X. 02.401 Print on Acrylic 72.75x42.25" 1/2" bleed

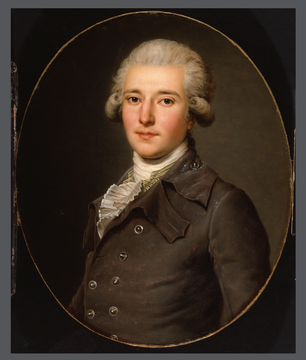
The Genet Affair

1793

French revolutionaries have beheaded their king and are now recruiting American ships to attack British merchantmen in the Atlantic. Should Washington uphold America's treaty with the French, even if it means fighting a war for which the new nation is not prepared?

In January 1793, French revolutionaries send King Louis XVI to the guillotine.

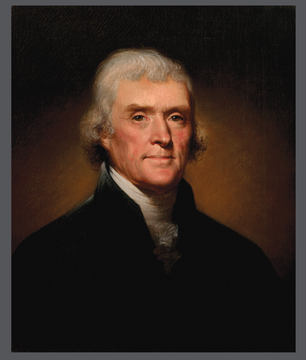
Execution of Louis XVI, Georg Heinrich Sieveking, 1793. Copperplate engraving.



Brash and energetic, Ambassador Edmond-Charles Genet is whipping up anti-British sentiments throughout the United States.

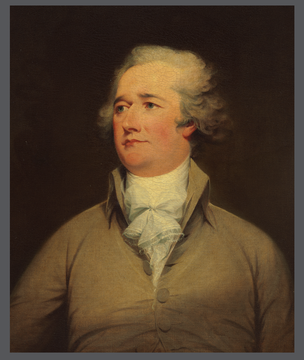
Edmond Charles Genet (1763–1834). Adolf Ulrich Wertmüller (1751–1811), 1784. Albany Institute of History & Art, Bequest of Nancy Fuller Genet, 1978.6.1

American ships and sailors recruited by Genet have begun preying on British merchant ships in and near American waters.



Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson believes that the French revolutionaries are following in America's footsteps and should be supported.

Official Presidential Portrait of Thomas Jefferson, Rembrandt Peale, 1800. The White House Historical Association



Secretary of Treasury Alexander Hamilton strongly supports Britain—our top trading partner.

Alexander Hamilton, John Trumbull, c. 1792. National Gallery of Art

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