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Essay #1

The founding of a nation takes upon themselves one of the greatest burdens that can be conceived by man, while issuance of avoidable war brings the deepest shame. George Washington had all the power in the new world and from his humble hands did he allow to slip, an action that would forever change the history of our nation. On the opposite side of the coin, Abraham Lincoln was enough of a despotic tyrant that, through terrible action, permitted the country to devolve into horrible war. I will elaborate on their respective actions of: the reasoning and design of the highest office in the nation, the actions that lead to the bloodiest conflict of our nation’s history, and the differences between the two despite sharing the same office.

George Washington was inaugurated on the 30th of April 1789 to the highest office in the land at the time and decided to, not only give up that power, but to help set up the rest of US history to help avoid someone potentially failing what he achieved. During the national convention it was recorded that, “While Washington held the belief that America should have a strong central government and a single executive leader, he did not allow his bias to sway the other delegates” showing his intention to avoid the trappings of the actions that were accustomed to the governments that they freed themselves from (RICHARD par4). This convention would lead to the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, whose contents was focused on the protection of the citizenry and states from the president and national government. This coincides with Washington’s decision on the title for the holder of the office to be the ‘president’ which at the time was a term of modesty. He also arranged the annual State of the Union address to keep the power of the president in check.

President Lincoln could be considered the worst villain in US history by the actions take prior to and during the bloodiest conflict in our history. Disproportionate taxation, under representation, and high levels of tariffs targeting the southern states were only some of the reasons that pushed those states into considering and finally committing to secession. This secession would be wrongfully identified as treason since it was defined as, “Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort” to mean action against the states, instead meaning it to be against his administration and the federal government (CONSTITUTION art 3 sec 3). He would accompany this line of thinking with his twice suspension of habeas corpus and through this imprisoned as many as 2,000 people considered to be political opponents or critics of his administration.

These two men held the office of the president and showed the content of their character with the actions that they took while in that office, wielding some of the greatest power in the world. George Washington’s administration was one of eschewing power that was all but thrust onto him that resulted in the creation of laws that we still hold high today. Abraham Lincoln’s administration in contrast was one of shame such as with his suspension of habeas corpus that needed to be repealed after each time it was enacted, since it was a stain on his administration that could not be allowed to remain. It is best said with, “The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government” that was meant of how the government was to be run by the 1st president, and what party for the 16th (LIBERTY pg287 par2).

In conclusion, both of these presidents lead administrations that shaped the US in vastly different way, but shaped the US nonetheless. While one constructed what we still used today, and the other created division and actions that were repealed soon after, they both show what the president can do when that power is used by different minds.

Essay #2

The battle for the continent of the new world between the colonies of two of the world’s superpowers at the time. The French Indian War, also known as the American theatre to the Seven Years’ War, was a conflict between the French and their Indian forces in America and the British colonies and their Indian forces also in America over the Ohio Company’s demand for recognition of land claims by the French. George Washington was present as a 21-year-old major who played a small part in the negotiations between the British and French as well as military asset.

The events that led up to the French Indian War arguably begins with the imperial domination efforts in 1754, with the British colonists of the area attempting to dislodge the French from forts they had constructed in Pennsylvania. George Washington was dispatched by the governor of the area to engage in diplomacy with the French soldiers in the fort that was being constructed on the lands that were being claimed at the time by the Ohio Company, as well as the Shawnees, Delawares, and Haudenosaunee. His mission failed, but he constructed the for known as Fort Necessity with two companies of soldiers afterwards to oppose any French activity in the area, which was short-lived since it was taken by a large French and Indian force soon afterwards.

Another series of events that led to the French Indian War was the alliances and fortifications that were built by the French. The French of the Louisiana area established close trading and military relations with the Native nations of the area, thus posing themselves as a real challenge for the British. This escalation would be mirrored by the British forming a rivalry as written, “…French and British traders competed to form Native alliances and control the trade in deerskins” (LIBERTY pg166). This naturally made each of the two nations more wary of one another, which caused them to take further action to secure themselves in case of any instigation of conflict, and the other would follow suit creating further escalation repeating endlessly.

The constant expeditions across the territory with no negotiations, but claims of the territory created additional divide. They were under orders to reaffirm the loyalty of certain Indian tribes to their respective nations, order them to make no deals with the opposing nation or tribes allied with them, and to vacate any of the opposing nations colonists. These acts of aggressive tactics can easily be seen as both the British and the French governments understanding that conflict was inevitable and trying to assert themselves as much and as quickly as possible before war finally broke out.

In conclusion, the French Indian War was led to through events of aggressive expansionism, conflicts with claims to territory, and rivalries in shared commerce of the region. George Washington at the time played a small but important role in negotiations and military actions for the colonial side of a major conflict. This conflict was by no means small as it was the first of the centuries imperial wars and, “It permanently altered the global balance of power” (LIBERTY pg167).

Citations

LIBERTY, *Give me Liberty!.* Eric Foner, Kathleen DuVal, Lisa McGirr. Seagull Seventh Edition, Vol 1: to 1877, W. W. Norton & Company

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