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APUSH

Period 4

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CH 6 Focus Qs#1,2; CH 7 Focus Qs 1, 6

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1. The Philadelphia Convention was divided from the start, into large and small states and north and south states. The first problem was of representation of states in the legislature. Should it be based on population? This was “resolved that the national legislature ought to consist of two branches,” (1) one based on population and the other with two representatives per state. This satisfied both the small and large states, giving each a legislature with greater power. The next issue was one of slavery and representation. The southern states wanted slaves, who were considered property, to be represented in the population, and when it was agreed that each slave would contribute as 3/5 a person to their state’s population. This was different from the idea that “[the assemble] should be in miniature an exact portrait of the people at large,” (2) but it was the only solution that the north and south states could agree upon. These two major deals, along with countless others, were required for the Constitution.

2. From the start of the US government, two political parties were already forming, the Federalists and the Republicans. The Federalists were supporters of a powerful national government and acted on this by taking advantage of implied powers in the Constitution. Hamilton, a leader in the party, believed that “implied powers are to be considered as delegated equally with express ones.” (3) Federalists consisted of the merchants and elite concentrated in the cites, and were the minority, despite controlling the government. The Republicans, on the other hand, believed in strictly following the Constitution. They objected to the Federalist’s national bank, saying “[a bank] have not… been delegated to the United States by the Constitution.” (4) This party represented the common farmers, and most of the US. They hoped for the US to remain agrarian and for cities to stay small. After years of Federalist power backed by George Washington, Jefferson and the Republicans gained power in the 1800 election and had the chance to carry out their vision.

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1. The debate over state’s rights versus national government has been going since before the Revolutionary War. With the creation of the Constitution and a powerful federal government, however, more questions arose about the power of states. As the US split into political parties, worries over “[the Union] controlling the effects of faction… the Union over the States composing it” (5). This idea of political factions controlling the Union and States led to worries of the States losing power. The power of the National government seemed to be in decline with the election of Thomas Jefferson, a staunch Republican. However, even he managed to increase the federal power, with the Louisiana Purchase. The Federalists worried that “it will be impossible to restrain our citizens from crossing the river… the very population that would otherwise occupy part of our present territory.”(6) These people were afraid of losing influence and of the diminishing power of states.

6. The War of 1812 was a highly controversial war. The war fever infecting the southern and western US led to the election of the War Hawks in Congress. These people wanted the Natives to move further west and the Spanish to leave Florida and thought war with the Britain could solve both problems. Tensions with European powers had been rising since the start of the Napoleonic Wars, and the complex economic situation for Americas, who had to choose. Both Britain and France threatened US merchant shipping rights with their trade laws. Americans had desire to “stand upon the ground which asserts the rights of … the seas.”(7) These factors were multiplied with the Chesapeake and the Leopard incident, when newspapers noted that they “have never… witnessed the spirit of the people… so great a degree of indignation.” (8) With the combination of these incidents, many of the American people were ready to retaliate against the British.

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Citations:

(1) Pierce Butler, Debates Within the Constitutional Convention

(2) 14A, John Adams, Creating a New Government, pg 110

(3) 18B, Alexander Hamilton, A National Bank Would Not Be Unconstitutional (1791), pg 133

(4) 18A, Thomas Jefferson, Problems of the New Nation(1791), pg 132

(5) 16B, James Madison, A Viable Republic Can Be Large and Diverse (1787), pg 124

(6) 21B, Samuel White, The Louisiana Purchase Should Be Opposed(1803), pg 158

(7) War of 1812 Documents, Aurora General Advertiser, 31 July 1809, pg 4

(8) War of 1812 Documents, Washington Federalist, The Chesapeake and the Leopard, 3 July 1807, pg 1