The Early Republic

By Joseph Ellis

1. What problems did Washington encounter as the First President of the US in regarding the ability to command the allegiance of the people he was supposed to represent?
2. According to the author, what was a prevailing dilemma that faced the new US government and would be a thorn in the side of the country’s relationship up to the Civil War? Why?
3. What was Congress’ approach to the problem of slavery? What invention eventually paved the way for slavery to become a necessity in the South? Why?
4. How did the Secretary of War Henry Knox propose to keep peace with the Natives? Why do you think this did not work out as intended?
5. What was Hamilton’s financial plan that was to put America on a firm economic setting internationally? How was it accepted? How did he get the plan passed?
6. What was the reaction by Jefferson and Madison to the new bank according to the author? Do you agree with him?
7. What was the main argument against the federalists that this author portrays? Did they have a point in your opinion?
8. Why did Jefferson and Madison call Washington’s actions in the Whiskey Rebellion despotic?
9. How did the Democratic-Republicans attack the Federalists and how did they portray themselves?
10. According to this Article, what was the main focus of the Kentucky and Virginia resolutions? What problems do you see from these resolutions?
11. What foreign policy decision caused a larger rift between Jefferson and Washington? Why?
12. Why was there a big debate over Jay’s Treaty?
13. What did the election of 1796 expose as a major problem that had to be fixed?
14. What did the way that the vote of 1796 foreshadow of events to come?
15. Would you have wanted to be John Adams as 2nd President? Why or why not?
16. What problems did Adams face? How did he try to solve them?
17. According to the author. What major mistakes did Adams make? Why did he make those decisions?
18. What was the biggest accomplishment of Jefferson winning the election of 1800? Explain
19. How does the author differ in Jefferson’s opinion that his election was the “Revolution of 1800?”