation exaggerated by Hamilton as an insurrection and a conspiracy to overthrow the federal government (Ferling 1988: 452). To deal with this issue, Washington had chosen to raise an army against these revolutionaries. However, to do so, Washington required the permission of the state legislature, or a governor's request for troops (p. 448). In the case of Pennsylvania, the state legislature was not in session, but the governor, Thomas Mifflin, had not requested federal troops and he wished the matter to be dealt in the judicial system instead of through violence. Washington had to relent, but not quit the field altogether. After the rebellion in Massachusetts, Congress had given the president the authority to intervene in state affairs "for the purpose of repelling foreign invader, enforcing federal law, or suppressing insurrections" (p. 449). He received a judicial writ which motioned that all other means of justice had been exhausted, and

was thus allowed to send troops to deal with the issue. He himself led the forces at first, but returned to Philadelphia as Congress came back into session before they could reach their opposition. He did not miss any action, however, as Hamilton's words were soon learned to be stretched. Barely twenty protestors were arrested and brought back to Philadelphia of the over a hundred that were accused. Only two of these were found guilty, but were promptly pardoned by Washington to avoid further political embarrassment (Ferling 1988: 452). During this same time, Washington's long term campaign against the Native Americans in the northwest had succeeded bringing an end to the threat for that region and securing the frontier in the north (Ferling 1988: 451). This was one of the last tensioned moments of Washington's career as president before his retirement.

Early in 1795, word reached Washington from John Jay and the treaty he had managed to negotiate³. It was thinner than Washington had hoped (Ferling 1988: 456), especially in the protections of the American citizenry, and the openness of trade with the British Caribbean holdings. However, while it passed along partisan lines through Congress, barely reaching its minimum votes, Washington was torn about signing it, though all evidence points to him already having accepted the concessions over a bout with Great Britain (Ferling 1988: 460). Political machinations would see to this, however, as shortly after retiring to Mount Vernon for the summer, a matter was brought into his attention by the secretary of war, Timothy Pickering, which in a letter to the French foreign minister G net revealed a potential conspiracy by Edmund Randolph, the secretary of state, to have the Jay Treaty abolished. Seemingly Randolph had agreed to a monetary compensation for dissuading the president from signing the treaty, an act

³ The Jay Treaty (Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, Between His Britannic Majesty and the United States of America) was signed for ten year duration in November 1794 in London, but was brought before Congress and the Senate only in June 1795, and finally ratified into law in February 1796, lasting until 1806.

which he vehemently denied. He proceeded to resign from his post, which was then by a Federalist, Pickering in fact. This made Washington's cabinet heavily partisan during the final months of his presidency. Washington heavily denied this partisanship in his administration, continuing to call against factionalism, even in his Farewell Address as will be later discussed. (Ferling 1988: 458—461).

This affair would lead to Randolph speaking against Washington in the following years. However, Washington was seemingly untouchable by his words. Something that others had found to be true. Ferling (1988) notes that Washington was night untouchable, in fact, and that “Even his most ‘unpalatable’ acts were sanctioned” (p. 463). It should be noted that Washington in his Farewell Address would speak out against this type of personality, and power of one-sidedness. It will be further discussed in sections 5.2.2 and 6.1.

In the final months, after the publication of the Farewell Address and the myriad of attacks by anti-Federalists and the pro-French, Washington faced the fallout of his actions. Jay Treaty which was meant to ensure American neutrality had turned on him; the French had not taken kindly to his administrations ties to Britain, nor to his easily influenced nature. In retaliation, they chose to work under the rules of Britain, marking the same materials as contraband and prohibiting their sale. Soon after, they began seizing American vessels.

This situation would continue to develop after Washington left office in early 1797, to be succeeded by his vice president and a staunch Federalist, John Adams. In 1796, he claimed to Congress his actions had succeeded in strengthening the Union, and that the Jay Treaty had been a success in keeping the peace. His only disappointments were that Congress had not formed the necessary military institutions Washington had pushed for, and that they had failed to create a

strong federal army, which was instead replaced by the Militia Act of 1792. (Ferling 1988: 471—3).

All in all, this section was to provide some insight into Washington as a person and president. His actions during his youth and continued setbacks during his early military career made him a person that was both methodical in decision-making, but also hesitant. His nature made him unpredictable, especially when emotional and he was easily suggestible by those that shared his vigour and ideals, whether this was achieved through flattery or reason. His goals are much easier to understand than his actions. He was a man that wanted a strong centralized government and thought that a strong military was required for its survival. He also saw the wealth of the west, and sought in every step to protect the potential of western expansion, whether it was by force of arms or through negotiations. As for his foreign policy, it is clear that he wished to maintain a neutrality toward all sides, especially once the war erupted between France and Britain. As the conflict escalated and more and more nations were drawn into the issue, Washington was forced to make a choice and in all circumstances he opted for Britain; the old host to his nation and their habits were still engraved in Washington's learnings and he had long sought the approval from across the sea. He also saw reason in solidifying ties with Great Britain and its great mercantile fleet (Ferling 1988: 483). This led him to resisting French attempts to draw them into the conflict, and to utilize United States as a staging grounds for their raiding operations. It led to the Jay Treaty, which unpopular and divisive, was still the most viable option to remaining neutral, while also reinforcing the Union by garnering the support of the merchant class.

As for what became of Washington after his presidency ended, he returned to his life as a planter on Mount Vernon. There he opened a few new business ventures with his, then manager, James

Anderson—distilleries that brought good income to Washington's estate. He continued attempts to sell his lands that had begun years ago, but it proved to be a more difficult task than expected due to the harsh nature of the soil. (Ferling 1988: 487—494).

In the political side, the second president of the United States experienced a sudden fallout with the French soon after taking office, a situation that evolved from Washington's decisions. The French nullified the Franco-American commercial accord of 1778 and in 1797 made the decision to seize all ships that contained cargo heading for Britain (Wood 2009: 239). In the end, this matter would be resolved diplomatically. Before this was achieved, however, Washington was recalled from retirement for one last time.

In 1798, as the country prepared for a potential, but unlikely French invasion, it passed legislation that allowed for the formation of a new army. Washington was made a general of this army, though it was not a gracious posting as he soon realized the true nature of the post. He was a mere figurehead whose work meant little, especially in the overall designs of war. It also proved to be an unnecessary post, as the issue was resolved without conflict after President Adams managed to alleviate tensions and the French navy (and thus plans for any naval invasion) was defeated by the British at the Battle of the Nile in late 1798 (Wood 2009: 271). It would end being Washington's final duty, no matter how unnecessary, and he still held the post upon his death in December 14, 1799. (Ferling 1988: 495—500; 507).

2.4. After Washington

After Washington, the United States continued to exist as a nation. Some political turmoil made appearances in the void left by Washington's death and partisan opinions became more apparent as they began to argue about the future for the country (Wood 2009: 209). Power switched sides

awkwardly in the aftermath of a political campaign at the turn of the century (Wood 2009: 276—286), some of the causes for which will be discussed in section 8.1, which led to the first Republican Presidency. It also concluded the conflict over republican ideals, choosing overwhelmingly to oppose the rise of a hierarchical system in governance that the Federalists had sought to establish through their policies (Wood 2009: 276).

The following years would lead the United States to oppose the traditional monarchies of Europe, and even to some extent heal their relationship with Revolutionary France, as the Republicans supported American freedom of trade fervently in the years of their rule (Wood 2009: 624—5). This involvement in European affairs and the war in Europe would lead to arguments with Britain that could not be solved through diplomatic means and quickly led to war. The events of the War of 1812, which will be discussed further in section 8.2 in relation to American identity and freedom from the European politics, left the United States with a single popular party (Binkley 1968; Sydnor 1946). As an independent entity it was allowed it to expand internally to a great extent, leading to issues that would continue to develop to a civil war (Grant 154—169), the events of which are beyond the scope of this thesis. While I will discuss some events after the War of 1812 and in recent history, the main purpose of this thesis is to discuss Washington's warnings through their parallels. As such, if history beyond Washington's immediate influence is discussed, it will be opened in its appropriate surroundings.

3. Previous studies

Previous studies have mostly examined Washington's Farewell Address through its effects and instigation of the United States' foreign policy for the following century and a half. Studies such as that of Samuel Bemis' (1934) article, which explored the Farewell Address' influence on the isolationist policies that followed soon after Washington's presidency are attributed to keeping the United States more closely focused on internal, rather than external growth for the first half of its existence. Similar examinations of United States foreign policy and Washington's approach to the subject include works by Louis Wright (1943), DeConde (1957), Felix Gilbert (1970) and Nordlinger (2001). They all unravel the early political environment in this early period of the United States and how the state of the world influenced Washington's ideology. One aspect of the Farewell Address that can be said to have dominated this research is Washington's wish for the United States of America to "steer clear of permanent alliances" (Washington 1796).

Other intriguing studies into the Farewell Address include arguments of its construction and structure. It is important to note that Washington did not always pen his own speeches, as few presidents do. Horace Binney (1859) questioned the style and delivery of the Farewell Address in their work, and concluded that Washington was indeed not the composer of the Address, rather he was merely the voice behind it. The actual work can be considered to be a collage of Washington's ideas, organized and constructed by Alexander Hamilton to be coherent and relatable. From its structure, Matthew Spalding (2001) identified six issues which Washington wished his successors, as well as the people of the United States would reflect upon. These subjects are: the importance of the Union, Constitution and the rule of law, political parties and their tendency to follow majority opinion, tendencies of the people, threat of foreign influence

and policies of trade, alliance and neutrality (p. 22). This thesis has abridged these six major points into three categories by combining the threats originating from the outside, such as foreign influences and the threat of alliances; those coming from the inside, such as the role of political parties and that of the people; and those of commercial importance. It is important to keep in mind that they are all intrinsically connected to one another and have to be discussed in a general sense, but it is easier to comprehend one singular aspect by discussing it in its primary element or function.

Finally, Gaffey's (2015) chapter in "The Effects of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Effects," examines senators' observations of the Farewell Address, and the many opinions produced from reading it. While the study itself is focused upon studying the rhetoric of the texts themselves, it is in reality a study about the Farewell Address' influence upon the senators and a fantastic analysis of the differing points of view that arise out of the honest imaginations of those that read the Address and their interpretation of it. It also acts as evidence of the fact that Washington's warnings are "timeless," and are still found to be true today as they were centuries ago. This is not because they are ubiquitous to a singular party or ideal, rather than universal worries that can resonate within members of either party. This can be seen in section 7, where I discuss the words left behind by those that read the Address and their ability to always find something within their own ideals to corroborate with the Address, no matter their party.

4. Methodology

The method used to discuss Washington's Farewell Address will be political discourse analysis, a methodology that originates from critical discourse analysis. One of its main purposes is to provide insight into "political discourse as primarily a form of argumentation, as involved more specifically *practical* argumentation, argumentation for or against particular ways of acting, argumentation that can ground decision" (Fairclough & Fairclough 2012: 1). Along with this main text, I will be utilizing van Dijk (1997) article "What is political discourse analysis" and its indications of political discourse analysis.

To begin answering van Dijk's question, I already mentioned that political discourse analysis (henceforth PDA) is a descendant of critical discourse analysis (henceforth CDA). Their means are quite alike one another, only major difference being the core subject which they examine, though there is a subtle difference in the way in which they analyse what belongs to what form of discourse. PDA, for instance, studies argumentation separately from party opinions, while CDA might place them underneath the same bracket of opinion. This works well, as many of the subjects discussed in this thesis are not partisan questions, but behavioural patterns that lead to separate arguments. PDA is also more focused on the action and use of argumentation to achieve a goal. It is about wielding *power* that is inherent to a politician to drive their own arguments and deliberations. It is more goal-oriented than CDA, which studies the overall subject through the representation of certain qualities represented (like that of *power*). Therefore, using PDA, I may inspect Washington's actions, and his ideologies as they are present. I am still constricted by time, which limits my analysis to contemporary events. To break away from those restraints, I have to further define the structure of PDA used in this thesis.

As was already discussed, Washington's Farewell Address shows a great quantity of political ideologies. It is rife with his own frustrations, his own responses and strategies to combat the ever evolving threat of war with either France or Britain, and the threat of party politics. It also presents his *policies* for international and internal commerce. Washington's Farewell Address, then, through the eyes of political discourse would be considered a manifesto of sorts. A declaration of ideas to represent him in the absence of his own personification. As such, it is open for analysis through PDA. To expand this to substantiate the goals of my thesis, which are to draw parallels between moments contemporary to Washington and after his time, I must incorporate into PDA Manheim and Rich's (1986) methods for political analysis.

Manheim and Rich's 1986 theory for political analysis introduces a six-step process into PDA. Its six steps are 1) formulation of theory, 2) operationalization of that theory, 3) selection of appropriate techniques, 4) observation, 5) analysis, and 6) interpretation (Manheim & Rich 1986: 4). It is step six that is most important about the theory, as steps 1–5 are already taken into account through the overarching methodology of PDA and the subject of this thesis. It is this important function provided for political analysis by the introduction of interpretation that truly allows me to interpret, using historical evidence and examples, parallels in policies.

In conclusion, the main theory through which this thesis is examined is political discourse analysis and all its definitions of political discourse set up by Fairclough and Fairclough (2012), such as *policy*, *argumentation*, and *deliberation*. Their theory sought to diverge PDA from CDA using a more action-oriented approach, and also to highlight how this is achieved through argumentation and careful consideration of the facts present, and the *value* of the considered sides. The presented ideology is also structured around the reasonableness of an action, weighing the worth and effort, as well as approach, of the issue in deliberation, which gives it a more

fundamentally present and personal view of the politician behind the issue. This is the reason it is pertinent that Washington's history as both a soldier and politician is well conceived before moving onto analysis. It is to give insight into his reasoning, and the lengths which he would be willing to go in certain issues, an insight which is required for the analysis of the potentiality within Washington's warnings, which is presented through Manheim and Rich's (1986) framework for interpretation of political substances. It allows me to further distance myself from the description of legitimacy of Washington's power and in exchange discuss further about the validity of his arguments when it comes to scenarios outside his purview.

5. Farewell Address

Washington in his 1796 Farewell Address speaks at length of the issues and subjects that most troubled the First President while in office. Structured as an official letter to the people of the United States similar to an inaugural address, he spoke in a very formal and explanatory manner in this document, recorded by the Library of Congress for future generations. The subjects themselves are rather modern, and still present in political situations around the globe today.

This section will begin the analysis of the Farewell Address, starting with an analysis of the Address' construction and structure. It will discuss in more depth the creation of the Address, and to whom credit should be placed for its gradually evolving, somewhat meandering delivery that was so unlike Washington's. It is notably uncommon language for Washington, whose speeches were recalled by a fellow politician, member of the Virginia Burgesses and Continental Congress, Thomas Jefferson as brief and unceremonious (Ferling 1988: 88).

Following subsections discuss the main points of the Address. These are divided into the three categories mentioned before: domestic, foreign and commercial, which mean to introduce each subject to the reader with some contentious issues that highlight their existence. These issues will also provide parallels, which are useful for linking the past with the present.

5.1. Construction of the Farewell Address

The Farewell Address was an unusual piece in its time. Rather than addressing the Congress and the state leaders, Washington chose to speak to the people of the United States directly. It was an

idea suggested to him by James Madison during a private conversation in May, 1792⁴. In the end, Washington heeded his suggestion in 1796 as he chose to release the Address in writing, where his words could be heard by a larger audience with preference shown to no one (Malanson 2010: 13). More than that, it allowed his words to be said uninterrupted, or his vocals misinterpreted by only the few journalists that would be present at a public event. Such precautions could be expected from a man as shrewd as Washington, who had struggled to unite the nation and its new peoples while seeking to disparage none.

It would come as a surprise to many that Washington was not the actual author of the Farewell Address, and that only his thoughts and philosophies that were penned onto paper. Binney (1859) examined the Address and other notable texts from the era and concluded that its compilation was not done by Washington himself. The 1796 address was, in fact, compiled by Hamilton; it was based upon drafts produced by Washington and an earlier draft (James Madison to George Washington, June 21 1792⁵) constructed by Madison after Washington's Conversation with the man in 1792 (Madison, May 1792; Binney 1859). To what extent did the Address change its form from the first draft proposed to Washington in 1792 and its publication in 1796? This section is to provide some insight into the substantial changes to the Address during its preparation, as well as to discuss in more depth the history behind the famous Address.

The original draft of the Farewell Address was more akin to a declaration of retirement than a warning to the people of the United States about the dangers lurking in administration and politics. It can be seen from the draft produced by Madison in 1792 that there were few

⁴ See Madison, J. (May 25, 1792). Substance of a conversation with Pres. George Washington, May 5, 1792. *Library of Congress*. https://www.loc.gov/resource/mjm.05_0078_0081/?sp=1.

⁵ Transcription of the first draft can be found from Horace Binney's (1859) *An Inquiry into the Formation of Washington's Farewell Address*, Appendix A.

functional warnings present, while the core subjects of party disputes, foul language spoken by parties and their degradation of government, and the necessity of Union and its wealth as one, are mentioned. Foreign politics, however, is not among them; while so profoundly integral to the published Address, it is non-existent in this early document. The propositions which caused tensions between United States and France at the time, and which made the Farewell Address one of the foremost documents of its time, and an example for foreign politics (by some considerations) for century and a half, were not there.

This reveals the main focus and greatest challenge of Washington's second term as president, as well as hints at his fall into partisanship itself. It also shows the influence that the Federalists had on Washington, especially through the trust shown to Hamilton. Not only was Washington's second tenure teeming with diplomatic turmoil and the balancing of neutrality and independence (Bemis 1934; DeConde 1957), it was troubled by the maintenance of the Union to prevent it from fracturing into civil war due to Anglo-French disputes that tugged the two majority parties further apart (Binkley 1968: 67): pro-French Republicans led by Jefferson (p. 72) and the Federalists led by Hamilton (p. 29; Malanson 2020: 23).

To highlight this change, consider the following. While Spalding (2001: 22) identified six issues from the final version of the Address, Binney (1859: 20—21) recognized four core statements from a letter to Madison that preceded the preparation of the first draft (Washington to Madison, May 20, 1792): a) Americans are one great people with a rich nation, b) the diversity of the Union is its strength, c) the leader of the nation should remain open to all sides, and not sow discord of the Union, and d) speculation and accusation sow discord. When comparing these two contents, one can detect that there was a definitive shift away from internal politics and toward foreign policy that took place during Washington's second term that influenced the final draft.

First, Washington made no apparent discussion about alliances, as can be seen from the first draft produced by Madison, and from the communiques between Washington and Madison in the spring of 1792. There is little in the way of even consideration of matters outside of the Union. Washington was sincerely interested in maintaining the Union's integrity at this tumultuous time, highlighting the instability that the Republic faced its early days. These same worries propose a reason why Jefferson was adamant that Washington should serve another term in office in 1792 (Jefferson to Washington, May 23, 1792), and why Washington was willing to accept another term in office, as it showed the fears present in the draft of the Address to be a potential threat to the continuance of the Union (Ferling 1988: 422—3).

Second, there was no discussion present in the first draft about potential benefit from expanding beyond the United States current territory. While Washington did speak of the potential of the United States, and how its diversity in peoples and environment would be beneficial for the Union, he did not go as far as to speak of the potential found from trade. This was certainly an issue that was raised to Washington's agenda by the French and British privateering fleets on the Atlantic after the British involvement in the French Revolution (Bemis 1934: 252), especially after the US had been effectively cut off from major ports due to the on-going differences between their old parent state and the fledgling nation (Binkley 1968: 8—12). The complexities of this trade will be discussed in more depth later on, but it is important to note how imperative this was for the overall meaning of the final draft to not be present in the original. It set the United States on a more neutral, but offensive mercantile path that sought to protect its interests over that of inclusion in world affairs. In one way, it was Washington's Farewell Address that plays the first notes of what we would become to understand as capitalism: a philosophy of governance that is more focused on the functionalities of trade, than global dominance through

the force of arms (though that is conjecture due to the lack of direct input by the Address). It does show the durability of Hamilton's ideology behind the Address' statements, as it was to his interests and aligned with his ideologies to promote a commercially wealthy nation that would give rise to a "propertied elite" that would create a lynchpin in the national unity which would keep its people under control (Ferling 1988: 386—7).

The four years that transpired between the conception and publishing of the Address, then, shows significant growth in the ideas present in the Address, but also a change in the worldly situation. The construction of the Address, from its draft to its published form, of which there were many as is found from Binney's (1859) inquiry and its Appendixes which contain the pertinent notes about the subject, gives some insight into the explosive nature of the Address. It was drafted by Washington at a time when he was willing to step down as an example for the people and because of his personal health, but transformed at the hands of Hamilton and Washington, and the poignancy of foreign politics between 1792 and 1796 into a piece more openly abrasive against the vices of government and partisanship that Washington had originally perceived as mere "spirit of party." Many of these changes were evident in a draft created by Washington in 1796 (Binney 1859: Appendix No. I), in which he expresses more or less the same issues that are present in the final draft. This draft does not differ too greatly from the final draft in terms of concepts, rather in the style in which they were delivered. Washington's writing style was analysed by Binney (1859: 41—42) to be more independent by structure, each paragraph a concept of its own, while the final draft of the Farewell Address was more a flowing argumentation over its whole length. However, as Pessen (1987: 6—7) notes, Washington made some changes to the final draft by Hamilton to solidify his position on the issues and to remove

vagueness from the overall text, proving that Washington was the final voice within the Address as he made precise changes that were founded on his ideals.

In conclusion, while it is unquestionable that Madison, then Hamilton helped Washington construct the Address, there are some questions about its contents. While Madison was given rather free reign to develop the first draft, shown in his “substance of a conversation with Pres. George Washington” (May 25, 1792), the draft sent to Hamilton was far more refined. While it contained many of the arguments that would end up in the final draft, it was also changed significantly from the original in style. It defined the Address as a personal farewell, less than a point to point system of warnings and ideas that Washington’s writings were in general, and contained less compromising materials that would open Washington’s character for debate (see Binney 1859: 60). Therefore, Hamilton’s modifications were chosen to be published due to their realization of Washington’s ideals, and by being less provocative in nature. Though the contents of the Address transformed through experience, they remained those of Washington’s as he at all points in time chose what to say and what to leave out from the published version.

5.2. Domestic issues raised in the Farewell Address

As was concluded earlier, Spalding (2001) and Binney (1859) extrapolated multiple different ideas from the Farewell Address. However, due to their interconnected nature I have chosen to condense them into three major categories: domestic, commercial and foreign. The first one to be examined are those of domestic nature: these include the spirit of party and the spirit of revenge. Overall, these issues aggravate a nation’s existing internal divisions, causing animosity amongst parties and were well known ideas before Washington published his Farewell Address. Furthermore, they function as an underlying principle behind some modern policies which are

used to diminish the opposing party's base and to strengthen one's own. While on the surface this appears like mild competition, it is a known symptom before drastic action, like that which occurred prior to the United States' Civil War.

5.2.1. *Party spirit*

“There cannot a greater Judgment befall a Country than such a dreadful Spirit of Division as rends a Government into two distinct People, and makes them greater Strangers and more averse to one another, than if they were actually two different Nations.”(Addison, July 24, 1711, *The Spectator*, No. 125).

These are the words of Joseph Addison (1672—1719) who wrote for *The Spectator* between 1711—1712, alongside its founding partner Richard Steele. It highlights fantastically the ideas present in Washington's Farewell Address many decades later, and proves that the concepts he discussed of volatile behaviour and conflict within a nation were present in the minds of people prior to the founding of the United States of America, as were many of the ideas present in the Address (Pessen 1987: 6). It was indeed a fear of Addison that violent discord may have serious consequences, as is shown in the following paragraph: “A furious Party Spirit, when it rages in its full Violence, exerts it self in Civil War and Bloodshed” (Addison & Steele July 24, 1711, *The Spectator*, No. 125).

Taking his warning into consideration, it cannot be dismissed how dangerous the idea of party spirit can be to a nation, and how its dangers have been identified throughout history. However, not always is party spirit negative in form, as will be discussed later on in section 6.1. There are many ways in which it can manifest itself, of which some arguments lead to a compromise or the continuation of the *status quo* (Gutmann & Thompson 2010) in a system (system in this case is a

reference to the whole nation, including its form of government and administration). Very often the polarization of parties is seen as foulmouthed exclamations and accusations that undermine the system and one another, and turn opinion of one side against another for justification or gain (Pessen 1987: 18; 21). This can be seen in modern day politics, especially in the advent of multimedia and social media, which gives opponents the opportunity to lash out against one another in very public form without the ability by the other to intervene or defend one's self.

Party spirit, as Addison already stated by their fear of war, can exhibit physical qualities as well. These are not always violent or vocal, and some can be rather stealthy in the way in which they influence the system, manipulate party and people's opinion. While less openly aggressive, they do not diminish their degradation of the system, especially a democratic one. One such method is that of gerrymandering, as it is known in the vernacular, or redistricting; it is the act of dividing an elective area into districts by those currently in power (Engstrom 2013). This combined with the assigned number of votes per district, based on the majority instead of an individual vote, gives room for manipulation of districts into more efficient form that might swing the district one way or another. A modern example of this is the red-blue state moniker that is used to describe to whom the popular vote in a state, or a district, fell to, used most controversially during Presidential elections (Shin & Webber 2014). Until the 20th century there were no rules against it, and has been used to great political effect by all ruling parties (Engstrom 2013). Even in the 21st century it is not heavily monitored, though some oversight has been introduced by the judiciary after the civil rights movement of the 1960s seeking to prevent minority district discrimination (Engstrom 2013).

Racial discrimination in gerrymandering became more common after the Voting Rights Act of 1965, when minority right to vote was reinforced by legislation and successive Supreme Court

decisions that both limited gerrymandering based on racial bias, as well as declaring zoning based solely on racial bias unlawful. This in practice was the drawing of districts that diminished the effect of coloured votes, or even ensuring that they would have minimal effect on the state level. While these have been limited by court decisions, the Supreme Court avoided intervening in a political question, and has therefore left the matter to be solved by the legislature. (Engstrom 2013).

Meanwhile, in Washington's time the concept of gerrymandering and redistricting was not yet an apparent tool, especially in regards to voting as the contemporary interpretation of the Constitution limited the voting to a portion of the population; it excluded wholly all women and coloured people from voting. However, he was aware of its slow emergence in the country, as he called it out through the term "geographical discrimination" (Washington 1796). This form of discrimination lacks the same racial quality that we ascribe to it now, and means physically identifying between sides, and characterizing them accordingly. This is common in United States culture even today, as one can recognize from the still persisting terms northern and southern, and identifying them through these monikers alone. Worry is that these division would grow over time, and become more integral to the identity of the party and their state. An example of this form of division would be the earlier mentioned red-blue state monikers, as well as the recognition between free and slave-states (see Grant 2012: 145, fig. 5.3.).

One way in which geographical discrimination occurred during Washington's time as President was, when Alexander Hamilton as Treasury Secretary began efforts to increase northern industry, while seemingly dismissing the agricultural south (Grant 2012: 150). This would eventually have significant ramifications in United States history in the following century, but also acts now as proof to one of Washington's warnings; it is one that was in fact recognized by

Hamilton himself as it was written in his version of the Farewell Address (Binney 1859: 199).

The warning was of an individual, a “chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty” (Washington 1796). As Grant (2012: 150) notes, the financial structure of the United States was at the time under Congressional control since the Constitution’s ratification. An interpretation can be made that Hamilton, controlling Congress⁶ and national finances through his position as secretary of the treasury, was utilizing this autocratic authority to elevate his personal agenda and to propose a national dimorphism based on geographic discrimination between the north and the south.

The Farewell Address echoes Hamilton’s defence of this policy, as well as Washington’s conciliatory tone to the new ideas his secretary of the treasury presented. It seeks to plead unity, and speaks of the benefits that co-operation has over disharmony and conflict:

“The North, in an unrestrained intercourse with the South [...] finds in the productions of the latter great additional resources [...] The south in the same intercourse, benefitting by the agency of the North, sees its agriculture grow and its commerce expand.” (Washington 1796).

Furthermore, it shows an understanding of the underlying division that existed within the United States, and of the imbalance that would continue to exhibit itself throughout western expansion. The geographic discrimination that Washington was already worried about in his Address would be exasperated as new territories were added to the country, and the two sides became more

⁶ Hamilton’s power over Congress is shown by the multiple bills that were passed during Washington’s Presidency that failed to be reconstituted under non-Federalist administrations, such as the Bank Bill of 1791, but also willingness of the Congress to rely solely on his advice (Wood 2009: 92).

distinct from one another. However, instead of a question of agriculture and industry, the prevalent source of competition and division between the North and the South throughout the 19th century revolved around the question of slavery.

As the United States grew larger, more states were added to it⁷. This continuous growth meant a more varied Congress, but one that threatened the balance in Congress and the Senate (Grant 2012: 166). This in turn bound the political ideology of slavery to the well-being of the party, giving rise to the spirit of party to defend their ideology. It separated everyone into their partisan corners: to those that supported the institution of slavery, and to those that opposed it as an affront to the liberties present in the Constitution. An idealistic divide within, which Addison saw as the greatest threat to harmony.

As such, the Civil War was a product of party spirit; or more accurately the defence a political ideas, and the geographical discrimination created by attempts to resist political fracturing, such as the Missouri Compromise, which created an arbitrary line below which slavery was allowed and above which it was banned (Grant 2012: 158). It was a question of votes: a matter who controlled the Congress and the Senate, as the Constitution allows for amendments to be suggested “whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary ... or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States,” and be valid “when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof” (U.S. Const., art. V). Therefore both parties struggled to maintain a steadfast balance as to not give the other sufficient votes to pass legislation that would threaten their perspective. It was

⁷ See Grant (2012: 145) figure 5.3., which shows the division between free and slave states, as well as the year they ratified the Constitution and officially joined the United States.

redistricting that can be seen as a tool that balanced this strife for a while, as Southern states could prevent the ascension of opposing parties in their states and vice versa.

In the end, the western expansion that Washington had seen as an opportunity for the nation would turn against it (as the race to designate states was limited by the Pacific) and the territories in-between were quickly divided into the two factions. Some of these states chose to oppose the Missouri Compromise in the 1820s (Grant 2012: 166), giving the choice of slavery to the electors (p. 168). This was on par with Washington's ideology:

“If in the opinion of the people the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment in the way which the Constitution designated. But let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed.”
(Washington 1796).

History, however, tells us that the decision to allow people to choose only vocalized the issue of slavery in the United States and destroyed the carefully maintained balance between the North and the South (Grant 2012: 168). It shows a miscalculation by Washington's about the united spirit that all Americans shared, demolished by party spirit. Of course, it is important to highlight that the decision of slavery was made at a state-level, not on the Constitutional-level, as Washington's Farewell Address clearly states. This harkens back to Washington's opinions about a strong Federal government (Ferling 1988: 351—2; 358—9), but also shows that he did not trust the people to make a valid decision without there being an element of oversight like that of the Congress, Senate and the President.

Moreover, he foresaw the dangers of the people deciding for themselves. He had lived through a momentous occasion such as that himself: the Revolution itself was a means by which the people decided against the government through usurpation. While in this “one instance” (referring to the Revolution) it was “the instrument of good,” it was not one that had a good reputation (take into consideration the Reign of Terror in the aftermath of the French Revolution). There was always a possibility that the people would choose to express themselves through the party spirit, which could dissolve national unity.

Overall, we can detect some parallels with the events leading to the Civil War and the Revolution. First a legislative opinion was created in the form of the Missouri compromise, much like the taxation laws of Britain prior to the Revolution. Second there was a public outcry against the measure which divided the population; during the Revolution it was between those that supported the British Crown, and in Civil War those that supported slave-ownership. Third there was an issue of representation, which in the case of the Civil War was a partisan issue and a carefully maintained balance in the legislature, while prior to the Revolution it was about the lack of colonial self-governance, and equal representation of their ideas in the British Parliament. And fourth an opposing faction constructed its own legislative body through a partisan opinion, which during the Revolution was known as the Continental Congress and during the Civil War known as the Confederate States of America.

These four parallels seemingly connect the two separate events, and reveal an underlying framework through which Washington’s warnings seek to disrupt the generation of party spirit. An emergence of a scheme that is proposed by a dominative government, proceeds to divide opinion and creates a barrier within the nation between two physically identifiable sides. This is then exasperated by a competition over their own opinion during which both sides strengthen

their support within their individual area, and which if not addressed through amendments leads to violent confrontation against the dominant government.

5.2.2. *Spirit of Revenge*

While the earlier examination focused on the spirit of the party and the factions within a society, this subsection will focus on the “spirit of revenge,” as was mentioned by Washington as “natural to party dissension.” It is a separate idea due to its fundamentally wanton need to do harm to the other without regards to order and consequence. As a subsection of party spirit, however, it is never too far from the behaviour of an individual and a group of people.

Revenge as a concept is an act, or a response against a person who committed wrong in a prior event to the instigator of revenge. Modern culture acknowledges many different forms of revenge. It can be a quick, physical action which can, for instance in keeping with the presidential atmosphere, be the assassination of Abraham Lincoln by John Wilkes Booth, to whom Kauffman (2004) presents a motive of vengeance for the fall of the Confederacy. Revenge can also be slow and methodological, often times nonsensical by the observer, as is the case of Miss Havisham’s revenge on all men in the “Great Expectations” by Charles Dickens (2002) by teaching her adopted child Estella to scorn all men with her behaviour. Similarly, in an act of revenge Estella marries a gold digger to attack her mother’s earlier behaviour, an act that only leads to misfortune, as it did with Miss Havisham.

“Great Expectations” is an accurate depiction, then, of the wanton nature of revenge. The way in which it leads to ruin and misfortune. While in Dickens’ story it is a personal ruin, to Washington it meant internal strife within the nation and the destruction of liberty and democracy. In United States history acts of revenge are unfortunately common. As will be

discussed in section 8.1, revenge can be found from the Sedition Act of 1798. It can also be seen in the manner by which the Confederacy withdrew from the Union, as a reaction to their loss in the presidential election to Abraham Lincoln and the imbalance of the Missouri Compromise. In the modern day, it is most notably present in voter discrimination, especially of those incarcerated. To this day, around a quarter of the states remove a felony offender's right to vote (NCSL 2021), itself a means of revenge against those that have worked against the law. Yet in another, it is a means by which parties of a given state manipulate the voting system to draw themselves above their opponent (Engstrom 2013).

More bombastically, the spirit of revenge can be discerned from the actions of the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump's, behaviour toward Obama-era legislation. Primarily the social-welfare policies and legislation of the previous president from the opposing (Democratic) party. Trump has already taken actions to repeal the Affordable Care Act, known colloquially as *Obamacare*, in 2017 (Glenza 2017), though those efforts failed to collapse the act. They did, however, reveal the bipartisan polarization on the issue (Thompson, Gusmano & Shinohara 2018) and the wish to cause harm to the opposing party by striking against a signature legislation of the party opponent.

Similarly into the spirit of revenge can be counted the 2019–2020 efforts to impeach Trump, and any and all retributions taken by Trump in the aftermath of his acquittal in February 2020. As well as Trump's actions at the start of 2021 following his election defeat, and the voting regulations filed in many Republican states to combat voter activity. They are prime examples of the spirit of revenge in action within recent memory, and historically significant enough to be remembered. The effects of January 2021 even thread close to Washington's warnings of a

dominant party and how its “chief ... turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation on the ruins of public liberty.”

Lastly, spirit of revenge is a form of offence that is used to suppress any form of media that offends the leading party. In United States, the Sedition Act of 1798 (History, Art & Archives) was a controversial piece, which was seen as a threat to first amendment rights to criticize the government. An examination of the case of James Callender (Smith 1954) in section 8.1 is in many ways an example of the spirit of revenge in action, as the piece itself is an attack against government action, which is then reciprocated as the administration turns against the published criticism.

Overall, then, party spirit and the spirit of revenge are most highlighted by the uses of political discourse and the interplay between rival parties. It can be an act of libel, mockery or actual disenfranchisement of millions (Rosenberg 1984; Engstrom 2013). Party spirit can fracture a nation, as it did during the Civil War and during the civil rights movement (Grant 2012: 168—9; 375), and tends to intensify during elections, as in 1796 when Washington witnessed (reciprocal) attacks against fellow politicians and himself (DeConde 1957: 654). It can also present itself in attacks against legislation and works that are significant to the opposition, as was the case with Obamacare (Thompson, Gusmano & Shinohara 2018).

5.3. American policy of commercial neutrality

“The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.” (Washington 1796).

George Washington can be considered to be the founder of the United States foreign policy for almost a century and a half following his death. His ideas, recorded in the Farewell Address, entrenched the idea of isolationism into a national creed (Nordlinger 2001: 50—2; Wright 1943). His words manifested a policy of independence from the squabbles of the European theatre and structured their relationship into one of economic in principle. Isolationism to Washington was just that, independence from foreign affairs. The excerpt above, taken from the Farewell Address, highlights Washington's noncommittal approach to foreign politics, and how his wish was to maintain neutral relations to the outside world. It shows his wish to maintain the integrity and trust of the nation state by fulfilling obligations they had assumed earlier, such as the Treaty of amity and commerce with the French, signed in 1778 when the country was fighting for its freedom.

This did not mean that the United States would be a stagnant nation for the larger world. As Nordlinger (2001) discusses, the United States in its state of isolation focused on internal matters, choosing to focus on expansion through the North American continent and strengthening national security and sphere of influence⁸. The engagements mentioned by Washington were also part of these internal matters as they solidified their independence from the continental powers of Europe, allowing the United States to grow to become the powerhouse of economy and manufacturing in the 19th and 20th century (Grant 2012).

Furthermore, Washington nor any of his successors had reason to diverge from this path of isolation. Because the United States was a fledgling country for the early part of the 19th

⁸ While many can hold this against the belief that United States was an isolationist power, I would see it as an extension of their wish to remain separate from the world at large, choosing to move at their own pace rather than with anyone else.

century, and focused on internal matters, Washington's words, as well as those of Alexander Hamilton and James Madison (Nordlinger 2001: 50), led them to internal expansion due to the lack of interests abroad. What use would the United States have with Cuba while their own internal politics were threatening to tear the nation apart? (DeConde 1957). Indeed, only a policy decision to prevent a European expansion into the United States' territorial waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific managed to wrangle the nation out of its shell in the late 19th century; an ideology that gained support after the destruction of the *Maine*, a United States warship docked at Havana (Grant 2012: 251—3). Similar parallels can be drawn with the sinking of the *RMS Lusitania* in 1915, where over a hundred American civilians died (among many others during the submarine war), which acted one of the many causes for the United States to join World War I (Grant 2012: 269; Startt 2017: 45; 114).

The United States, then, would not attack without just cause. Similarly to the war of 1812 (which will be discussed in more depth in section 8.2), they acted more in self-defence. It was in accordance with Washington's mantra, in which through a "respectably defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies." Whether the sinking of the *Lusitania* can be considered an emergency is debatable. It presented one at home, where protests erupted over the action, decrying the German excuse and repeated violation of the United States' neutrality.

Neutrality to Washington was of national interest alone. In the Farewell Address he does not suggest that the United States should push to the territories of other nations, instead, he suggests that the nation focuses on the internal matters so that they might strengthen their position on the global stage through credibility. To him, this could be achieved through commerce, as a wealthy nation able to sustain itself was also able to dictate its own rules. As a businessman (Ferling

1988: 69—71), Washington knew the benefit of access to markets, and how good connections could provide that access. Through his experience in war, he knew how much war cost to a nation; he had seen first hand the actions of the British Empire as they struggled to pay the debts accumulated in wars with France.

Moreover, he also had experienced the headache that entanglements with foreign nations could cause, as was the case with France (Bemis 1934; Binkley 1968: 51; DeConde 1957). While the United States had formed an alliance with France in 1778 to bolster the war for independence, in 1796 Washington was in a place where he had to choose between war and peace. To abide by the treaty was to go to war with the British, which would inevitably draw the United States into a conflict on its own borders due to the prevalence of British troops in Canada. It would also threaten shipping across the Atlantic, whose neutrality was already under attack by both navies (Bemis 1934; Ferling 1988: 465). Therefore, Washington's calls for neutrality in the Address were based on, in addition to a wish for the United States to remain focused on the internal matters, a hope to remain free of the troubles in Europe, and to protect the country from foreign threats.

In practice, Washington's ideology configured into the Jay Treaty, which sought a commercial compromise to the issues present. This was a means by which the United States could remain at peace with Britain and increase national benefit through trade, but with which they worsened their relations with France (Wood 2009: 239—75). Similarly, as will be discussed later on in sections 6.3 and 8.3., commerce would not remain a method to maintain neutrality in furthering tensions between two nations. In fact, unlike Washington's Address desired, it would become a political tool.

5.4. Foreign interference

“It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.”
(Washington 1796).

Washington was adamant in his Address about warnings against foreign influences within the United States (DeConde 1957). He warned against foreign agents tampering with “domestic factions,” and “mislead[ing] public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils!” This was best highlighted by the actions of the French minister Edmond Gênet, who raised a privateer fleet to raid British shipping along the United States’ coastline (Ferling 1988: 432—3); and French Ambassador Pierre Adet, who took it upon himself to turn the people of the United States against the British, and whose actions led to significant turmoil within the United States (DeConde 1957). These actions took place before and around the time that the Address was being compiled by Washington and Hamilton, and within the overall complex political situation of the 1790s. It culminated in the Jay Treaty, which allowed the British to confiscate French goods aboard American shipping, something the French were not allowed to do due to earlier attachments, and placed many American exports under a contraband list to protect British interests (Ferling 1988: 457). This enflamed the situation, highlighting the fortified anti-British sentiment throughout the old colonies. The French naturally took advantage of the moment to create political pressure and attacks against pro-treaty politicians, and thus against the Federalists and Washington, to secure their own personal interests (Bemis 1934: 252, 252n3; Ferling 1988: 456).

Washington's Address was a powerful tool to the Federalists: it openly presented the subject of foreign influencing and its detrimental effects to society. The Address could even be interpreted as an attack against Jefferson's Republicans and their willingness to subjugate themselves to the will of the French government through their compliance with the French provocations across the country. It put under question the Republican integrity and loyalty to the United States, and made them appear subservient to the will of the French. Counterintuitively, after the Farewell Address' release, the French intensified their attacks against Washington and the Federalists, affirming Washington's statements and allowing the Federalists to combat the French ideals and their beneficiary, Jefferson's candidacy in the upcoming elections. The Federalists called out the irrelevancy and dangers of diplomatic associations in politics, and highlighted the Jay Treaty as positive outcome as an extension to the 1783 treaty of Paris, and sought to clarify issues that had been present in the original peace deal. By attacking the Farewell Address (and thus Washington) directly, the French caused an upsurge in anti-French sentiment among people that saw them as a threat to American liberty; a new host that sought to rule over the United States. This matter was criticized in the Federalist papers throughout the country, and the purpose of the alliance with the French questioned. (Bemis 1934: 252; DeConde 1957).

In a way, the Federalists broke Washington's ideas of party spirit and the spirit of revenge by allowing themselves to be drawn into a verbal conflict with their opponent, which distanced the two sides at a crucial time when a popular president was stepping down from office. In the Address, foreign influencing was correlated with the party spirit and domestic infighting. With conflict between two parties or more, each attempting to disseminate false information about the other, Washington warned of foreign influencers seeking to drive a wedge between the two sides by creating an artificial fracture within the Union. Through the vision of a party and their fervent

beliefs, the foreign influencers could create discord between the two sides and thus incite “riot and insurrection”, while subjugating the infighting nations to the “policy and will of another.”

Perhaps the best example of this comes from more recent times, and from the era of the internet. Due to wide conversational networks and anonymity online, people and characters can be used to great extent by nations to influence the perception of facts and information. Levush (2019) discusses this subject in her report about the uses and defences against disinformation and the systems that are used to spread and combat them. It proves that disinformation has played a role in modern elections and establishes why online activity will continue to be utilized as a means of influencing an election. In United States, one of the largest and most notable occasions of this style of influencing comes from the 2016 presidential elections, when foreign agents attacked the election infrastructure and spread disinformation, which was used extensively to discourage voters and discredit selected officials (U.S. Senate Intelligence).⁹

In the aftermath of Donald Trump’s election to office, one can identify signs of heightened tensions between the two parties, as well as among the populace. It led to multiple protests between the two sides immediately after the 45th president’s inauguration, more vocal than in earlier transitions. These culminated in the January 6, 2021 attack against the US Capitol building, in what contemporary news referred to as a *siege* or a *breach*, and a *riot*.¹⁰ A huge part in the controversy that led to the attack against the Capitol building was the question of election results. It is speculated in Volume 1 of the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee Report that such mistrust could have been the intention of the foreign agents in the 2016 elections, and thus it

⁹ Volume 1 focuses on the attacks against the voting systems, while Volume 2 assess Russian activity through social media, and the succeeding volumes focus on threat assessment and counter-intelligence.

¹⁰ For collection of news articles about the January 6 Capitol attack, see: <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/us-capitol-breach>; <https://apnews.com/hub/capitol-siege>. [Retrieved April 1, 2021].

could have played a role in the 2020 elections, in which the then sitting President Trump attacked the integrity of election results, though it should be noted that he never placed the blame on foreign agents but on the opposing party, highlighting the effects of party spirit once more.

While the warnings against foreign influences in the Farewell Address point more toward political conversation, it can also be used to question commerce. During the 1790s, the French and the British were attacking neutral ships to bolster their own war efforts (Bemis 1934, Ferling 1988: 465). The French were especially keen on preventing supplies from reaching Britain on American ships after the Jay Treaty came into full effect (Wood 2009: 239). This can be seen either as an act of revenge for the decisions made by the Washington administration, or as a means by which the French sought to pressure Americans back into line with their opinion (the aspect of foreign influencing in regards to commerce will be discussed in sections 6.3 and 8.3).

In conclusion, there are many forms of foreign influencing, from trade to politics, and even to Washington it was a balancing act between usefulness and threat. It can give rise to domestic issues that are instigated by foreign agents through support given to a party or their opinion. It is also a matter of disinformation and utilization of core issues to divide public opinion, raise political maliciousness and arouse the spirit of revenge, and to discredit leadership and opponents (DeConde 1957). In more modern times, the threat comes through the internet, where disinformation is spread through social media and other actors (Levush 2019). While these actions are prevalent in society, only in worse case scenarios will they have the potential to instigate violence, which was shown by recent events to be possible through the collision of party spirit and foreign influencing.

6. Farewell Address in contrast

This section is to balance the content already discussed. In it, I will discuss some aspects of Washington's Farewell Address from a separate point of view, starting from the intra-party politics that have often been turbulent in the United States. I will continue on to a discussion about the Grand Alliance of World War II and NATO, as well as the current status of world trade and global organizations. The purpose of this section is not to dispute Washington's warnings nor to accredit them, merely to explore the potential opposite which they represent, and which in some cases may attribute a defence for his ideals.

6.1. Intra-party politics

“Left unchallenged masters of the political field after 1816, the Republicans were to discover presently the disintegrating effect of a multi-group party of the disappearance of a common enemy, a vigorous political opposition.” (Binkley 1968: 94).

This quote highlights a reaction to an event, where a singular party gains absolute power over the other. In opposition to Washington's claims that it would lead to “ruins of public liberty,” it instead hints that this power could redistribute itself as a reaction to the lack of opposition; that a party, left unchallenged in the political field and without competition, finds itself in a position of infighting. Once there are no more issues in the wider scale to unify them, they shatter into smaller groups, which then prevents the function of the party as a whole in practice. A historical example exists of this happening in the United States, in which a singular ruling party splintered to form the two major parties present today: Democrats and the Republicans (Binkley 1968).

After the War of 1812, the Federalist Party, which heavily resisted the war, voting against it along party lines, practically disintegrated. They nominated no-one to the presidential and vice-presidential races in 1816 and 1820, giving all-choice to the Democratic-Republican Party (formerly Jefferson's Republican Party) who re-elected James Monroe without opposition. This era, known colloquially as the *Era of Good Feelings*, lasted through his two terms as president from 1817—1825, after which the Democratic-Republican Party split into four parties during the election of 1824. These then coalesced into two noticeably separate parties: Democrat and National Republican parties, which more or less maintained their structures up to the Civil War. (Binkley 1968; Wood 2009).

As such, it is not definitive that a singular party, if elected over another en masse, would constitute the end of liberty as Washington claimed. Neither is his stance that party spirit is wholly negative in form. Muirhead (2006: 718) argues that party spirit is not only an expression of “a particular and essential kind of democratic virtue,” but “an essential element in the quest for justice.” Muirhead (2006: 715; 719) highlights the functions of a party as a means of connecting people and their many views into a cohesive unit that is easier to understand, and allows for power to be consolidated under a majority, should the party opinion gain enough support from a wide range of people. A party's purpose, then, is to lead these people and find a balance within their internal views: a compromise, of sorts, from this range of different views and approaches that benefits them the best.

Beyond this form of partisanship, Muirhead (2006: 722) highlights that of ethical partisanship, where those that have no attachments to any party have a better capacity to view objectively at the parties and their positions on certain issues. These people also recognize that a “victory should never be total” (p. 722), but instead act as a voice of opposition to prod the quality of that

which is presented, whether this be an election or legislation. Those engaged in ethical partisanship participate in political argumentation with certain limitations, and Muirhead (2006: 722) argues that they do not support those that attempt to promote their own political superiority: these would essentially be bills that regulate voting, or seek to discriminate the electorate. Such occasions, where voting is restricted or somehow diminishes votership, will lead to a loss of ethical partisanship and thus promotes an uncontrolled party spirit that provokes conflict. Similar situations can occur naturally, as well: In the example given of the United States in the aftermath of the War of 1812, the country saw a loss in ethical partisanship as diminished votership without an opposition to vote for. This in turn lowered the amount of active voters, which only rose to former levels when the leading faction was faced by opposing faction with different ideals (Sydnor 1946).

As such, it appears that partisanship is integral to democracy and the democratic process, and not necessarily the destructive force that Washington feared. If anything can be learned from the Era of Good Feelings, is that partisanship can provide integrity to the system by promoting competition. Through ethical partisanship and appealing to a larger population, a party can further solidify its position by achieving a higher majority within the legislative body. However, actions that seek to restrict votership, or somehow diminish and attack the opposition, promote party spirit and damage national unity. One style of legislative reform that can be considered an attack against opposition, and was not discussed in this section, is a restriction on political speech: this form of the party spirit will be discussed further in section 8.1.

6.2. United States: a global ally

Washington's ideals in the Farewell Address called for good relations and limited political contact with other nations; foreign relations was to be focused on commercial ties, and nothing more. United States has throughout its history neglected this advice by distrusting foreign nations, such as the Soviet Union (Pessen 1987: 12—13), and by allying itself either with a global partner, or a local ally to combat their opponent's influence. During the Revolution, for instance, they joined forces with France through the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1778 to fight the British. Fighting in the frontier against native tribes also occurred often with a Native American ally (Wood 2009: 125). Similarly, almost no conflict today is fought by a singular belligerent, rather by two or more due to the defensive treaties that connect most of the world. Such an organization would today be the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (Grant 2012).

Indeed, the United States today has a myriad of alliances and treaties in place which bind them to other countries (U.S. Department of State). Some of them have provided it with means to defend itself, as for instance the close relationship with Canada that allowed for an early warning system against bombers during the Cold War¹¹. Others have proved less beneficial over the years, like the inclusion of Turkey in NATO, whose actions in recent years have put the organization into a difficult position. Its relations with its neighbouring Greece, another NATO member state, have deteriorated and weapons purchases from Russia have made United States sanction the nation (Pamuk & Gumrukcu 2020).

¹¹ Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line was a radar defence line, which depended on Canada's support for the operation to function and cover the Arctic against the possible incursion of Soviet bombers and give an early warning for United States and Canada to launch fighters to intercept.

As such, one can see the difficulties of entanglements that Washington spoke of. To ally with a nation is to put the United States in a position where its credibility may be put to question.

Where it may be drawn into:

“[...] frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. [...] Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?” (Washington 1796).

Yet, as it was mentioned, United States has formulated many alliances with the European nations over the years and found itself embroiled in many of its wars, most notably the two world wars (Grant 2012). The Cold War especially was one to solidify United States and Europe as allies through the threat of the Soviet Union and Communism that the two presented, though the conflicts created by the hostility against Communist ideals expanded beyond its continental borders. Most of the defensive treaties originate from this era and seemingly play into Washington’s ideology that the nation could trust on “temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies” (Washington 1796). Pessen (1987: 18—9) argues otherwise, attributing the justifications to amoral behaviour by the era’s leadership, uncouth for the principles set forth by Washington. Whether or not these decisions were able to counteract the behaviour and led to further peace, I will not argue in this thesis. It does raise a valid question: since the Soviet Union no longer exists and the discussion of Cold War has moved to the past, has this threat not disappeared and thus made the alliances obsolete?

It is true that the Cold War ended, however, it does not mean that threats ceased to exist. For defensive purposes and as a matter of readiness, the United States operates multiple foreign

operations abroad, like that of Japan, who pays billions of dollars annually to host United States forces as a deterrent against military action in the region (Chanlett-Avery, Campbell & Williams 2019). Tensions within the region, especially around the question of Taiwan, could also be paralleled to that of the Cold War. Therefore, it would appear that while the rivalry that once existed between the United States and the Soviet Union ended upon the latter's collapse, the rivalry between the East and the West did not. Thus, this seemingly shows that the emergencies for which Washington approved alliances still persisted as a means to defend the states. However, it does so in disregard of his wishes to remain nonpartisan as "excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side" (Washington 1796).

In conclusion, the United States relies on alliances to protect itself in the modern world. The world is no longer as isolated as it was in Washington's time and landing troops on foreign soil is easier than ever. To counteract the potential dangers of an invasion at home, alliances can isolate the fighting to the immediate region of the belligerent, thus keeping the civilian infrastructure, economy and population safe from harm. In many ways, however, Washington's warnings still possess merit when questioning alliances and their persistent nature. Troubles within larger alliances, such as NATO in regards to Turkey, can lead to problems in the wider security of the nation and threaten the security of the United States. Furthermore, the disregard of Washington's ideals in maintaining good relations with other nations and not favouring one or the other has led to increased tensions throughout history. This side of the Address was blatantly disregarded during the Cold War, and today as United States has set up rivalries across the world. By not following Washington's advice, and by choosing partners to work with while dismissing others as rivals has led to significant tensions globally, thus threatening national security.

6.3. Commerce as a means of foreign interference

“But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand: neither seeking nor granting exclusive favors or preferences; [...] diffusing and diversifying by gentle streams of commerce but forcing nothing [...]”
(Washington 1796).

Washington’s ideal for trade was American neutrality and liberty to trade with anyone they pleased. In his Farewell Address, he called for United States commercial policy to hold “an equal and impartial hand,” and wished to prevent showing favouritism to one party or another as “it is folly in one nation to look for disinterested favors from another” (Washington 1796). Through the Address, Washington spoke against excessive flattering of another nation, and showing preference to them, especially one that showed disinterest in their affairs as it could create dissent in others; but also warned the nation from becoming indebted to another, which could have the unfortunate effect of leaving them their subject.

Washington was not alone in his opinion to maintain impartiality in trade. His secretary of treasury, Alexander Hamilton with his Federalist party, saw it a source of revenue for the young republic (Wood 2009: 101—2), with which the United States could pay off its foreign debts and begin a grand scheme to become truly independent of other nations. They had no intention of setting protectionist measures, like embargoes or high tariffs, to encourage American production over that of foreign production, as any preference shown through them could damage the American reputation (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 105; 108). However, the rest of the world was not quite so willing to follow America’s example (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 91).

After the revolution, Britain was not on terms with the United States and had limited access to its markets, especially in the all important West Indies, one of United States' most prominent trading partners at the time. Before the Constitutional Convention of 1787, which would allow the federal government to dictate taxes and tariffs (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 89), each individual state was in control of its own taxation and commerce (p. 94). Some states attempted to pressure Britain into easing access to their markets in the West Indies by banning ships from unloading, or by instilling tariffs on the goods coming from abroad, or from other states. These measures proved to be ineffective in handling the problem of protectionism, as the states competed not just with the foreign entities, but with each other. This disunity allowed foreign shipping to select a port to which they landed their goods, leaving those states attempting to combat this market inequality practically disabled, unable to continue their efforts for long in the absence of revenue and imports (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 93—4).

After the Constitution's ratification, a better plan was introduced, which allowed the United States to create a coherent and successful commercial strategy (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 98—100). Through trade, the federal government gained a source of revenue, which allowed the nation to gain strength while at peace. When the conflict between Britain and France started, United States was placed into a difficult situation: it had to choose between its most important local trading partner, and with its established treaties with France. The Proclamation of Neutrality of 1793 was to avoid conflict with either side and assure them that the United States would not interfere in the war (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 109—10). Nonetheless, both belligerents began confiscating goods aboard American ships (Bemis 1934: 251): this attempt to deny the enemy of foreign goods has been a repeated strategy to coerce another nation, and is itself a means of using commerce as a tool for influencing a foreign government (and will be discussed further in section 8.3).

More importantly, political efforts by Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists, seeking to detach United States from the French alliance (Bemis 1934: 251—2; DeConde 1957: 641), sought a separate deal with Britain that would alleviate tensions between the two nations and increase business opportunities throughout the West Indies (Ferling 1988: 456). This mission, led by John Jay and concluding in the signing of the Jay Treaty (prior to Hamilton’s draft of the Address), created higher tensions between France and the United States. This show of preference toward the British, then, caused exactly what Washington warned of in his Farewell Address: it led to conflict with their former ally, as the French retaliated against all American shipping, confiscating British goods without any regard to previous treaties and ties.

A nation choosing to focus on their own personal welfare is not itself surprising; its foreign policy and commercial outreach always seeks to negotiate between the cost and the benefit of an action. This way of thinking is supported by Milner, Rosendorff and Mansfield (2004), who note that there is an inherent quality of domestic and foreign policy always involved in international trade. A nation will always take into consideration the domestic effects of a treaty, as well as its foreign implications, then evaluate its benefits over its potential costs. In accepting the Jay Treaty, a possible domestic instability by those in support of the French alliance was taken into consideration, however it was deemed to of lesser importance than a stable business relationship with Britain that could secure the financial future of the young republic (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 118).

Later in history, United States would find itself in similar situations: put in front of a decision between free trade and political necessities; showing preference to one side above that of the other. Such moments can be found from both world wars, during which United States found itself aligned more with Great Britain and the entente over Germany and the Axis. During World

War I, United States had its supply ships attacked, which led to them eventually joining the war (Grant 2012). This was not before they had already conceded to Great Britain in the delivery of supplies to Germany: Germany was heavily dependent on food imports to sustain themselves, and thus United States compliance with a British embargo led to the death of thousands, damaging the German war effort. Similarly, in World War II, United States took a stance to aid the Allied forces, even before they were themselves drawn into the war in 1941, through the lend-lease program¹².

In conclusion, Washington's ideals for trade, it being neutral and disconnected from turmoil of war, were very much idealistic. Even before the formal Farewell Address was delivered, Washington had experienced the troubles that international relations and foreign wars had with commerce. The Jay Treaty, whose effects materialized only after the Farewell Address had been delivered, proved the impossibility of truly neutral shipping, especially in times of war. Furthermore, United States would find it impossible to declare themselves neutral in large conflicts which effected its trade significantly, mainly due to external factors like embargoes and ship seizures. At these times, worries for its own security often placed them on one side or the other, which then led to partisan trade accommodation, such as embargoes and the lend-lease program.

¹² An Act to Promote the Defence of the United States, as it was formally known, was a means by which the United States sought to protect itself by supplying the Allied nations with supplies, thus complying to Milner, Rosendorff and Mansfield's (2004) argument that domestic policy—self-defence in this instance—was connected to matters of commerce.

7. Earlier interpretations of Washington's address

As Washington is a large character in the United States politics, his word has been examined many times over. Such is the case with the Farewell Address, which has received readings in front of the Senate many times over the years. First official reading of the address occurred in 1862 during the height of the Civil War to boost morale and strengthen the ideals of unity and American character that Washington so deeply represents. Second reading occurred in 1888, on the centennial of the Constitution ratification, and two more readings occurred before the event turned into an annual session in front of the Senate in 1896, the centennial of the publication of Washington's Farewell Address, always held in late February, around the anniversary of Washington's birth. (Gaffey 2015: 162; U.S. Senate).¹³

These readings have, since the later half of the 20th century, often included a more personal note from the reader, which expresses their own opinions with the address' main point that most resonates with them. This section will examine some of those notes and see which of Washington's ideas struck these senators. The purpose is to show that there are multiple ways in which the words can be interpreted, and that there are many moments throughout United States history that Washington's warnings realize themselves.

The data is available from the U.S. Senate (U.S. Senate), contained within images of the personal notes themselves. These were written by hand and then photographed, and thus all the following clear-text transcriptions are my own. The R and D within parenthesis inform the reader of the political allegiance of the person discussed, R being Republican and D a Democrat.

¹³ Archived recordings of these readings can be found from the U.S. Senate website: <https://www.senate.gov/floor/>.

Margaret Chase Smith (R), 1949:

“[Illegible] President Buckley honored me in asking me to read Washington’s Farewell address. [Once] I read this I wondered what our great President would think if he were alive today. Would he condemn the proposed North Atlantic Pact as an entangling alliance? The objective in the arms treaty—freedom. The only difference is the way to obtain that freedom.” (U.S Senate).

Senator Smith’s writings point to Washington’s questions about international alliances and the contemporary issue about the formation of the North Atlantic Pact. While Washington’s Farewell Address advises against alliances, it does make an exception for extreme circumstances. Since Senator Smith writes in the wake of World War II, when the Soviet threat became entrenched in the post-war continent, it is a question of importance whether or not the threat of Soviet Union is large enough for the country to form an entangled alliance within Europe through the North Atlantic Pact, more commonly known under the organization that implements the pact: NATO.

In this brief message, she makes a defence for its formation: the acquisition of freedom. Similarly to events during the Revolution, which led to the formation of the treaty with France in 1778, she argues that freedom is an extreme cause that warrants the formation of an alliance. United States, however, is not subject to anyone at the time, nor are they involved in a war on their own continent. While this mission to obtain freedom could be extended to European nations under threat of invasion by the powerful Soviet Union, and perhaps the protection of international trade, United States would effectively determine to show preference to nations not under the Soviet Union’s control. All of these would lead to United States no longer being a neutral country, an integral proposition of the Farewell Address.

John McCain III (R), 1987:

“It is an honor and privilege for me, according to custom, to have conveyed George Washington’s Farewell Address to the United States Senate and to the people of this nation.

In this stressful time when once again the confidence of the people in their institution is being severely [sic] threatened, I believe it is entirely fitting to reflect on General Washington’s emphasis on morality in government. Closer adherence to his words is the surest path to a restored institution of the presidency and a renewal of faith of the American people in their system of government.”

First year senator, McCain strikes a rather different note than others. His reading came at a turbulent time for the Reagan administration, with the emergence of weapons trade with Iran in 1986, with whom the United States was not allowed to trade arms with due to an arms embargo. The Tower Commission, which was an inquiry into the matter led by former Senator John Tower, was very critical of the Reagan administration and found them having used intermediaries and contras, rebel groups funded and supplied by the U.S., in their combatting of threats against the U.S., to supply weapons to Iran. The report was published mere eleven days after Senator McCain’s reading, and multiple Congressional investigations had been launched to examine the matter by then. (Tower, Muskie & Snowcroft: 1987).

In the note left behind by McCain, he speaks of national unity, the need to rely on a strong, central government to lead a unified American people. His words echo many of the others examined in this section, speaking of the honor that comes reading the address, and of the wisdom in the founding father. They diverge, however, in the manner in which they attack the sitting President. His words about the “surest path to restored institution of the presidency” speak

of the disappointment that he had for the current administration, and how he saw Washington's tendency toward neutrality, presented within the Address through warnings against preference and entanglements, as an example of how the administration should be operated.

John Breaux (D), 2004:

“What a great honor to have read George Washington's farewell address to the full Senate. My thoughts as I read his speech were that after over 200 years of government how appropriate [sic] they were today. His warning of the possibilities of political parties losing sight of their real purpose is still true today[.] His concern about becoming too involved in the affairs of other nations strike an important note in today's World! Washington's world was much smaller than our world today. We are all more dependant on each other for peace + prosperity. I think Washington would be proud of America today as he was in 1796 A.D.”

John Breaux's 2004 note on the Farewell Address combines many of the points structured by Washington, the least of which is Washington's insistence upon the importance of religion in using “A.D.” at the very end. He notes how political parties are losing their “real purpose,” a sign of how there may be a rise in individual power within the party that raises the spirit of party to commit to actions dangerous to public safety. This can be correlated with the following sentence, in which he warns from getting too involved in the business of other nations (it is important to note that this was written after the 2003 invasion of Iraq and during an election year). These reveal a worrisome sign within the internal organization of the Democratic Party at the time: in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks against the United States, the country voted to go to war, with a portion of the Democrats voting for war, while a majority voted against it. While Muirhead (2011: 719) and logic says that this unified response against a perceived

aggravator is common, it shows a sudden loss of ethical partisanship in the discussion due to the emotions caused by the attacks. As such, similar loss of objective opinion can explain other events in the past, like opinion within the United States turning toward the option of war in the case of War of 1812 and World War I. Breaux's notion, then, is a question of party spirit, and whether or not it is bad for the country.

Further on, Breaux contests Washington's ideas of maintaining strictly non-preferential treatment of other countries in trade, and that the United States should not become reliant on other nations. With this, Breaux breaks from the norm by defending the United States' need of other nations as they bring both peace and prosperity to the nation. His defence for this stance is the interconnected nature of the world now than it had been in the age of sail. It is true that commerce has connected the world and countries operate either under commercial treaties or the World Trade Organization rules. Most nations are also reliant on imports for food or fuel (much like Germany was in World War I), without which the nation would suffer famines and shortages as they were unable to sustain themselves due to lack of natural resources. This, then, would be proof enough to Breaux that nations were dependent on one another.

Kelly Ayotte (R), 2013:

“President Washington's Farewell Address is a testament to the strength, wisdom, and humility of the first president. With a deep sense of reverence, I was honored to carry on this special Senate tradition.

As senators gather to make decision about our country's future, Washington's warnings about accumulating debt remain especially relevant. Preserving our national credit remains essential to our safety and security – and as Washington wrote, we ought not to pass in to posterity, “the

burden” which we ourselves ought to bear, I pray we will have the courage to meet that challenge.

May God bless our great country – Live Free or Die! Kelly Ayotte”

Lastly, I wish to look at the most recent addition to the notebook. After this, there do not appear to be any records of further notes written in the notebook, though readers have continued to appear before the Senate since 2013. This note, along with some of the other more recent notes, refers to the national debt, and the responsibility of elected officials to ensure the nation is not engulfed by over-expenditure and reliance on national credit, which might see the nation overtaken by its enemies. Washington’s Farewell Address speaks about the debt in connection to national security, and suggest that the government takes actions “cultivating peace” and “shunning expenses” (Washington 1796).

One view of these words could be that money should be spent on defence to avoid a position of disadvantage. Where the nation would have to build its army on the spot, instead of having a prepared, trained military to repel an enemy at the ready, which was a direction toward which Washington was developing the ragtag group of militiamen under his command during the Revolution. Whether it be by discouraging the enemy from attacking, or simply being able to swiftly put an end to a war before the expenses could overwhelm the national credit.

Another view, however, is that public credit is that of trust. That by credit Washington refers to the people. It was a struggle in the early parts of the revolution for Washington to maintain an army. After Battle of Bunker Hill, and the subsequent winter during which Washington restructured the army, he also lost many of the New Englanders that formed the army as they had to return home to their fields and lives. (Ferling 1988: 136—38). It is his experiences as a soldier

that can provide some insight into Washington's understanding of duty and the requirement of public attitude for the function of a nation, especially one at war. It was this public attitude that influenced Washington's decision making, and which would come to affect decision making throughout American history—one strong example is the loss of public support for the war in Vietnam, while not determining the outcome of the war, helped necessitate the negotiations that led to peace (Grant 2012: 358). Though it is important to note that it was not the support for the war that was ever questioned, as majority always appeared to be pro, it was liable for rapid and radical changes (Grant 2012: 359), and as such an internal issue for the sitting President and their party. Therefore, it was “public credit,” not in the sense of wealth, but political support that Washington may have feared might fracture, or destabilize the country. Similarly one can see these ideas come to life in Senator McCain's discussion about the morality of government and the need to restore the institutions therein.

All in all, the notes left behind by Senators were revering. They spoke highly of the “honor” that it was to read his words in front of the Senate. This was to be expected, but nevertheless the discussion it provided clarified the broad range to whom Washington spoke, and of the timeless nature of his warnings. It also made it evident that not always has United States listened to the First President and his ideas for the nation, as they did in the first century and a half, when United States opted for an isolationist approach in their foreign policy, though this is not because of Washington's policies, rather due to the interpretations of his legacy and strategies as the First President. Senator Breaux's dismissal of Washington's ideas about remaining independent from the rest of the world also struck a notable difference in idealism between 1940s and 2000s, and how the world had moved on from the idea of isolationism, seeing globalism as a means to go forward.

8. Discussion

8.1. Slander and lies: Case of James Callender and speech as a democratic process

While Washington's Farewell Address spoke about the party spirit, its nature and its effects on society, the message lacked practical examples of how it may manifest beyond party dissention. Indeed, he mentioned the "spirit of innovation," whose "assault may be to effect in the forms of the Constitution alterations which will impair the energy of the system and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown." This spirit of innovation could be considered regulations which seek to discriminate or dissuade votership, but also attacks against the fundamental rights stated in the Constitution. One such right is presented in the First Amendment (U.S. Const., amend. 1), in which "Congress shall make no law ... prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press."

It would not be long after Washington left office that the first such law was established: the Sedition Act of 1798 (History, Art & Archives), sought to exhaust "false, scandalous and malicious writing" (Sedition Act of 1798 s. 2) against the government and its leadership. It was argued to be a measure with which to prevent potentially hostile entities from generating chaos, should the newly formed United States be drawn into war against the French, among their majorly French-aligned countrymen.

Judge Alexander Addison was a proponent of the Act (Rosenberg 1984) and would support it for years. He was an ardent defender to setting limits to what was legally authorized to be said about a nation and its government, with limitations to the authority of the government, naturally, to challenge what was considered libel. This was achieved by giving jurisdiction "before any court of the United States" (Sedition Act of 1798 s. 2), meaning that the judges and the jury held

authority over determining if something was libel or not (Wood 2009: 260), instead of the government. Addison's defence, then came in the form of protecting people's rights to determine the truth, and to diminish the quantity of falsehoods that spread in the politically hostile environment in which all sides sought to discredit the other.

The Sedition Act, however, failed to gain spirit. While it was passed into law in 1798, it was decreed to last until 1801, unless expanded upon. When opponent of the bill, Thomas Jefferson became president in 1800, the bill was never renewed and it expired in March of 1801 (Sedition Act of 1798 s. 4; Wood 2009: 260). While the bill was in force only for a brief amount of time, leading to the indictment of fourteen people under the Act, of which ten were penalized (Wood 2009: 260), it functionally achieved to realize all Washington's warnings of a single party dominion. It defeated the criticism of elected bodies, and that of government; allowed for a singular party opinion to rule unchallenged; and it promoted sectionalism amongst the political parties, dissuading the two sides from reaching for compromise. For this section, then, I will examine the Sedition Act in practice by studying the case of James Callender, who was convicted under it. In this brief examination I will highlight how counterproductive subduing political discord can be, as the discrimination shown through it may raise defenders amongst those that support speech as a democratic process.

Consider the case of James Callender, a man whose opinions had raised plenty of ire in the political leadership of the nation in the years leading to the Sedition Act (Wood 2009: 237). The case overall was seen, even at the time, as a deeply partisan attack against Jeffersonian party promoters, and those that used their papers to "violate the laws of our country" (see Smith 1954: 182). The case against Callender consisted of multiple passages from a paper released by James Callender titled *The Prospect Before Us*. He was charged for libel and sedition against President

Adams, whom he criticized heavily in his paper. The trial concluded in Callender's imprisonment until the expiration of the Sedition Act, but it would not silence him. He wrote multiple additions to his earlier publications, and wrote passages that would, considering the nature of the passages he was convicted upon, most likely have put him in trial once more.

The trial in itself was a deeply disturbing affair from a modern standpoint. Judge Chase¹⁴, a Supreme Court Justice, took on the case himself and presided over the case in Virginia. His motive for this cannot be accurately questioned, which may have ranged from a partisan view to enforcing Federal law in the Southern states (of which Virginia had voted against certifying the Sedition Act into law). Whatever the case, it was evident that the jurors in the case, whom Judge Chase declined multiple pleas to replace, consisted of Federalists and political opponents of Callender (Smith 1954: 171). He also continuously interrupted the defence, and declined their witnesses (Wood 2009: 261). The prosecution also acted vehemently against the defence, taking on a doctrine of "guilty until proved innocent" (Smith 1954: 172).

It did not help Callender's cause that he was a foreigner, and not a born American, as Judge Chase was eager to make apparent when sentencing him. He was a naturalized citizen, but born in Britain where he had been outlawed after similarly stinging statements against the state (Smith 1954: 158). In the end, he was sentenced to nine months in jail and to a fine of two hundred dollars (Wood 2009: 261). Today, Judge Chase's treatment of Callender due to his place of birth is a clear sign of discrimination, and thus a way in which his party spirit attempted to stifle the voice of opposition.

¹⁴ Justice Samuel Chase was later impeached for his potentially partisan behaviour, however he was acquitted by the Senate; see Hinds' Precedents, Volume 3 (1907), Chapter 72 "The Impeachment and Trial of Samuel Chase". <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GPO-HPREC-HINDS-V3>.

While the Sedition Act tried to reduce quantity of falsehoods and accusations of false nature against elected officials, it failed to account for the definition of libel. Prosecutor of the Callender case, Nelson, spoke of a person's rights to "expatiate on the virtues of the new candidate;" he also stated it "false, scandalous, and malicious" to consider the potentiality of war with France should Adams be re-elected in 1800, and stated it untrue on the basis of its predictive quality (Smith 1954: 175). This prevention of argumentation of possibilities covers all ground of hypotheticals of negative stature, when questioning the actions of an elected official. As such, what would not be considered libel, or untrue, if matters that are not even real cannot be claimed to be free of this definition?

In the aftermath of the sedition trials, the Federalists realized they had only increased the criticism of their political ideologies, but also created a fervent demand for a press that criticised politicians and the parties (Wood 2009: 262). This network helped the Republicans to focus their national agenda, unify the nation under their own ideals, and separate them from the Federalist agenda, allowing for a sweeping victory in 1800 (Wood 2009: 308). In response to this success, the Federalists in 1801 launched their own papers that sought to captivate the public opinion and counteract Republican ideas, effectively committing the same acts which they had sought to suppress in the past few years.

In seeking to dissuade from critical speech of the government, they had in fact only succeeded in detaching their ideology from their opponents and defining a clearer outline between the two. Through the Sedition Act and discrimination of their opponents, such as James Callender, the Federalists had damaged the democratic process. This push against speech, then, and against a fundamental right within the Constitution, turned those in favour of ethical partisanship toward

the side in which freedoms and the democratic process were defended (as was discussed in section 6.1).

Similar developments can be seen in modern day with the rise of political commentary known as *fake news* and *alternative facts*, which function to deliver false information through sensationalist topics (Levush 2019). These modern publications follow similar patterns to the articles that led to the sedition trials, and face a threat of censorship online, and the application of defamation laws that attempt to stifle those accused of delivering disinformation in this form (Levush 2019: 1). This conflict of disinformation is best highlighted around election times, which in the 2020 presidential elections culminated in the disputes around election fraud. These claims were supported by the chief executive Donald Trump in a tweet: “changes made to the voting process, rules and regulations, many made hastily before the election and therefore the whole State Election is not legal or Constitutional” (Trump 2021). These facts themselves were at first disputed through tags, such as “This claim about election fraud is disputed,” but the tweet was eventually removed along with the account. Others that made similar claims have been attacked through civil lawsuits (like that of US Dominion Inc. v. Rudolph Giuliani), which has raised question over the publication of disinformation on online platforms.

The draconian law under which Callender was sentenced raised opposition against it, both from Callender and others, and eventually led to a political shift that ended the law. While disinformation today is combatted in less unsettling manner, and through civil lawsuits rather than a criminal ones, it provokes a thought of what opposition against this form of information control can cause. Much like the events surrounding the Sedition Act raised opposition against the law, partisan opinions (of those that use disinformation) may rise against the laws that seek to stifle disinformation and demand the dismissal of the regulations on speech.

8.2. American identity: Reaction of an isolationist nation in defence of its people

“Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity must always exalt the just pride of patriotism more than any appellation derived from local discriminations” (Washington 1796).

The Farewell Address was an important document for the American people and the country as a whole. Through it, Washington is often referred to as one of the founders of the isolationist policies that followed his terms in office (Nordlinger 2001). The document, however, is equally important as evidence to the foundation of the American identity and the term American. It answers the question what it means to be American, but also what duty is bound to them as citizens of the new Republic, and vice versa. In this section, I will discuss what this identity meant for national behaviour, especially in regards to the events surrounding the War of 1812, and in the isolationist policy that was broken during the war for the purpose of defending the citizenry of the United States.

Isolationism as a policy is the abstention of a state from foreign relations, of political alliances and economic treaties with other countries, to better focus on domestic affairs and to remain uninvolved with potential hostilities with foreign states. While the Farewell Address indeed calls for such action, Wright (1943: 175) argues that these were measures Washington wished to propose in order to defend the country during its early years. He makes the point that Washington did not consider these matters beyond the next few decades, as he knew how much time could change a country and how change may be a necessary reaction to issues that may arise (e.g. necessity for the Constitutional Convention of 1787). The fledgling nation at this early

time was still unstable and its people divided into factions that were vulnerable to foreign influence. Once the domestic issues were resolved, and the nation unified under a single identity, the country could open itself for further experimentation (Wright 1943: 176). Isolationism, then, was not an unreasonable policy in the early Republic: it ensured the nation's survival into the next century, during which its domestic affairs stabilized and they became an identifiable entity from European nations with its own characterization as American. (Wright 1943).

The way in which Washington spoke of the identity a citizen was through the nation they belonged to, and through its sovereignty. To Washington, a citizen's identity was integral to their loyalty toward the country and its other citizens, no matter their origin. Through this view, Washington not only sought unity amongst the peoples of the United States, but defence of the republican ideals that connected them. This duty by citizens and to citizens, and their liberty as ordered under the Constitution, then, is what I will argue is the source of American identity. This is best highlighted by the War of 1812, which showed United States break free from its isolationism to, not only fight for the recognition of their independence, but to protect its citizens from the presumed authority of the British (Wood 2009: 659—700).

The War of 1812 was part of the overall conflict of the Napoleonic Wars, though to the United States the reasons for going to war with Britain had nothing to do with Napoleon's conflict. The War of 1812 was in a way a second war for independence (Wood 2009: 669). Even after the 1783 Treaty of Paris, which saw the end of the American Revolution and recognition by the British government, and the Jay Treaty, which sought to secure American trade and neutrality, the British navy was still forcing American citizens to serve¹⁵ by capturing them in American

¹⁵ Impressment was a means for a navy to supplement casualties during a war, and the British were in constant need of sailors during the turn of the century due to their war with France.

ports and vessels. This meant that American citizens, through mistakes, misunderstandings and negligence, were forced to serve aboard British ships. Furthermore, as the British had control of major portions of the Atlantic throughout this time in history, they were able to easily manage the United States trade network and prevent them from operating truly independently, or at all, preventing any attempts by the United States to remain neutral. (Bemis 1934: 251—2; Wood 2009: 641—2; 662—7).

The United States entered the conflict with multiple war goals. Primarily they sought to force the British into compliance with the Treaty of Paris and acknowledge their rights as a sovereign nation, but other war goals included an end to the Native American threat that existed in their frontier: this meant that they needed to invade British Canada whose support for local natives threatened American expansion. Furthermore, smuggling from Canada had helped undermine attempts by the United States to fight the British economic restrictions, which may have made the target more appealing to Federal government.

An over-reliance upon American-born citizens of Canada, whom they had expected to aid them in the invasion due to their presumed loyalties, made it appear easier than it was. The first invasion of British Canada ended in failure, as did all subsequent attempts (Wood 2009: 680), though the war in general was met with initial successes, especially in the fight against the natives. Andrew Jackson (who would later become the 7th President of United States), succeeded in defeating the natives in the South (Wood 2009: 687—8). However, as the war went on and the British navy mobilized, and Canada stood firm against United States forces, it quickly turned into a war of attrition (Wood 2009: 688—90). In late 1814 peace was certain: the United States navy was kept in harbour by the British navy and the nation was bankrupt due to the lack of revenue from trade (Wood 2009: 692). The War ended in the restoration of the status quo in

December 1814 and was received in the United States in early 1815, but only after Andrew Jackson recorded a major victory over the British in January 1815 in New Orleans (Wood 2009: 695—6).

The peace treaty did not acknowledge any secessions of land, nor acknowledgements of neutrality or discontinuation of impressment of US citizens. It did not matter, however, as it proved to the world that the United States was able, and willing to defend its rights and its citizens from foreign transgressions. It did so, willing to break away from a tradition of non-involvement. To the American identity, the War of 1812 brought about a unity that had not been achieved in the previous decades, as there was no argument over fighting for another nation, but for their own. (Wood 2009; Grant 2012).

Moreover, the War of 1812 cannot be measured by the peace treaty, as the war ended due to difficulties on both sides to practically challenge the other. The British were engaged in a war with France, and could not afford the expense and troops to fight the Americans, who had no practical way of assaulting Britain itself. Therefore, it is more pertinent to look at the changes the war caused in the national character, and cultural works produced through it. The lyrics of the United States' national anthem *The Star-Spangled Banner*, for instance, originate from a poem written during the War of 1812 (Wood 2009: 691), and art depicted victories in the war, such as the *USS Constitution Battles HMS Guerriere* (1812) by Michel Felice Cornè (1752–1845). Furthermore, the United States gained a new national focus to protect trade and its liberties with this newly established navy. In 1815, it went to war with Algiers and the Barbary States to end their piracy of American ships and to free American (and other) prisoners (Wood 2009: 696—700), showing that United States was willing to extend its reach beyond its borders for the sake of security for its citizens and their rightful operations.

8.3.Commerce as a successful foreign policy

Section 6.3 discussed Washington's ideas of trade and how it was a factor in national behaviour toward another country, and a representation of a country's stance toward another. This section will discuss deeper the use of commercial strategies as a tool to incentivize a nation to follow a specific pathway in its domestic or foreign policy, through the management of sanctions, embargoes, or foreign aid, to see if there was wisdom in Washington's warnings that commerce should not be used to enforce or encroach upon a nation's sovereign policy.

When Hamilton in late 1793 released a congressional report establishing the significant barriers to trade in many ports, especially ones controlled by Britain, action was called for. Jefferson wished to sanction those countries preventing imports (mainly Britain), but Hamilton disagreed, finding the acts unnecessarily hostile and impractical due to the diversity and importance of British imports to national revenue and welfare. Any attempts to raise the issue were rebuffed by Washington and the Federalists until 1805, when the Jay Treaty, failing to be renegotiated, expired and the Republicans (now holding the presidency) were allowed to act. The Republicans introduced an embargo on all shipping in 1807, the intent being a peaceful coercion to end the impressment of American sailors and to enforce neutrality on all American shipping. This plan failed, and though it had little effect on the finances of the United States, it showed minimal success of such an approach, even to a nation that relied heavily on United States shipping while fighting a war. (Irwin & Sylla 2011: 112, 116; Wood 2009: 646—7).

Similar strategy of coercion was used by Britain during the world wars, in which they sought to disable Germany's ability to fight, causing catastrophic damage to the nation's finances and welfare (Berghoff, Logemann & Romer 2017; Startt 2017: 41—2). Mainly in the First World

War, Britain began a blockade that prevented United States' (neutral at this stage of the war) ships from delivering goods to German ports and those of other neutral nations through which it could be delivered to Germany (Startt 2017: 41). This pushed United States clearly out of its neutral stance, as its "arms trade could only benefit the Allies and was, therefore, in violation of the spirit of neutrality" (Startt 2017: 44). As such, it would suggest that Britain was able to successfully manipulate United States foreign policy toward a favourable direction through the blockade of Germany. While efforts to counteract this behaviour were taken by the United States, Germany's own efforts to prevent goods from aiding Britain caused opposition to rise within the United States against the Central Powers (Startt 2017: 33; 114). Therefore, it may not have been Britain's commercial strategy that successfully changed United States' position on Germany and the war, but merely increased the likelihood of conflict due to the American deaths caused by Germany, and United States' national character to protect its citizens from undue harm (as was discussed in section 8.2).

Finally, I would like to discuss Iran, which has been a scene for economic sanctions since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. United States strategy is to "cease supporting acts of terrorism and to limit Iran's strategic power in the Middle East" (Katzman 2021: 1). In the third millennia, sanctions have heavily focused on limiting Iran's nuclear program, but maintained efforts elsewhere. In 2015, Iran signed a treaty that limited their attempts to refine nuclear materials, lifting many of the sanctions while keeping in place sanctions against the importation of armaments, including components for missile development. This treaty was rescinded unilaterally by the United States in 2018 in attempts to renegotiate the treaty through applying pressure on the Iranian economic sector.

Katzman (2021: 50) notes that the global economic sanctions in place prior to 2015 were instrumental in achieving the terms of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). Through cooperation of the United States, European Union and their allies, Iran was willing to limit its nuclear program in exchange for lifting the sanctions on oil, precious metals and other major markets. After United States withdrawal from the treaty, the European Union did not reintroduce sanctions against Iran in the markets it had already lifted, in attempts to salvage the treaty. However, many private companies opted to limit or abandon the Iranian market due to pressure from the United States. (Katzman 2021: 43—4).

In the end, the sanctions have had little effect on Iran's behaviour. Prior to the JCPOA, Iran funded operations in the region and have continued to do so since. Their weapons development program has not seen a significant increase or a decrease within the timeframe, and at least since 2018, Iran has been successful in developing advancements in its nuclear and domestic weapon's development. Some unrest has evolved in Iran, however they appear to be unconnected to the United States' sanctions. They have neither shown a decrease in Iran's foreign involvement, as can be seen from their continued funding of regional forces, though there is a change in their focus now that the situation in Syria has calmed. Politically the environment within Iran has continued to oppose the United States and elections are estimated to support existing powers. (Katzman 2021: 50—3).

Part of the reason why the sanction may have failed could be that Iran did not have time to become dependent upon the global economic system between 2015—2018. Furthermore, it already possessed a robust marketplace that is able to sustain itself in lieu of foreign investment. As for its weapon development, it has not needed United States approval since the change in regime in late-70s, and the extensive weapons bans that have existed since the 90s. Therefore

domestic replication of weapons has had major support in the country's political environment as purchasing them became difficult elsewhere.

United States sanctions, then, have not seemingly had any effect in Iran's conduct. While it has had significant effect on Iran's market and economy, it has failed to generate an effect that would enforce United States' will over the country. While some may argue that European Union resistance to join these sanctions has led to their failure, looking at Katzman's (2021: 52—3) dissection of the economic effects shows that the levels have dropped to levels similar as prior to the JCPOA. This is most likely due to pressure on private businesses and countries more dependant upon United States foreign aid. As Milner, Rosendorff and Mansfield (2004) discuss, foreign aid as a means of foreign influencing can be more productive than outright denial of trade: if a nation is dependant upon another nation for aid, they are more easily converted to a secondary point of view. Applying this ideology to a successful operation, in which a foreign nation subverted hostile opinions from forming, this would appear to be the case. The Marshall Plan, which the United States started as a means of economic recovery for the war torn European states, successfully prevented multiple nations from falling into the sphere of communism (Grant 2012: 329).

In conclusion, while trade alone as a means of foreign influencing failed on multiple accounts to change the opinions present within a nation, it would appear that there is some merit in applying economic pressure through foreign aid. This would also abide by Washington's warnings that forceful behaviour or showing preference, as is often done in war, tends to lead to conflict, whereas investment on a nation, or "diffusing and diversifying by gentle streams of commerce" the opinion of a nation would appear to have better outcomes.

9. Conclusion

Throughout this thesis I have discussed aspects of the Farewell Address and how they reveal themselves throughout history. Much of the discussion revolved around the time of Washington's presidency to the end of the War of 1812, but some of the parallels and the events surrounding them are still unfolding. This only proves that the subjects discussed in this thesis are still pertinent today

Section 5.1 discussed the origins of the Farewell Address and the ideas presented by Washington, and whether they were truly his. Alexander Hamilton played a major part in the construction of the Address, but concluded that the words were Washington's own. This is eventually proven by the subtle changes that occur between Hamilton's draft and the published work, which also highlights the differences between the two characters: Hamilton possessed more radical views to those of Washington, whose ideas were more lenient of party opinion. The sections show that the Farewell Address contains a message that Washington approved of, conveying his ideas and policy and what the nation should be wary of in acting its force.

Party spirit, as Washington called it, is a means by which a partisan opinion is radicalized and their power enacted. This may take its form as revenge or discrimination, but also as a means of expressing their opinion on contested subjects. In the case of James Callender and the Sedition Act of 1798, party spirit was expressed as both of these, attacking opinions that were not shared by the governing party and proposed ideals that threatened the safety of the public. Party spirit is not inherently evil, however, nor definitive in nature, as was discussed in section 6.1. Party spirit can appear within a party itself, should it lack an opposition to argument against. This may lead to fracturing of a party from within through a similar process with which it radicalizes the two

sides. It is also a means by which majority opinion can be harnessed and altering opinions raised, which is an important aspect of the democratic process, though at times questionable when the opinions turn to falsehoods, as was discussed in relation to disinformation and censorship and where it may lead.

In regards to alliances and foreign affairs, Washington sought a neutral, non-committed approach. While he acknowledged that the United States could not hope to persist alone, he promoted commercial strategies over political ones when dealing with foreign nations. Attempts to stabilize the nation were his focus at the time and therefore the troubles of Europe less pertinent for the survival of the newly formed Republic. Thus is it not surprising that a pertinent voice within his Address was for national unity and the unification of the people, and the dismissal of their differences. The interpretation of Washington's Address as an isolationist policy would be accurate, but only as long as it was recognized to be in relation to his attempts to stabilize the nation and its peoples.

When discussing the interpretation of Washington's warnings, and how they reflect upon strategies used in commerce to influence others, it is evident that Washington's warnings should still resonate in the mind of the leader. In section 8.3, it was shown that using forceful strategies to bring about change within another nation was not as successful as more peaceful options. The discussion around Iran, especially, shows that a country will find it difficult to enact change, if they do not have leverage, or anything to offer to the nation. Meanwhile, World War I proved that, while a blockade may successfully starve the opponent of supplies, it is also likely to raise forceful opposition and thus fail as a peaceful measure. The Marshall Plan, meanwhile, proves that a peaceful change is possible through investment and effort, rather than force.

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