

“Vox Populi” versus the Patriot President: Benjamin Franklin Bache’s Philadelphia *Aurora* and John Adams (1797)

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The first decade of American life under the Constitution—the “Federalist Era” of the 1790’s, during which George Washington and John Adams began molding that unique institution, the American presidency—witnessed the eruption of severe conflict between our first political parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans.¹ As students of the history of American journalism during this period know, the press played a vital role in expounding issues and personalities of significance to the public. The most important opposition newspaper of the 1790’s, when animosity developed to President Washington and his Federalist “prime minister,” Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, was Benjamin Franklin Bache’s *Philadelphia General Advertiser*. Founded in October, 1790, this newspaper, better known by the title *Aurora* which it adopted in 1794, was the Democratic-Republican daily of greatest circulation, averaging some 1700 subscribers, at a time when most daily journals attracted only about five hundred.² The *Aurora* carried the most reliable transcribed reports of congressional debates, which were often reprinted by its competitors. Free copies circulated extensively in taverns and under the postal frank of Republican congressmen. Young Bache (1769-1798), Benjamin Franklin’s grandson, composed stirring editorial rhetoric and further proved his devotion to enlightened thought by printing the works of Paine, Condorcet, Joseph Priestley, “Citizen” Genet, and other radicals. Most scholars agree with Donald H. Stewart, the author of a massive study of Jeffersonian journalism, that after 1793, when Philip Freneau’s *National Gazette* went out of business, the *Aurora* “was in all likelihood the most influential newssheet in the country.”³ James Morton Smith calls Bache’s paper “the leading Republican journal,” and the dean of historians of American journalism, Frank L. Mott, dubs the *Aurora* “the chief Republican organ.”⁴

Although scholars recognize the *Aurora*’s importance, they tend to underrate Bache’s rational self-control as well as his concern for the stability of the infant American nation, instead portraying him as a fanatical ideologue, “embittered republican visionary,” “rabid partisan,” and the “most vitriolic” of the anti-Washington editors.⁵ Commenting on the *Aurora*’s abuse of Washington after he signed the unpopular, pro-British Jay Treaty in 1795, an expert on Bache invidiously concludes: “The attack was not chiefly an attempt to rally republican sentiment, it was a black campaign of despair and frustration, of defeat and revenge. For Bache, bitterness and contempt remained the main features of his politics right up to his premature death in the yellow fever epidemic of 1798.”⁶ He implies that Bache made few meaningful

contributions to America's republican political culture.

Even historians favorable to Bache have largely ignored or discounted his newspaper's high-minded, patriotic, and nonpartisan effort to rally Republican voters behind John Adams, whom he had until then opposed, after the unique presidential election of 1796, in which the lack of separate ballots for the two offices led Adams to win the presidency. Democratic-Republican standard-bearer Thomas Jefferson, who won the second highest number of electoral votes, 68 to Adam's 71, gained the vice-presidency, his rival's former post.⁷ This essay will examine the *Aurora's* view of Adams in the period between his election and his message to a special session of Congress on May 16, 1797, in which he gave the first indication of the new administration's policy toward the revolutionary French republic, a critical juncture in the burgeoning party conflict.

Though Bache's paper had been somewhat critical of Adam's "aristocratic" views during the elections of 1791 and 1796 and had denounced his *Discourses on Davila* (1790) during the controversy between "Publicola" (John Quincy Adams) and Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* in the summer of 1791, the *Aurora's* observations on Adams for six months after his presidential victory stressed his effort to uphold the Enlightenment ideal that good government rested on political man's free, uncoerced use of his independent reason.⁸ The *Aurora's* commentary on Adams during this brief truce in party warfare was also greatly influenced by the intellectual legacy of such eighteenth-century British "Country Party" writers as Viscount Bolingbroke, John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon, the first being editor of *The Craftsman* and the latter two of *Cato's Letters* (1721) and editors of the anti-monarchical newspaper, the *Independent Whig*. These "eighteenth-century Commonwealthmen," as historian Caroline Robbins calls them, represented a motley array of urban artisans and rural gentry. They had opposed Prime Minister Robert Walpole, who used bribes, pensions, and patronage to secure majorities in the House of Commons favorable to his policies. Abhorring "factions" and "parties" as dangerous to community well-being and social stability, they instead espoused the concept of a "Patriot King," an independent statesman who decided questions of national policy solely on the basis of morality, justice, and public welfare.⁹ As Bolingbroke eloquently phrased it in *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1738): "Instead of abetting the divisions of his people, he will endeavor to unite them, and to be himself the center of their union; instead of putting himself at the head of one party in order to govern his people, he will put himself at the head of his people in order to govern, or more properly to subdue, all parties."¹⁰ Bolingbroke's views were respected by many American leaders, including Jefferson and Adams.¹¹

At first, the *Aurora's* writers, without substantive confirming evidence, could only hope that Adams would reverse the Anglophile policies of the Washington administration. "An American" optimistically predicted: "I rather believe that he [Adams] will conquer his affection for Great Britain and his dislike to democratic republicanism, and seeing that the tranquility and prosperity of the country depend,

in a great degree upon preserving a good understanding with the French Republic, departing from the line of conduct which has hitherto stamp'd our executive administration British, he will pursue a line of conduct more worthy of a free people."¹² Believing that British depredations on American commerce, impressment of American seamen, and arrogance toward their former colonies constituted a potential danger to national sovereignty, Democratic-Republicans also thought that the French Revolution, despite its violence and instability, would increase the happiness and prosperity of the majority in the long run. To ensure the public good and the success of representative government, therefore, the *Aurora's* contributors suggested that Adams alter his predecessor's policies.

At the same time, the *Aurora* emphasized Jeffersonian admiration for the new president's talents, and insisted that they would cheerfully accept Adams's election. One writer, although admitting that he had favored Jefferson, considered Adams "a man of abilities, virtue and patriotism." The author believed that despite "speculative opinions" in his books in support of aristocracy, Adams's respect for public opinion and the Constitution would guide him: he would "make us a good republican President," acknowledge previous "errors," and join the "stream" in support of popular government, "in preference to persevering in error, thro' obstinacy."¹³ A wise and statesmanlike figure, Adams should be capable of using his reason to lead the new nation toward a freer, happier future.

At this juncture the newspaper's columns stressed the Enlightenment ethos that each man was competent to exercise his reason in making political decisions without coercion from any other. Deploring the existence of parties and factions, they regarded them as impediments to objectivity. When one joined a "faction," they warned, he became the unthinking tool of its leaders, and would inevitably, unwittingly lose his freedom of action at their hands. Bache went so far as to charge that those invidious institutions, monarchy and aristocracy, had evolved out of selfish factional groups. In his editorial column, "Philadelphia," he explained, "The instrument by which extensive mischiefs have in all ages been perpetuated, has been the principle of many men being reduced to mere machines in the hands of the few. Man, while he consults his own understanding, is the ornament of the universe," but "when he surrenders his reason, and becomes the partisan of implicit faith and implicit obedience, is the most mischievous of all animals."¹⁴ Republican writers exhorted members of both parties to stand behind a government of national unity. They proposed, "Let reason prescribe bounds to enthusiasm, and differences in opinion cease to be considered as proofs of base principles and sinister designs!"¹⁵

Unlike the independent, rational statesman Bache hoped Adams would personify, the party man, who feared to exert his will to depart from rules laid down for him by others, had a quality of servility that bordered on the inherently immoral: "Depravity would have gained little ground . . . if every man had been in the exercise of his independent judgment." "Ceasing to examine every proposition that

comes before him for the direction of his conduct," Bache warned, the partisan "is no longer the capable subject of moral instruction; he is, in the instant of submission, the blind instrument of every nefarious purpose of his principal."¹⁶ Not only was the party man immoral, Bache implied. His abnegation of his free will and reason made him, in a sense, a slave.

In light of this vehement denunciation of partisanship, it seemed logical for Bache's newspaper to follow the Commonwealthmen in concluding that the nation needed a president who, like Bolingbroke's "Patriot King," applied principles of reason to the conduct of government and played the role of an enlightened, independent statesman. Moreover, Adams's writings, notably his voluminous *Defence of the Constitution of Government of the United States* (1787-1788), had glorified the idea of an independent executive who stood above conflicts between the rich aristocracy and poor commoners, and mediated their disputes in accordance with the "public good." Bache could take solace from this perspective. The ideal of the president as a benign, paternalist figure still resonated strongly with the voters; it was one of the reasons for Washington's persisting popularity despite public disapproval of many of his policies. The *Aurora* could manipulate these "affections" to rally the support of the Democratic-Republican rank-and-file behind Adams, and exploit its new attitude toward "His Rotundity" as a token of their confidence. Though the *Aurora* had supported Jefferson during the election of 1796, it had largely avoided personal abuse of Adams. Its opposition primarily consisted of reprinting Tench Cole's "Federalist" articles, which had originally appeared in John Fenno's *Hamiltonian Gazette of the United States*, as well as a few essays from others newspapers that denounced Adams's monarchical sympathies.¹⁷

The first contested presidential campaign had been scurrilous, but Bache had confined himself primarily to praising Jefferson. His journal now sought to encourage Adams to exemplify disinterested "republican virtue" in the months following his election. Although Federalists derided Bache's abrupt volte-face, the shift was actually less extreme than they pretended. Since little of Bache's political correspondence for this period has survived, we must turn to the *Aurora's* editorials to gauge his intent.¹⁸

In February 1797, Bache's paper began to stress Adams' aloofness from the objectionable policies of Washington and Hamilton, especially the odious Jay's Treaty. Its pro-British clauses had caused the French Government to break off diplomatic relations and seize American shipping in the West Indies. The *Aurora* reported that "the federal or British party, and particularly Jay and Hamilton, are disappointed at the election of Mr. Adams as president." They had allegedly favored the relatively unknown candidate. Minister to Spain Thomas Pinckney, hoping to "confine Mr. Adams another four years to the insignificant and unimportant office" of vice president. Hamilton might be able to control Pinckney, but the independent-minded Adams was another matter. "A Correspondent" commended the Braintree states-

man for his minor role in devising Washington's programs, which had largely emanated from Hamilton. At the same time he upbraided the administration for excluding Adams from the cabinet's deliberations. "Whence has this arisen?" Bache inquired. "Was it from a belief that the Vice President wanted talents or integrity? Was it from an opinion, that he was not deserving of confidence?" It was because Adams opposed Hamilton's schemes, Bache replied to his rhetorical query.¹⁹

With such considerations in mind, Democratic-Republican praise for Adams escalated its intensity. When he bade farewell to the Senate in February, 1797, a formal expression of his gratitude for having served as its presiding officer and his hope that no "more permanent body" would be necessary to protect property rights, the *Aurora* reprinted a New York editorial that acclaimed the speech as one that would "be read with pleasure by the American Republicans." Adams might be the independent statesman Americans had been waiting for and had mistakenly thought Washington embodied:

The republicans are well satisfied with the election of Mr. Adams; they have reason to believe that he is a firm and upright patriot—that he will not commit his conscience to the keeping of any one but judge for himself and pursue the real good of his country—Nor have they any apprehension of his putting himself at the head of a party as his predecessor has done.

Jeffersonians sought to depict the new president as an independent statesman, the personification of Bolingbroke's "Patriot King," transformed into a republican figure. They predicted Adams would impartially appoint his former opponents to office and redress French grievances. He would be guided by his own judgment, and not be the pawn of "faction." Unlike Washington, who had appointed "the greatest Tories . . . to confidential places, merely because they were of his party," Adams would "distribute public offices among men of probity and talents, and not select those only who may approve of his administration." Republicans implied that Adams should follow Bolingbroke's advice and select men of diverse viewpoints, thereby maintaining "the balance of a great, if a well poised empire." His goal, like a Patriot King/President, should be "to espouse no party, but to govern like the common father of his people."²⁰

Persevering in the hope that Adams would strive for impartiality, Jeffersonians felt justified in concluding with the *Aurora*: "Upon the whole, America has a right to rejoice in the prospect she has of a wise and virtuous administration under two such distinguished patriots as Adams and Jefferson." Another Democratic-Republican newspaper, the *New York Journal*, concurred on Inauguration Day: "That his administration may be propitious to the spirit and intention of our late revolution, and to the true dignity, peace and happiness of the people of our empire, is the sincere wish of every good citizen."²¹ An optimistic Wilmington correspondent viewed Adams as a Patriot President who would reject pressures from special interests in his quest to implement the people's will. Unlike the haughty and majestic Washington, Adams

would guarantee the success of representing government, he predicted. With "the retirement of the President," he thought it could be "reasonably . . . expected, the Aristocrats will again gradually sink into their primitive nothingness;—and that the cause of Republicanism, under the administration of Adams will acquire important vigor." Adams's leadership in the Continental Congress and as minister abroad during the critical Revolution and Confederation epoch suggested that he would "disappoint the British faction, act like a genuine Republican and not prove himself an apostate to the Liberty and Independence of his country, by disgracing his conduct during our late glorious revolution."²² He would not kowtow to erstwhile "aristocrats."

The principles of revolutionary republicanism had taken root in America's French ally, and Bache hoped Adams would support them against the "High Federalists" Secretary of State Timothy Pickering and Secretary of the Treasury Oliver Wolcott, who followed Hamilton in their contempt for popular rule and amenability to a Franco-American war. Adams wanted peace with the French Republic, Bache insisted, and "his first solicitude will be to close the breach and restore harmony." Bache lent credence to rumors that Adams had opposed Jay's Treaty, and "had declared in presence of one of the Senators . . . that he could have made a better one ten years ago." Obviously, Adams had not fallen under "British influence," as Bache thought Washington regrettably had. Especially after the new President's friends had reportedly informed him of a Hamiltonian plot to thwart his election, he "takes care how he suffers himself to be led, as Mr. Washington had been, by this gentleman."²³ Bache believed Hamilton's alleged electoral conspiracy had served to strengthen Adams's political independence.

While reflecting his own effort to conciliate the Democratic-Republicans, Adams's inaugural address on March 4, 1797, evinced the new President's basic hostility toward an opposition party. Although professing "a love of virtuous men of all parties and denominations" and "an equal and impartial regard to the rights, interests, honor, and happiness of all the States to the Union, without preference or regard to a northern or southern, eastern or western position," he simultaneously denounced "the spirit of party . . . and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of destruction to elective governments." He firmly pledged his support to the Constitution and American republic. Denying that he had ever wished for a Senate or executive "more permanent" than those the Constitution had established, he affirmed his disdain for aristocracy and monarchy. Representative democracy was the best form of government for the United States, he assured his listeners, and the American people had proven its viability.²⁴

Despite Adams's praise of Washington and promise to support his policies, Bache enthusiastically gave the address his "most unreserved" approbation. His newspaper praised the tenor of its political sentiments. "It is so long since the citizens of America heard an acknowledgement on the part of their executive that all power was derived from the people, that they had almost forgot their government was a repre-

sentative one," the *Aurora* pointed out. Adams's speech also revealed his sympathy for states' rights, an integral part of the Jeffersonian ideology. "It has hitherto been too common to degrade the sovereignty of the several states, and to treat them as mere subordinate corporations," Bache pointed out, obviously alluding to Alexander Hamilton's philosophy of governmental centralization. But Adams defended constitutional government, a fact which would cause "anti-republicans to foam." New York City Republicans likewise predicted that Hamiltonians would be disappointed by Adams's moderate address, which they hailed as the dawn of a

NEW AERA. . . . How the speech of the new President will suit the appetites of the friends of the old administration, we shall not hastily enter upon—but we dare congratulate the friends of Republican Virtue, on the auspicious prospect which is presented before them by the patriotic speeches of John Adams, President, and Thomas Jefferson, Vice-President of the United States.²⁵

Encouraged by Adam's avowed impartiality toward the sections of the union and his promise to appoint "virtuous men" to federal posts, the *Aurora* thought such good will "reflects the highest honor on him . . . A striking contrast this to the example of his predecessor in office! May he persevere in it uninfluenced by the menaces or machinations of artful and designing men!"²⁶ By appointing his former opponents to government positions, Adams would show the sincerity of his pleas for an end to party conflict.²⁷

The *Aurora* continued to print praise of Adams's inaugural address in following weeks. One contributor noted that Adams's determination to support the Constitution "pure and inviolate," his desire for peace with France, support of states' rights, and willingness to adopt other aspects of the Republican creed "cannot fail to be completely satisfactory to the candid and dispassionate." Republicans thought that message marked the president's dissociation from his former allegiance to the Federalist party: "It is the address of a fellow citizen, who will not deign to become the President of a Party, but the President of the United States."²⁸

At the same time, Jeffersonians acclaimed their acquiescence in Adams's election, the first democratic presidential contest in the history of the world, as a landmark in the evolution of republicanism. The peaceful transfer of power after a bitterly fought campaign was "a spectacle grateful, in the highest degree, to every advocate of representative government," an event of international significance of which the Democratic-Republicans were proud. By concurring in their opponent's election, they had shown the world that peaceful democracy was "compatible with the strictest harmony and order." Nevertheless, Adams's conciliatory inaugural address had made such unity possible: "We find the strenuous opposition made to Mr. Adams, pending the election, melt into a peaceful acquiescence with the declared majority, and a manly confidence in his integrity and love of country, supersede the doubts and fears, which certain speculative opinions of his had given birth to."²⁹

Believing him independent of Washington's advisors and trusting his ability to

use his own reason to decide critical issues, Adams's "former opponents," the *Aurora* asserted, were "willing to weigh his measures with candor." If Adams relied on his own judgment, "A Correspondent" was confident that his administration would correct Washington's errors and restore peace and prosperity. As he put it: "It is universally admitted that Mr. Adams is a man of incorruptible integrity, and that the resources of his own mind are equal to the duties of his station; we may flatter ourselves, that his measures will be taken with prudence, that he will not become the head of a party, and that he will not be the tool of any man or set of men."³⁰

Like the ideal "Patriot King" of Bolingbroke's writings, Adams, Republicans hoped, would fulfill the role of a leader above partisanship. Quoting the inaugural address once again as evidence of the new President's high-minded virtue, impartiality, republicanism, and friendship for France, they exclaimed, "Let it be compared with any of his predecessor's, and they must hide their diminished heads in the comparison. How honorable are these sentiments! How characteristic of a patriot!" Adams was much to be preferred to Washington, whose "anathemas against particular descriptions of citizens" in his message condemning the Democratic Societies after, the Whiskey Rebellion, in November, 1794, still aroused Jeffersonian wrath. The *Aurora* praised Adams for intending to pursue a contrary policy, "to soothe the irritated public mind and to harmonize the different parties. May Heaven grant success to his labors, and his reward be in the fruition of his endeavors and the plaudits of his country."³¹ Republicans like Bache thus hoped for a coalition government in which they would have an equal voice with their opponents under Adams's benign, dispassionate supervision.

"A Correspondent" was confident that Adams would "extricate" the country peacefully from the controversy with the French Directory. He suggested that the President summon the Senate into special session, "either to co-operate in issuing a new commission, with extraordinary powers" for Charles C. Pinckney, whom the Washington Administration had dispatched as American minister to France at the close of 1796, "or appointing some other person as envoy extraordinary to the Republic." Rumors that the Directory, the French executive board, had summarily rejected Pinckney alarmed "A Correspondent," who feared war unless Adams sent a special delegation. "We have one hope left, and that lies in the prudence and ability of Mr. Adams," he wrote. "He declares himself the friend of France, and this friendship, together with the interests of our country, which he believes are reciprocal, will lead him by all means in his power to effect a reconciliation with our injured allies."³²

In popularized form, the conception of Adams that the *Aurora* and other Jeffersonian newspapers propagated during the brief hiatus in party warfare early in 1797 bore similarities to that of the idealized "founders of states" depicted in political theory. The image they sought to convey of an independent statesman who embodied Enlightenment ideals of rationality, the skills and wisdom of Plato's Philosopher King and Aristotle's *aristoi*, and the creative Legislator envisioned by Francis Bacon, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and in the Founding Fathers' own political

fantasies, was larger than life. He would surmount and unite all parties in the pursuit of the common good.³³

Less than a quarter-century earlier, the soon-to-be American revolutionaries who now revered representative democracy had protested their loyalty to George III's monarchy and disavowed the desire for an independent republic.³⁴ But in 1797, while upholding the ideal of the "Patriot President," the *Aurora's* writers made clear, by the content of their commentary, that they respected and would continue to support Adams only on the condition that he persevere as a "republican," a "citizen," and a "patriot" in the style of his Inaugural Address, and not betray any partiality for monarchy, or monarchies like the British.³⁵

At the same time, at least for public consumption, the Democratic-Republicans and their foremost editor, Bache, espoused a "republican" variant of an ostensibly undemocratic ideal, whose most prominent advocate, Viscount Bolingbroke, had once been a royalist.³⁶ Shrewdly, they appealed to public receptivity toward the vision of an impartial, reasonable moderator, in the process identifying their own party with that laudable type of leadership. As Benjamin Franklin had observed in a speech to the Constitutional Convention in June, 1787, there was "a natural Inclination in Mankind to kingly Government," because even republicans would "rather have one Tyrant than 500. It gives them more of the Appearance of Equality among Citizens." At least potentially, his grandson's readers sought in John Adams, the Jeffersonians' recent opponent, the fulfillment of a Patriot King's role. They trusted him to override the traumatic party conflict and establish national unity, resuscitating the virtue of the people and their wayward representatives.³⁷

"The people" constituted the other side of the equation of political power in the United States, and Bache esteemed this "revolutionary" facet of republicanism more than he did the vestiges of monarchy upheld in the presidential office. Thus on March 15, 1797, following news of Pinckney's rejection by the Directory, the *Aurora*, along with other Democratic-Republican newspapers, thought an appeal to the voters was imperative. Believing that France had appropriately dismissed Pinckney in retaliation for the unfair Jay Treaty, which aided her enemy England, the *Aurora* and the *New York Journal*, in identically worded articles, recommended the treaty's repeal and urged public protests to induce President Adams to adopt a peaceful policy:

Americans reflect!—It is time to express to the Federal Government, in respectful but firm language, your sentiments on the alarming state of your public affairs—let the President know there is nothing you wish for so much as peace and friendship with France—nothing you deprecate so much as war with that Republic, or an alliance offensive and defensive with Great Britain.—If the British treaty must be the price of this peace and friendship, in God's name let it go—it was founded in iniquity, it was carried by art and corruption, and there is no way of healing our wounded honor, or repairing our violated faith, but in rescinding the articles of that execrable contract, which have given just umbrage to our allies.³⁸

Here was a Democratic-Republican variant of the "Patriot President" theme: Although the President exercised his own reason, he must be mindful of the wishes of his constituents in making his final decision. Only the people themselves, on whom the government in a "representative democracy" rested, could save the nation from the perils of war, by an appeal to independent-minded, republican President Adams. Significantly, Bache argued that Adams, if he received public remonstrances, would yield to the popular will and make peace with the French. Bache thereby pointedly qualified his ideal of the independent statesman who obeyed only his own reason, to conform to the reality of American republicanism and the Democratic-Republican interest in the preservation of peace.³⁹

Following news of Pinckney's rejection, the Hamiltonian press, aware that a showdown was impending with the Democratic-Republicans over Adams's response, sought his support by deriding the sincerity of their protestations of loyalty and friendship for the new president.⁴⁰ Hard pressed to refute these charges, Jeffersonians emphasized the old friendship between Jefferson and Adams, the conciliation offered in the inaugural address, and the disreputable motives of his opponents, the execrable "British faction." In addition to Hamilton's backing of Thomas Pinckney for President, Adams's inaugural address had convinced Jeffersonians that he was an "independent republican . . . determined to be President of the United States, and not the chief of a faction." Far from mere whim, the new Jeffersonian adherence to Adams was the result of an evaluation of these recent, substantive events. A New York correspondent explained, "They then, and not until then, proffered him that just tribute of praise, which none but a zealot would have grudged."⁴¹ By assuming an independent posture, Adams had thwarted Hamiltonian plans to reduce him to an "automaton" and dictate policy toward France:

The *royal British faction* are extremely incensed at the Republicans for confiding in Mr. Adams, and for commending him for his inauguration speech. . . . They flattered themselves that he would become an automaton in their hands, and that he would respond to any sentiment and to any measure which they might think proper to dictate; but finding that Mr. Adams has a will and an understanding of his own, and that he is by no means disposed to become the pupil of Mr. Hamilton, who endeavored to make Mr. Pinckney supersede him, they are overwhelmed with disappointment and mortification.⁴²

Rather than be a contemptible, robot-like tool of party, President Adams was free from the manipulation or designs of others. His independence and devotion to the public good were the only hope for national salvation, Bache warned. Despite critical party divisions at home and French spoliations abroad, the *Aurora* was confident that Adams could overcome these difficulties through the exercise of energetic, virtuous leadership. "This is a moment that demands deliberate prudence and dispassionate energy," a contributor asserted. "The President expressed his intention to

submit all differences to negotiation; may success, happiness and tranquility yet await his measures."⁴³

The insistence by Bache and other Jeffersonians in the *Aurora* on Adams's virtuous republicanism was more than mere jockeying for political advantage; it was a consistent theme in the republican press of Philadelphia, Boston, and New York during the first weeks of his presidency, reflecting the prevailing ambivalence toward political parties. It was later abandoned only with reluctance.⁴⁴

Adams's frugal habits indicated he had not lost his republican virtue. He had dressed simply for his inauguration, and owned a two-horse carriage rather than a six-horse equipage like President Washington.⁴⁵ As the *Aurora*, speaking for the Jeffersonians, explained, Adams's inaugural address had convinced them to "consult him instead of his book"—*A Defense of the Constitutions of Government of the United States*, which Adams had written in 1786-1787, supporting an aristocratic branch of the legislature to check popular rule—"and they are sanguine from the cast of his sentiments, that republicanism will be countenanced, peace with our allies preserved, no hydra of a British faction nurtured, and that all men of virtue will be equal in his estimation, that he will be the president of the people, and not a party."⁴⁶ Should Adams adhere to this program, he would fulfill the role of the Patriot President, the ruler who consulted the wishes of the majority of his constituents ("The People"), while simultaneously accommodating conflicting interests with lofty decisions. He would rule through his example as well as his policies. As Bache had put it several years earlier, the virtuous leader revealed to the "moral eye" of his people a "living example" of "whatever is lovely and heroic in affections and conduct, or what is nearest to those pictures genuine copies of manners, that it may learn easily to separate between the fair and harmonious, the deformed and dissonant."⁴⁷ Like Bolingbroke's magnanimous figure, Adams, guided by the intention to promote the public good, would restore national harmony and end the threat to republican unity—or at least so Democratic-Republicans hoped.

When Adams called a special session of Congress, the first in the young nation's history, most observers guessed that Pinckney's recent dismissal was the reason. Bache and other editors had suggested that he ask Congress to meet in order to choose a special commission to negotiate with the Directory. They greeted his action enthusiastically, in contrast to skeptical Democratic-Republican leaders Jefferson and James Madison, who questioned the President's motives.⁴⁸ Praising Adams's "disposition to consult the wishes of the people" by convening Congress, Bache argued that the President thereby upheld the principles of representative government, a good omen for peace though distasteful to the Hamiltonian cabinet, which Bache assumed Adams had bypassed in favor of the popularly chosen legislature.⁴⁹ As one writer put it, the President thus "shews a profound judgment of his own, and that when he wishes for counsel in high matters he looks to a popular representation for it, rather than to an official council."⁵⁰ Jeffersonians in Boston and New York concurred,

depicting Adams as a man solicitous of the public will. Rather than consult the aristocratic elite Washington had chosen as his advisers—men who had not been confirmed by popular vote—he “is for obtaining the sentiments of ‘The People’ by their Representatives,” they asserted.⁵¹ Whether or not its remarks were sincere, the Democratic-Republican press wished to convey to its readers a belief that Adams intended to be a true representative of the people, the “democratic element” in the “mixed constitution” he propounded.⁵² Perhaps this gloss on Adams’s motives temporarily assuaged their fear of what Congress, with its small Federalist majority, might do when it convened.

As the date of the special session approached, Bache increased the tempo of his peace campaign. He continued to insist that an “envoy Extraordinary” would resolve differences with France and that “pacific measures will be pursued” by Adams. Still proclaiming the new president an “independent republican,” Bache emphasized Adams’s virtuous behavior. Renewing his praise of the “true dignity” of the inaugural ceremonies, he observed, “It is a circumstance very auspicious to our country, that this is the kind of dignity the President means to display.”⁵³ Unfortunately, Bache and other Jeffersonian editors based their exalted assessment of Adams as a latter-day Cato above party influence on the slender evidence of a few symbolic gestures. Their enthusiasm did not outlast the special session.

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When the special session began on May 15, 1797, Congress, responding to the crisis, assembled a quorum much more quickly than usual.⁵⁴ The first item of business, however, was not discussion of the perilous Franco-American situation but the election of the clerk of the House of Representatives, a post held since 1789 by John Beckley, a leading Democratic-Republican strategist who had been responsible for Jefferson’s victory in Pennsylvania in the recent election. The previously indifferent Federalists mobilized their forces to remove him, an indication of the increased party hostility since Pinckney’s rejection by the French government; he fell short of re-election by one vote on the first day of the session.⁵⁵

Bache took the lead in the Democratic-Republican counter-attack on this resurrection of factional spirit, at the same time revealing his own antipathy to party strife, in elaboration of the views he had expressed encouraging a nonpartisan administration under Adams. Castigating Federalist efforts against Beckley as factious malice against a man who had competently performed his job, notwithstanding his political views, Bache contended they had dismissed Beckley “because he acted like a free-man, according to his own conscience and the dictates of his own understanding; because he was not a tool of faction, but would think for himself. In this the treatment a faithful servant of the public is to receive because he has an opinion of his own?”⁵⁶ Like his recent praise of Adams, Bache’s comments on Beckley’s defeat sup-

ported the Enlightenment ideal of the rational, independent statesman who used his judgment free from influence or manipulation. According to the *Aurora*, Beckley, a capable government officer who had been removed by the Federalists (in an early instance of the "spoils system") out of partisan motives, upheld this ideal:

The dismissal of John Beckley from the office of clerk of the house of representatives is a specimen of party ranchor [sic] that has seldom been equaled even in the annals of federalism. Mr. Beckley has served in that capacity eight years, during which he has conducted himself with acknowledged fidelity and ability. The experience he has acquired is now lost to the public, thro' the party animosity of a few bustling individuals. A man's private opinions, it appears, are to be the test of his fitness to office.⁵⁷

It was vital to good government that a nation's citizens discern the general good based on their own honest perceptions, uncolored by the threats of "factions." Beckley's removal flagrantly violated this ethos—at least in the eyes of Bache's writers.

Much more important, Adams's speech to the special session dashed Bache's hopes for party reconciliation. Apparently in anticipation of war with France, the President advocated increased appropriations for national defense: funding to finish construction of three frigates; arming and convoying of merchant ships; a strengthened militia; additional cavalry and artillery units for the regular army; and creation of a provisional army to enter service in the event of war with France. Although Adams also proposed sending a special mission to renew negotiations, his recommendation for increased armaments dwarfed its significance.⁵⁸

Dumbfounded at the President's apparent reversal of his conciliatory policy toward the opposition, Bache denounced Adams's address (which he printed on May 17) as a "war speech" that made clear he had become the tool of Secretary of State Pickering and the warmongers in the cabinet: "From the temper which a great man shewed in his speech on Tuesday to a great assembly we are unavoidably led to believe that his men Timothy [Pickering] and Oliver [Wolcott] have fed him upon pepper-pot these three weeks past in order to bring his nerves to a proper anti gallian [sic] tone."⁵⁹ Instead of acting rationally and independently, Adams had permitted the hated cabinet to dominate him. He was no longer eligible to wear the Patriot President's mantle, but like George III in 1776, he had betrayed those he was obligated to serve, and taken counsel from evil ministers who put their selfish desire for power and "influence" above their country's welfare.⁶⁰

Alarmed, the *Aurora* voiced its apprehension that Adams intended war and only sought to deceive the French and American peoples by offering new negotiations. "With such a specimen of the disposition of our executive as the President's speech affords . . . the sending an envoy would be little better than a farce; and where would the puppet be found to act it?," Bache argued. The only hope for peace lay in con-

gressional rejection of Adams's bellicose proposals; should the legislative follow the President's lead, "the only measure adviseable is to arm; and in the meantime send a man to France (if one can be found fit for the dirty business) to amuse the French until we are in tolerable readiness to join the coalition" of powers aligned against the new republic.⁶¹ By ignoring Albion's "depredations" on American shipping, Adams had made it painfully clear that he was under British "influence."⁶²

Now viewing Adams's friendly Inauguration Day comments on France and the Democratic-Republicans as insincere, Bache recanted his earlier praise of the President. He regretted that the Jeffersonians had been duped into the belief that he would be nonpartisan and independent, when in fact the "President by three votes"—Adams's electoral majority in 1796—was actually committed to the "British party" which sought war:

Whatever may be said of the President by *three votes*, he has certainly one characteristic feature, that of *dissimulation*. From the time of his appointment to the present moment he has completely deceived the people, who were led by his inauguration speech and other circumstances to believe, that he was of *no party*, and that he was under no *extraneous influence*. Thanks to him, however, he has thrown aside the masque, and we must see him in *propria persona*.⁶³

The impetus behind Bache's efforts to conciliate Adams, the hope that the Democratic-Republicans could persuade him to adopt a friendly policy toward France, was now in large measure gone. Therefore Bache turned to the people for support, as in the past. His appeal was couched in the democratic language of a popular party, and pointed to his advocacy of the ideal of majority rule as well as more immediate considerations in his struggle to preserve peace.⁶⁴

Adams by no means represented the people, Bache asserted. Had the electors been chosen by popular vote in all of the states "the President by three votes" would surely have lost.⁶⁵ The new President was merely the pawn of the British and Tory factions who abhorred democracy, sought to eradicate the French Revolution, and "think themselves delegated by Heaven or Hell to govern, and that the American people are asses made by nature to bear any burdens, even an additional burden of fifty or an hundred millions of dollars to carry into effect the extravagant and barbarous schemes of a weak old man." Rather than a revered exemplar of patriotic independence and virtuous pursuit of the public good, Bache now despised Adams as a "weak old man" in his "dotage" who had allowed scheming advisers to seize the decision-making power. The acuteness of the *Aurora's* abuse reflected the intensity of the Jeffersonians' disappointment in Adams's failure to fulfill their expectations. At the same time, the newspaper responded to this unfortunate sequence of events by an appeal to the ideal of popular rule as well as the reality of the increased taxes required to fight France.⁶⁶

The *Aurora's* criticism of Adams did not abate after the announcement on May 31, 1797, of the appointment of a three-man special mission to France, including the

rejected minister Pinckney, Virginia Federalist legislator John Marshall, and Massachusetts judge Francis Dana. Since these men were committed Federalists and, Bache suspected, hostile to France, he interpreted Adams's action as merely one more step toward war. According to the *Aurora*, the President's choice of envoys demonstrated his insincerity; he was only going through the motions of conciliation to placate and deceive public opinion. "Can it be supposed that success will attend this negotiation when the persons who are nominated, will carry with them the temper of a British faction, instead of the temper and sensibility of the people of the United States?," one of its correspondents argued. "Disguise it as they will the disposition of the presidential party is for war, and if they can effect it by such means as will deceive the people, war we shall have."⁶⁷

Since the President had defaulted in his role of virtuous independent statesman, Bache now placed his reliance on Congress and the people for the preservation of peace. But the rupture between Adams and the Jeffersonians had its note of pathos. With bitterness and a hint of nostalgia, "A Correspondent" asserted, "If ever a man played the hypocrite for the purpose of the basest deception the President by three votes is the man—When he delivered his inauguration speech he pretended to be the friend of the French Republic and many who were ignorant of his real character supposed him sincere." He had proposed a peace commission, not because he sought to avert war, but because he knew that Congress would refuse to declare hostilities. The commissioners' Francophobia betrayed the President's motive—to lull the American people into believing his aim was conciliation, when in fact "WAR is their object." Though Adams plotted wickedly, "pretend[ing] to negotiate to deceive the people and to unite them against France afterwards by persuading them that every endeavour was made to accommodate," his devious "measures cannot deceive" the common sense of the American people.⁶⁸

By contrast with his constituents, the President had apparently lost his senses. "A Correspondent" argued that Adams's May 16 speech to Congress "manifests the temper of a man divested of his reason, and wholly under the dominion of his passions." It seemed only logical, therefore, for the American people to "come forward in a manly tone of remonstrance to induce Mr. Adams to resign the helm to safer hands," since he had "committed himself too far to retract" his belligerent conduct toward France and national self-interest had irreparably suffered as a result. Adams's metamorphosis in the *Aurora's* pages from a would-be Patriot President, who embodied reason and objectivity, to an irrational, demonic character could hardly have been more extreme.⁶⁹

* * *

The Philadelphia *Aurora's* abortive attempt (joined by other Democratic-Republican newspapers) at cooperation with Adams early in 1797 indicated that even so fierce a partisan as Benjamin Franklin Bache had not yet outgrown (at least in the-

ory) the legacy of Bolingbroke, the "Real" Whigs, and the classical republicans. Like these men, following a tradition that went back to Plato and Aristotle, the *Aurora* had stressed the need for independence and impartiality among the nation's political leadership. Bache's newspaper, during this epoch of the first presidential interregnum, seemed to agree with British thinkers like John Toland, a founder of the British Country Party at the beginning of the century, that party men had surrendered their freedom of thought and were "no longer voluntary agents, but so many Engines merely turned about by a mechanic motion."⁷⁰ Paradoxically, the reputedly fanatically partisan *Aurora* hesitated to accept the existence of two irreconcilable political parties until Adams's message to Congress blasted Democratic-Republican hopes.

Unfortunately, several historians who have studied this period have tended to adopt the view of Bache's scurrilous journalistic competitors and detractors, William Cobbett, John Fenno, and Noah Webster (the great lexicographer). Other scholars employ more temperate language, but they seem to follow Fenno, whose *Gazette of the United States* labeled Bache a "poor, silly, emaciated dupe of Franch villainy," whose loyalty to revolutionary France and the Jefferson party suggested that "he must be well paid for his infamous services." Fenno berated Bache's alleged "lady-like squeamishness," an appropriate trait for "this miserable tool of the most abandoned faction that ever disgraced a free country." Even when the *Aurora* praised the moderation of Adams's inaugural address, Fenno commented sullenly that "the only credit that any man can derive from that paper (which has been not inaptly styled the "Infernal Gazette") is to receive its abuse." Webster's New York paper, the *American Minerva*, similarly found Bache's sudden approval of Adams evidence of his "shameless, unblushing effrontery." But Webster predicted that "the bait is too thinly disguised to beguile that old and cautious statesman." "Peter Porcupine" (Cobbett) bluntly charged Bache with hypocrisy, reminding his readers that in the past, "there is no species of turpitude that this base hireling of France has not imputed to Mr. Adams." Jeffersonian fawning made clear that "there is nothing too barefaced, too brutally base, for the Democratic faction of America," he warned. In more restrained, less embittered tones, James Tagg, Bache's most thorough biographer, somewhat agrees with these Federalist editors. He implies that Bache's short-lived support for Adams was, at least in part, "calculated and cynical," "a sly desire to manipulate, insofar as he could, an impressionable, friendless, pliable President." Bernard Fäy, Bache's first major biographer, joins them in depicting Bache acting on Jefferson's orders in printing editorials favorable to Adams. However, those critics, past and present, who consider his editorial stance toward Adams in early 1797 merely an opportunistic strategy undertaken at the direction of his mentors Jefferson and Madison, ignore Madison's early lack of enthusiasm about the possibility of an Adams-Jefferson entente. Shortly after the election he had warned Jefferson that by being too friendly to the new President he would alienate his followers and compromise the integrity of the Democratic-Republican organization should the need arise for renewed opposition.⁷¹

Jefferson's diary for this period, the *Anas*, records his growing awareness that Adams was unprepared to abandon the High Federalists in the Cabinet. Only two days after the inauguration, Adams, who earlier had promised him that he would nominate Madison special envoy to Paris, curtly rejected this option. "He immediately said that, on consultation, some objections to that nomination had been raised which he had not contemplated; and we took leave; and he never after that said one word to me on the subject, or ever consulted me as to any measures of the government," Jefferson wrote. He had accurately conjectured that Adams's cabinet had forced him to abandon friendly overtures to the opposition. "The opinion I formed at the time on this transaction," he recalled later, "was, that Mr. Adams . . . thought, for a moment, to steer impartially between the parties; that Monday, the 6th of March, being the first time he had met his cabinet, on expressing ideas of this kind, he had been at once diverted from them, and returned to his former party views." Virginia Congressman John Dawson observed a few months later that the administration avoided appointing Jeffersonians to office. Moreover, Jefferson himself had told him that Adams "has not opened his lips to him on politicks [sic] since his appointment." Since Jefferson had spent the crucial weeks from March 20 to May 5 at home in Monticello and did not return to Philadelphia until May 21, there was little time for him to confer with or influence Bache or other Democratic-Republicans about Adams. His absence may have relieved Hamiltonians like South Carolina Congressman William L. Smith, who observed in April: "Jefferson lodged at Francis' Hotel (with Adams) while here, attended the [American] Philosophical Society of which he is President, made a dissertation about a Lion's claw, and soon after returned to Monticello."⁷² This may have been one of Jefferson's frequent retreats to the haven of domesticity in the face of political frustration, similar to his past acts in retiring from the governorship of Virginia in 1781 and as Secretary of State in 1793. Perhaps he had already abandoned thoughts of an entente with Adams.

Jefferson's and Madison's early misgivings about the feasibility of cooperation between the new President and their followers, ostensibly verified by Jefferson's experience, help explain their later anxiety and mistrust when Adams called a special session of Congress.⁷³ Since Bache, by contrast, praised Adams's action, it seems clear that the Democratic-Republican leaders were not in close contact with the Philadelphia editor, certainly not to the point of dictating editorial policy. Bache either was ignorant of, or chose to ignore, Adams's rebuff to Jefferson as early as the first week of the new administration, and his and Madison's pessimistic appraisal of Adams's motives in convening Congress. Bache's virulent Federalist critics failed to draw the logical conclusion: that he pursued an independent policy during the Adams administration's first months, impelled by hope for party accommodation and reconciliation, rather than taking on a mission to flatter the new President into docility at the urging of Jefferson and Madison.

In this connection, we should note that Bache supported the Constitution in 1787. His newspaper favored the Washington administration's policies, including

Hamilton's funding program, neutrality in the wars of the French Revolution, and the unpopular whiskey excise tax. In 1793, he joined in espousing the anti-aristocratic ethos fostered by the French Revolution. But even in 1794, the *Aurora* favored governmental suppression of the Whiskey Rebellion, not wavering in that position until the year's end. Bache printed both sides on the issue of Hamilton's fiscal policy as late as 1795. In contrast with Philip Freneau's *National Gazette*, which attacked Hamilton unsparingly by early 1792, Bache's *Aurora* showed forbearance in turning to opposition.⁷⁴

What Joseph J. Ellis says about American writers at the close of the eighteenth century seems to hold for Bache: "Like most men, as they moved one foot forward into the future, they left the other firmly planted in the past."⁷⁵ Forrest McDonald notes the congruence between presidents and kings and the former office's import in providing Americans with a symbol of stability and a transitional bridge from monarchy to republicanism after 1776: "Reverence toward the Crown was a deep-rooted habit in the English-speaking world, and love of the president as king-surrogate was a crucial social adhesive for the diffuse and pluralistic infant United States."⁷⁶

A member and leading spokesman of this "transitional" generation, Bache inherited its ideals. It is thus not difficult to see the reasoning behind his eager support for Adams or its evanescence. Unlike the apotheosized, aloof Washington or the humanistic, popular Jefferson, Adams stood between the poles of regal, Olympian distance and gracious familiarity with his constituents. He was a paradigmatic "Patriot President." However, his penchant for puritanical dourness, pompous self-pity, and brooding indignation, along with his advocacy of fixed "social orders" represented within a "balanced government," were incompatible with the ideals of the emerging democratic republic. Dedicated to inculcating populist republican principles and to promoting the majority will, it was inevitable that Bache and his newspaper would abandon a President who persisted in carrying out the wishes of what they perceived as a minority "faction" that disappointed the people's hopes for peace with France.⁷⁷

A combination of political necessity and ideological conviction forced Bache and the Democratic-Republicans to renounce Adams, the embodiment of the strong executive they had traditionally feared, and proclaim their confidence in the wisdom and integrity of the people. Rather than the austere reason and virtue of the Patriot President, independent of conspiratorial and factious influence, Bache now looked to the people's common sense to save the republic.⁷⁸

Historians have pointed out the persistence of "monarchical tendencies" in the thoughts of many Americans as late as the 1790's.⁷⁹ American affinity for monarchy, under which they had lived for nearly two centuries, was not easily left behind. In a subtle way, the split between Adams and the Jeffersonian *Aurora* in 1797 helped set the Democratic-Republican party, and thereby the United States, on the road from "monarchy"—belief in the benevolent, independent statesman or Patriot President, who they had hoped and predicted Adams would personify⁸⁰—to "democracy," the

notion that the majority of voters, the "People," were not merely, through their legislative deputies, the only legitimate policy-making authority, but by means of their own intuition or "common sense," could correctly decide vital national questions.⁸¹

Following the failure of the second mission to France and its aftermath (1797-1798) and the repressive Federalist Alien and Sedition laws, Bache's disillusionment became complete.⁸² It was only then, when the Sedition Act and other measures denied the opposition equal freedom to compete in the electoral arena and its legitimacy was threatened, that the Democratic-Republican party emerged as an organized political force with its own *ad hoc* committees in preparation for the elections to be held in 1800.

The failure of the Philadelphia *Aurora's* attempt at cooperation with Adams in 1797, as this study has tried to point out, was among the less salient factors involved in the ultimate renunciation of "monocratic" ideals by the American electorate, the eventual maturation of a two-party system by 1828, and the rise of a democratic party and a democratic ideology in the United States. Although in the twentieth century it has become customary for opposition newspapers to call a political truce in the first weeks of a new administration, there was nothing preordained about Bache's ill-fated courtship of Adams during the first presidential "honeymoon." Obviously Bache was setting journalistic precedents, not following them, in pursuing a friendly editorial policy toward the incoming administration in its first months. Persisting in its stance despite the mockery of Federalist editors like Fenno, Cobbett, and Webster, the *Aurora's* ephemeral encomia to Adams as the independent statesman or "Patriot President" (a phrase used by Clinton Rossiter and Richard Hofstadter) were silenced after the President turned his back on party accommodation by appointing a Federalist delegation to negotiate with the French.⁸³

Ironically, "the defeat of aristocratic values in American politics"⁸⁴—of which the *Aurora's* repudiation of Adams was symptomatic—was followed by the triumph of the principle of party loyalty that Bache had denounced so vehemently in 1797. Rather than strive to be "Presidents above Party," America's chief executives henceforth were to be judged by their zeal and success as party leaders. As a recent study puts it: "For the post-Jacksonian president, the obligation to be a party leader has in general been accepted not only dutifully but also enthusiastically."⁸⁵ But Benjamin Franklin Bache did not live long enough to observe these changes. He died in September, 1798, a victim of Federalist persecution for seditious libel under the common law during the "XYZ war fever" against France, and of Philadelphia's catastrophic yellow fever epidemic.⁸⁶

Notes

1. Marshall Smelser, "The Federalist Period as an Age of Passion," *American Quarterly*, 10 (Winter 1958): 391-419; John R. Howe, Jr., "Republican Thought and the Political Violence of the 1790's," *ibid.*, 19 (Summer 1967): 147-165.

2. Donald H. Stewart, *The Opposition Press of the Federalist Period* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1969), pp. 9-10, 17, 610-654n.; Clarence S. Brigham, *Journals and Journeymen* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1950), pp. 20-21; Norman V. Blantz, "Editors and Issues: The Party Press in Philadelphia, 1789-1801" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Pennsylvania State University, 1974), p. 245.

3. Stewart, *Opposition Press*, p. 611. John C. Miller notes: "By April 1798, Bache's *Aurora* had gained the distinction of being the leading Republican newspaper in the United States. To a great degree, it set the tone of the opposition press; Bache's caustic comments upon Federalist policies and his broadsides against Federalist leaders were reprinted throughout the country." *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1951), p. 60. Jeffery A. Smith, *Franklin and Bache: Envisioning the Enlightened Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), calls the *Aurora* "the nation's leading Republican newspaper" (pp. 109, 169); see also Willard G. Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), pp. 115-123. The best study of Bache, James Tagg, *Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 100-101, 125-127, 131, 185, discusses Bache's publishing ventures and printing of congressional debates. Gary B. Nash, "The American Clergy and the French Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 22 (July 1965): 402-403, notes that Bache sold 15,000 copies of Paine's *Age of Reason* in Philadelphia in 1796.

4. James M. Smith, *Freedom's Fetters: The Alien and Sedition Laws and American Civil Liberties* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1956), pp. 9, 189; Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History*, 3d ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1962), p. 127. An early biographer

remarks: "His paper set the note for all the Democratic press, and all the Democrats found their inspiration in his campaigns and his watchwords"; see Bernard Fäy, *The Two Franklins* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1933), p. 310. Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, p. 105, and his "Benjamin Franklin Bache and the Philadelphia Aurora" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1973), p. 325, agree that, after 1793, the *Aurora* "assumed undisputed leadership among Republican papers." See also Lance Banning, *The Jeffersonian Persuasion: Evolution of a Party Ideology* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1978), pp. 232-233.

5. These are the views respectively of Miller, *Crisis*, p. 26; James D. Tagg, "Benjamin Franklin Bache's Attack on George Washington," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* [PMHB] 100 (April 1976): 191-230; and *Bache and the Aurora*, esp. pp. 350-352, 401-403; Bleyer, *Main Currents*; and George H. Payne, *History of Journalism in the United States* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), pp. 170-171. Blantz, "Editors and Issues," p. 250, lukewarmly comments: Bache was "fiery, impetuous, ardent in his beliefs, and filled with nervous energy. Although [he was] not a skilled writer, these characteristics made him anathema to Federalists."

6. Tagg, "Bache's Attack on George Washington," *PMHB* 100 (April 1976): 230. Tagg's recent biography is less hostile, but still sharply critical. On the other hand, Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, praises Bache as a liberal, "enlightened" democrat and fighter for freedom of the press whose attacks on Washington showed he was "zealous enough to be more interested in social justice than in mercy for people in public life" (pp. 139-140).

7. Stewart, *Opposition Press*; Richard Hofstadter, *The Idea of a Party System: The Rise of Legitimate Opposition in the United States, 1780-1840* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969); Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*; Ralph Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), omit Bache's overtures. Good general accounts of the election of 1796 include: Manning J. Dauer, *The Adams Federalists* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1953), pp. 92-111; Stephen G. Kurtz, *The Presidency of John Adams: The*

Collapse of Federalism, 1795-1800 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1957), chaps. 6-9; Noble E. Cunningham, Jr., *The Jeffersonian Republicans: The Formation of Party Organization, 1789-1801* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), chap. 5. Bache's recent biographers, Smith (*Franklin and Bache*, pp. 150-151) and Tagg (*Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 297, 318-319), downplay the significance of Bache's conciliation. Fäy, *Two Franklins*, pp. 305-312, hints he was Jefferson's ploy.

8. Peter Gay, *The Enlightenment: The Science of Freedom* (New York: Knopf, 1969), pp. 27-32; Daniel Walker Howe, "The Political Psychology of *The Federalist*," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 44 (July 1987): 458-509; Morton White, *The Philosophy of the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), pp. 107-127; Drew R. McCoy, *The Last of the Fathers: James Madison and the Republican Legacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Jack P. Greene, *All Men Are Created Equal* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976); Garry Wills, *Cincinnatus: George Washington and the Enlightenment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984); Henry F. May, *The Enlightenment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), part one. Bache is viewed as an eighteenth-century libertarian ideologue in Jeffery A. Smith, "The Enlightenment Education of Benjamin Franklin Bache," *PMHB* 112 (Oct. 1988): 483-501; and James Tagg, "The Limits of Republicanism: The Reverend Charles Nisbet, Benjamin Franklin Bache, and the French Revolution," *ibid.*, 503-543. For the Philadelphia *Aurora's* earlier views of Adams, see Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, pp. 149-150, 154; Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 133, 158, 160, 163, 222, 304.

9. See Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1968); Caroline Robbins, *The Eighteenth-Century Commonwealthman* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1959); David L. Jacobson, ed., *The English Libertarian Heritage: From the Writings of John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1965); Bernard Bailyn, *Origins of American Politics* (New York: Knopf, 1968), pp. 36-38, 125-131;

J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton University Press, 1975), pp. 66, 76-77, 484-485. Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, applies the "Court-Country" analogy to the conflict between Federalists and Democratic-Republicans in the 1790s.

10. *Works of Lord Bolingbroke*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1841), 2: 402. The ideal of personal independence and political autonomy is discussed in its manifestation in eighteenth-century Anglo-American anti-party thought and practice in many works, among them Richard L. Bushman, "'This New Man': Dependence and Independence, 1776," in Bushman et al., eds., *Uprooted Americans: Essays to Honor Oscar Handlin* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), pp. 79-96; J.G.A. Pocock, "Civic Humanism and its Role in Anglo-American Thought," in Pocock, *Politics, Language, and Time* (New York: Antheneum, 1971), pp. 80-103; *idem.*, *Machiavellian Moment*, pp. 515-516; Peter Karsten, *Patriot Heroes in England and America: Political Symbolism and Changing Values Over Three Centuries* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978); W. Paul Adams, "Republicanism in Political Rhetoric Before 1776," *Political Science Quarterly* 85 (Sept. 1970): 398-404; Richard Buel, Jr., "Democracy and the American Revolution: A Frame of Reference," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 21 (April 1964): 165-190; Caroline Robbins, "'Discordant Parties': A Study of the Acceptance of Party Among Englishmen," *Political Science Quarterly*, 73 (Dec. 1958): 505-529; and Harvey C. Mansfield, Jr., *Statesmanship and Party Government: A Study of Burke and Bolingbroke* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), chaps. 4-5. Book-length studies of this theme in eighteenth-century American politics include Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*; Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*; and Daniel Sisson *The American Revolution of 1800* (New York: Knopf, 1974), esp. pp. 23-69.

11. For *The Idea of a Patriot King's* influence, see Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, 13-23; Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 57-116 and *passim*; and William D. Liddle, "'A Patriot King, or None': Lord Bolingbroke and the American

Renunciation of George III," *Journal of American History*, 65 (March 1979): 951-970. Bolingbroke's influence on Adams and Jefferson was earlier noted in H. Trevor Colbourn, *The Lamp of Experience: Whig History and the Intellectual Origins of the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1965), pp. 85-90, 159, 173, 212, 217; Kramnick, *Bolingbroke*, p. 262; Felix Gilbert, *To the Farewell Address* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961), p. 35.

12. "An American," Philadelphia *Aurora*, Jan. 9, 1797.

13. "Extract of a Letter from a young gentleman in Virginia, to another in this city, 11th Jan. 1797," Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 3, 1797.

14. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 24, 1797.

15. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 6, 1797, reprinted from (Phila.) *Independent Gazetteer*, also appeared in the (Richmond) Virginia *Argus*, Feb. 14, and the *Federalist* (Fayetteville, N.C.) *Minerva*, Feb. 18, 1797, attesting the prevalence of conciliatory impulses at this juncture in party conflict.

16. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 24, 1797.

17. For the appeal of Washington's patriarchal image, see: Wills, *Cincinnatus*, pp. 27-35; Lawrence J. Friedman, *Inventors of the Promised Land* (New York: Knopf, 1975), pp. 44-78; Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth: Familial Ideology and the Beginnings of the American Republic* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 195-198; Robert P. Hay, "George Washington: American Moses," *American Quarterly*, 21 (Winter 1969), 780-791; Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The National Experience* (New York: Random House, 1965), pp. 337-356; Bernard Mayo, *Myths and Men: Patrick Henry, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Harper, 1963), pp. 37-60; Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution Against Patriarchal Authority, 1775-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1982), pp. 197-226; and Robert Norton Smith, *Patriarch: George Washington and the New American Nation* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1993). On Adams as "his Rotundity," see Philadelphia *Aurora*, Nov. 4, 1796 ("A Pleasant Anecdote"). An example of a moderate essay that originally appeared in the *Aurora* is "Dialogue between an Aristocrat and a

Republican," Nov. 12, 1796. Jacob E. Cooke, *Tench Coxe and the Early Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1978), 286-292, 531, and Dauer, *Adams Federalists*, 99-100, discuss "The Federalist." For Federalist skepticism toward Bache's apparent shift on Adams, see "Bache's Bow Wow," in *Porcupine's Gazette*, May 18, 1797, and the annotation to *Porcupine's Gazette*, March 14, 1797, as reprinted in Cobbett, ed., *Porcupine's Works*, 12 vols. (London: Cobbett & Morgan, 1801), 5:66-69. See also the following letters of Federalist leaders who doubted the sincerity of Bache's and other Jeffersonian Republicans' expressions of support for Adams: Robert Troup to Rufus King, Jan. 28, 1797, in Charles R. King, ed., *The Life and Correspondence of Rufus King*, 6 vols. (New York: Putnam, 1894-1900), 2: 135, and Theodore Sedgwick to King, March 12, 1797, *ibid.*, 156-157; Chauncey Goodrich to Oliver Wolcott, Jan. 9, 1797, in George Gibbs, ed., *Memoirs of the Administrations of Washington and John Adams*, 2 vols. (New York: privately printed, 1846), 1: 417, and Oliver Wolcott, Sr., to Oliver Wolcott, Jr., March 20, 1797, *ibid.*, 476; Alexander Hamilton to Rufus King, Feb. 15, 1797, and William L. Smith to King, April 3, 1797, both in King, ed., *Correspondence*, 2: 148, 157.

18. Good accounts of the *Aurora's* campaign for Jefferson in the presidential election of 1796, though they portray its stance as more hostile to Adams than I do, include: Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 290-295; Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, pp. 149-150, 154; Harry M. Tinkcom, *The Republicans and Federalists in Pennsylvania, 1790-1801: A Study in National Stimulus and Local Response* (Harrisburg, Pa.: Pennsylvania State Historical and Museum Commission, 1950), pp. 165-173; and Fäy, *Two Franklins*, pp. 299-304.

19. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 6, 1797; "A Correspondent," in Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 13, 1797.

20. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 22, 1797; Adams's farewell address to the Senate, Feb. 15, 1797, in Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Works of John Adams*, 10 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1850-1856), 8: 523-527. Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King* (London, 1783), p. 140, quoted in Harold Hellenbrand, *The Unfinished Revolution: Education and Politics in*

the Thought of Thomas Jefferson (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1990), p. 73.

21. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 22, 1797; New York *Journal*, March 4, 1797.

22. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 3, 1797 ("Communication," Wilmington, March 1, 1797).

23. Philadelphia *Aurora*, Feb. 22, 1797 (reprinted from New York *Argus*, Feb. 18, 1797). For public opinion about Washington at this time, see Simon P. Newman, "Principles or Men: George Washington and the Political Culture of National Leadership, 1776-1801," *Journal of the Early Republic* 12 (Winter 1992): 477-507.

24. Adams, ed., *Works*, 9: 107-108.

25. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 10, 1797, quoting the New York *Argus*, "Remarks on the President's Speech," which was also printed in the New York *Journal* (both owned by Thomas Greenleaf), March 8, 1797. The Boston *Independent Chronicle*, March 16 and 20, 1797, also published this popular editorial. The indented quote on the "NEW AERA" is from New York *Journal*, March 8, 1797.

26. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 14, 1797 ("From a Correspondent"). Despite their divergent views on the Jeffersonians' ideology, historians Lance Banning and Joyce Appleby agree that they zealously insisted on the average citizen's duty and right to participate in government through officeholding and membership in voluntary associations and "democratic societies." Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York: University Press, 1984), esp. pp. 53-84, 104; Banning, "Jeffersonian Ideology Revisited: Liberal and Classical Ideas in the New American Republic," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 43 (Jan. 1986): 18-19. Carl Prince has shown that few Democratic-Republicans were appointed to office either by Washington or Adams. Carl Prince, *The Federalists and the Origins of the U.S. Civil Service* (New York: University Press, 1977).

27. On the similarity between this aspect of Jeffersonian rhetoric and the views of Bolingbroke, who recommended that the "Patriot King" appoint nonpartisan "men of virtue and ability," see Mansfield, *Statesmanship and Party Government*, who argues that, in advocating careers open to talents, Bolingbroke was

the prophet of "professionalism and bureaucracy in politics" (p. 68).

28. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 11, 1797 ("New-York, March 8").

29. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 14, 1797 ("A Brief History of the Late Election of Electors for the State of Pennsylvania. Receipt of Returns").

30. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 14, 1797 ("From a Correspondent").

31. *Ibid.*

32. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 14, 1797 ("From a Correspondent"). For early predictions of Pinckney's rejection, see *Aurora*, Jan. 27, and New York *Journal*, Jan. 28, 1797, and Senator Henry Tazewell to Thomas Jefferson, Feb. 1, 1797, Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress.

33. Douglass Adair, "Fame and the Founding Fathers," in H. Trevor Colbourn, ed., *Fame and the Founding Fathers: Essays by Douglass Adair* (New York: Norton, 1974), pp. 3-26; Gerald W. Stourzh, *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (Stanford University Press, 1970), pp. 97-106, 171-189, 201-205; Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 36, 38, 112, 180, 195. Bache, following Bolingbroke, believed in the power of "living examples" to inspire "the supreme sense . . . of virtue." Philadelphia *General Advertiser*, May 17, 1791, cited in Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, p. 122.

34. Louise B. Dunbar, *A Study of "Monarchical Tendencies" in the United States from 1776 to 1801* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1922), pp. 10-11; Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution* (New York: Knopf, 1972), pp. 288-295; idem., "The Beginnings of American Republicanism, 1765-1776," in Library of Congress Symposium on the American Revolution, *Development of a Revolutionary Mentality* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1972), pp. 99-104; Kenneth S. Lynn, *A Divided People* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1977); Winthrop D. Jordan, "Familial Politics: Thomas Paine and the Killing of the King, 1776," *Journal of American History* 60 (Sept. 1973): 294-308; Peter C. Hoffer, *Revolution and Regeneration: Life Cycle and the Historical Vision of the Generation of 1776* (Athens, Ga.: University of Georgia Press, 1983), pp. 33, 141n.; Edwin G. Burrows and Michael Wallace, "The American Revolution: The Ideology and Psychology of National

Liberation," *Perspectives in American History* 6 (1972): 167-306.

35. Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 57-66, 108-113. Ketcham, p. 113, goes so far as to argue that "the thrust of Jefferson's presidency" was "somehow to republicanize the patriot king." This was true to some extent of each of the first four presidents, who believed that "possession of virtue by the ruler was the cardinal ingredient of good government," and "the principle of consent itself could be justified only insofar as it sustained that *summum bonum*." *Ibid.*, p. 117. See also Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, pp. 18-21; Liddle, "A Patriot King or None," 959; White, *Philosophy of the American Revolution* pp. 97-141; J.G.A. Pocock, "The Classical Theory of Deference," *American Historical Review* 81 (June 1976): 516-523; and Greene, *Created Equal*, pp. 30-32.

36. Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and his Circle*, pp. 30-36, 153-169, 209-219, 233, 245; Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*, pp. 485-486; Pat Rogers, "Swift and Bolingbroke on Faction," *Journal of British Studies* 9 (May 1970): 71-101. Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party, 1714-1760* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 96-98; and H. T. Dickinson, *Bolingbroke* (London: Constable, 1970), pp. 259-266, show the complex nature and "republican" aspects of Bolingbroke's thought.

37. Benjamin Franklin's Speech in the Constitutional Convention on Salaries, June 2, 1787, in Albert H. Smyth, ed., *Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, 10 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1905-1907), 9: 593, quoted in Michael Lienesch, *New Order of the Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), p. 78. Bache was apparently alarmed by what he perceived as the decline of both public and private virtue, especially in the towns, and the people's obsession with luxury and material possessions. See his pamphlet, *Remarks Occasioned By the Late Conduct of George Washington as President of the United States* (Philadelphia: Bache, 1797), pp. 83-84. James Roger Sharp, *American Politics in the Early Republic: The New Nation in Crisis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), emphasizes the pervasive fear of disunion and the twin evils of anarchy and monarchy among the political elite.

38. Philadelphia *Aurora* and *New York Journal*, "Communication," March 15, 1797. On Bache's praise for popular representative government, see Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 138-142, 205-231, 248, 262-263, 300, 375, 401-403. After the American Revolution discredited monarchy and aristocracy, political leaders concluded that "the only resort left for investing government with virtue was to find it, or train it and bring it forth, in the mass of the people." Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, p. 78. Democratic-Republican editors apparently shared this view. On Pinckney's impasse as a factor in the renewal of partisan conflict, see Richard Buel, Jr., *Securing the Revolution: Ideology in American Politics, 1789-1815* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1972), pp. 141-144; and Lisle A. Rose, *Prologue to Democracy: The Federalists in the South, 1789-1800* (Lexington, Ky.: University Press of Kentucky, 1968), pp. 142-143.

39. On the evolution of representative democracy, see Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969); J. R. Pole, *Political Representation in England and the Origins of the American Republic* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1966); Edmund S. Morgan, "Government by Fiction: The Idea of Representation," *Yale Review* 72 (Spring 1983): 321-339; idem., *Inventing the People* (New York: Norton, 1988).

40. See "Plain Truth," which appeared in the Boston *Columbian Centinel*, April 8, and the Philadelphia *Gazette of the United States*, April 18, 1797; New York *Herald*, March 15 and April 22, 1797 ("Extract of a Letter from Virginia"); *Porcupine's Gazette*, March 14, March 17 ("RUSTICUS"), and April 18, 1797 ("Extract of a letter from a gentleman in Georgia, to his friend in this city, dated March 1, 1797"), all appeared in Cobbett, *Porcupine's Works*, 5: 66-69, 96-98, 269.

41. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 16, 1797 ("New York, March 14").

42. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 18, 1797. The *Aurora* rejoiced at the failure of Hamilton's alleged electoral maneuvers against Adams: "In spite of every vile and detestable artifice the voice of the people was fully declared, and neither Mr. Adams nor Mr. Jefferson was tricked

out of their election" (March 20, 1797).

43. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 17, 1797.

44. See, e.g., *New York Journal*, March 1, 4, 8, 11, 15, 22; April 5, 8, 12, 15, 19; May 3, 1797; and Boston *Independent Chronicle*, March 6, 16, 20; April 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 1797. On the theoretical antipathy to political parties and the rudimentary state of party development in the 1790's, see, in addition to the works already cited, Ronald P. Formisano, "Deferential-Participant Politics: The Early Republic's Political Culture, 1789-1840," *American Political Science Review* 68 (June 1974): 473-487; idem., "Federalists and Republicans: Parties, Yes: System, No," in Paul Kleppner et al, *The Evolution of American Electoral Systems* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1981), pp. 33-76; Buel, *Securing the Revolution*, pp. 4-7.

45. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 20, 1797.

46. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 20, 1797.

47. Ketcham argues that the ideal of the patriot leader independent of selfish factions appealed to traditional family- and community- oriented values of the great number of Americans appalled by the burgeoning philosophy of profit-oriented individualism. Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 185-187. Philadelphia *General Advertiser*, May 17, 1791. For Bolingbroke's similar view of the importance of virtuous example, see Kramnick, *Bolingbroke*, pp. 163-169. On royalty's decline, see Richard L. Bushman, *King and People in Provincial Massachusetts* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985).

48. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 27, 1797; *New York Journal*, April 1, 1797. For Jefferson's and Madison's reactions, see note 73 above.

49. Philadelphia *Aurora*, March 30, 1797, reprinted in the *New York Journal*, April 1, 1797.

50. "A CUSTOMER," in *New York Argus*, April 19, 1797, reprinted in Philadelphia *Aurora*, April 24, 1797.

51. Boston *Independent Chronicle*, April 3, and *New York Journal*, April 12, 1797.

52. Wood, *Creation of the American Republic*, pp. 198, 203, 206-213, 574-587, discusses the "mixed" constitution. Provocative examinations of Adams's ideas may be found in Dauer, *Adams Federalists*, pp. 35-54; John R. Howe, Jr., *The Changing Political Thought of John Adams* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966);

and Joyce Appleby, "The New Republican Synthesis and the Changing Political Ideas of John Adams," *American Quarterly* 25 (Dec. 1973): 578-595.

53. Philadelphia *Aurora*, April 21 and 28, 1797. These pieces were reprinted in the *New York Argus*, April 24, the *New York Journal*, April 24 and May 3, and the Boston *Independent Chronicle*, May 8, 1797.

54. Dauer, *Adams Federalists*, p. 128.

55. Kurtz, *Presidency of John Adams*, p. 231; Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 16, 18, 1797; *New York Argus*, May 18, 1797. Beckley's dismissal is covered in detail in Edmund and Dorothy S. Berkeley, *John Beckley: Zealous Partisan in a Nation Divided* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1973), pp. 155-158.

56. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 18, 1797.

57. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 16, 1797. The *New York Argus* reprinted this article on May 18, 1797.

58. Adams's special message to Congress is in James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, 20 vols. (New York: Bureau of National Literature, 1897-1916), 1: 223-228. See also Dauer, *Adams Federalists*, p. 129.

59. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 18, 19, 1797.

60. The most perceptive studies of the decline of the colonists' veneration of George III as a Patriot ruler in the years before the Revolution, which bears a notable affinity to Bache's deteriorating confidence in Adams, include: Bushman, *King and People*, pp. 212-235; Bernard Bailyn, *Ideological Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 122-130; Liddle, "Patriot King or None," 951-970; and Jerrilyn G. Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774-1776* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987).

61. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 19, 1797.

62. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 20, 1797.

63. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 19, 1797. On the fear of deceitful rulers and its persistence in American political thought, see Gordon S. Wood, "Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style: Causality and Deceit in the Eighteenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 39 (July 1982): 401-441, and James H. Hutson, "The Origins of 'The Paranoid Style in

American Politics': Public Jealousy from the Age of Walpole to the Age of Jackson," in David D. Hall et al., eds., *Saints and Revolutionaries: Essays on Early American History* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1984), pp. 332-372.

64. Gordon S. Wood, "The Democratization of Mind in the American Revolution," in Library of Congress Symposium on the American Revolution, *Leadership in the American Revolution* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress), pp. 82-83, and idem., "Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style": 423, 438-441.

65. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 22, 1797 ("Communications"). For earlier Democratic-Republican claims that Jefferson was the more popular candidate, see the *Aurora*, March 3, 10, and 14, 1797; and *New York Journal*, March 15, 1797, which proposed direct election of that state's presidential electors rather than the existing mode of selection by the state legislature.

66. Philadelphia *Aurora*, May 22, 1797. For a possible source of the *Aurora's* metaphor, see Douglass Adair, "Rumbold's Dying Speech, 1685, and Jefferson's Last Words on Democracy, 1826," in Colbourn, ed., *Fame and the Founding Fathers*, pp. 92-101.

67. Philadelphia *Aurora*, June 2, 1797 ("Communication"). The *Aurora* carried a report of the nominations on June 1. After Dana declined to serve, Adams, June 20, nominated his friend Elbridge Gerry, then considered politically neutral, to the commission. The Senate confirmed his appointment June 22, 1797. Harold C. Syrett et al., eds., *The Papers of Alexander Hamilton*, 27 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961-1987), 21: 341n. The definition of "corruption" given above is from Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, p. 31. Cf. Richard L. Bushman, "Corruption and Power in Provincial America," in *Development of a Revolutionary Mentality*, pp. 63-91; and William D. Liddle, "Virtue and Liberty: An Inquiry into the Role of the Agrarian Myth in the Rhetoric of the American Revolutionary Era," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 77 (Winter 1978): 15-38.

68. Philadelphia *Aurora*, June 6, 1797 ("From a Correspondent"); Wood, "Conspiracy and the Paranoid Style": 423-429.

69. "A Correspondent," *Aurora*, June 6, 1797; *Aurora*, June 19, 1797.

70. John Toland, *The Danger of Mercenary Parliaments* (London, 1695), quoted in Kramnick, *Bolingbroke*, p. 153. On the classical ideal of independence, see, in addition to the works already mentioned, Zera S. Fink, *The Classical Republicans: An Essay in the Recovery of a Pattern of Thought in Seventeenth Century England* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1945); J. G. A. Pocock, "Machiavelli, Harrington, and English Political Ideologies in the Eighteenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 22 (Oct. 1965): 549-583; and Jack P. Greene, "Society, Ideology, and Politics: An Analysis of the Political Culture of Mid-Eighteenth Century Virginia," in Richard M. Jellison, ed., *Society, Freedom, and Conscience: The American Revolution in Virginia, Massachusetts, and New York* (New York: Norton, 1976), pp. 14-76.

71. Madison to Jefferson, Jan. 15, 1797, in *Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, 4 vols. (New York: Worthington, 1884), 2: 111-113; see also same to same, Dec. 19, 1796, Jan. 22 and 29, Feb. 5 and 11, 1797, *ibid.*, 108, 114-117. *Gazette of the United States*, March 14 and Sept. 22, 1797 ("Philadelphia"); *American Minerva*, March 11, 1797; *Porcupine's Gazette*, March 14, 1797, in *Works of Peter Porcupine*, 5: 69, attacked Bache for hypocrisy. Among those scholars who generally tend to view Bache as insincere, or a coadjutor of Jefferson, are: Stewart, *Opposition Press*, 9-10, 646; Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 297, 319; Blantz, "Editors and Issues," pp. 187, 191-193; Fäy, *Two Franklins*, pp. 310-312. The most thorough study of the *Aurora's* pro-Adams campaign is Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 295-297, 318-319, and his doctoral dissertation, "Bache and the *Aurora*," pp. 556-560, 576-582. However, Tagg fails to link Bache's editorial rhetoric with the classical republican tradition. Rather, he shares a deep-seated conviction among historians that he was invariably a radical revolutionary, e.g., Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 299-300, 350-352, 401-403. Fäy, *Two Franklins*, p. 361, also depicts Bache as an inveterate extremist, "the man who first gave its form to radical opinion in the United States and fashioned the Democratic Party." I have tried to uncover another facet of the Democratic-Republican *mentalité* by examining the editorials in Bache's

Aurora, which by 1796 had definitely become the leading vehicle for Jeffersonian popular ideology. Of course it reflected its editor's viewpoint. As Tagg points out, "There can be little doubt that by the mid-1790s the opinions stated by Bache's correspondents were consistently in accord with Bache's own opinions and that administration supporters were denied editorial space." "Bache's Attack on Washington," *PMHB* 100 (April 1976): 200n.

72. Anas, in A. A. Lipscomb and A. E. Bergh, eds., *Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 20 vols. (Washington: Jefferson Memorial Assn., 1903), 1: 415; John Dawson to Madison, June 4, 1797, in Robert A. Rutland et al., eds., *The Papers of James Madison* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1991), 17: 13-14; W. L. Smith to Rufus King, April 3, 1797, in King, ed., *Correspondence*, 2: 167; Malone, *Jefferson*, pp. 300-301.

73. Jefferson regretted Adams's convening a special session of Congress "for the 15th of next month," he wrote to Peregrine Fitzhugh, April 9, 1797. "I am sorry for it, as everything pacific would have been done *without Congress*, and I hope nothing is contemplated which is not pacific." Lipscomb and Bergh, eds., *Jefferson's Writings*, 9: 380. Madison, too, was alarmed by Adams's call for a special session, fearing it would lead to passage of anti-French legislation. "This gives a very solemn air to our situation," he wrote. "The measure was wholly unsuspected to any one as far as I know." Madison to James Madison, Sr., [ca. March 27, 1797], Rutland, et al., *Madison Papers* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), 16: 504. After Adams's bellicose message, freshman Virginia Congressman John Dawson wrote, "I am sorry to find all your apprehensions merited by the President's warlike spirit." Dawson to Madison, May 18, 1797, *ibid.*, 17: 6. The *Aurora's* failure to vent these anxieties suggests that Bache did not share them.

74. Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 139, 159-162, 183-184, 205-206, 210-217; Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, pp. 141, 155, 220; Tagg, "Bache's Attack on Washington," *PMHB* 100 (April 1976): 195-196; Smith, "Enlightenment Education, *ibid.*, 112 (Oct. 1988): 498. See also Thomas P. Slaughter, *The Whiskey Rebellion: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 102-103, for additional information on the *Aurora's* opposition to

the rebellion. Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, pp. 232-233, is also struck by Bache's impartiality until 1794.

75. Joseph J. Ellis, *After the Revolution: Profiles of Early American Culture* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1979), p. xiii. Another perceptive study of the conflict in the American literary mind between the values of community and individualism is Emory G. Elliott, *Revolutionary Writers: Literature and Authority in the New Republic* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

76. Forrest McDonald, *The Presidency of Thomas Jefferson* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1976), p. 166. See also Wood, *Radicalism of the Revolution*, pp. 98-99; and Jerrilyn G. Marston, *King and Congress: The Transfer of Political Legitimacy, 1774-1776* (Princeton University Press, 1987). For a view of the mid-twentieth century President as a modern monarch, see George E. Reedy, *Twilight of the Presidency* (New York: World Publishing Co., 1970).

77. The most thorough account of Americans' attempt to replace filial love for monarch and family with the autonomous, egalitarian affection of citizens for their republic—which was a pervasive theme in the *Aurora's* ultimate rejection of Adams—is Melvin Yazawa, *From Colonies to Commonwealth* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1985). For Jefferson's role in "humanizing" the presidency, see Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, p. 154, and McDonald, *Jefferson's Presidency*, p. 166. Among those historians who regard the 1790s as a "transitional," watershed stage between the political economy of classical, communal republicanism and modern individualistic, partisan, commercial society are Drew R. McCoy, *The Elusive Republic: Political Economy in Jeffersonian America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980), pp. 133-134; Formisano, "Deferential-Participant Politics," 473-487; and *idem.*, *The Transformation of Political Culture: Massachusetts Politics, 1790s-1840s* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 130. Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora* (p. 401) views Bache at times as a "transitional figure" between republicanism and democracy and a political "romantic." The best summary of Bache's emphasis on popular sovereignty and equality of opportunity is the discussion of his "radical ideology" in *ibid.*, pp. 116-157.

78. Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 104, 171;

Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, p. 22. As Wood astutely remarks of this period: "Nothing was more important in explaining and clarifying the democratization of the American mind than this conception of public opinion. In the end it became America's nineteenth-century popular substitute for the elitist intellectual leadership of the Revolutionary generation." "Democratization of Mind," pp. 83-84. See also Wood, *Creation of American Republic*, p. 612; John Zvesper, *Political Philosophy and Rhetoric: A Study in the Origins of American Party Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 1977), pp. 14-16, 104-106; Joyce Appleby, "The Social Origins of American Revolutionary Ideology," *Journal of American History* 64 (March 1978): 935-958; and idem., *Capitalism and a New Social Order*, pp. 59-86.

79. For example, Dunbar, "Monarchical Tendencies," pp. 83-126; Howe, *Changing Thought of Adams*, pp. 176-192; Hofstadter, *Idea of Party System*, pp. 83-86; Banning, *Jeffersonian Persuasion*, pp. 111-113, 119-121, 227; Minor Myers, Jr., *Liberty Without Anarchy: A History of the Society of the Cincinnati* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1983). A good summary of persisting rumors that powerful individuals desired monarchy for the United States in the 1780's is John P. Kaminski and Gaspare J. Saladino, eds., *Commentaries on the Constitution Public and Private*, 2 vols. (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1981) 1: 168-172.

80. Bushman, *King and People*, pp. 226-243; Stourzh, *Hamilton*, pp. 39-40, 107-109; Peter Shaw, *American Patriots and the Rituals of Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981), a psychohistorical study of the erosion of monarchical and patriarchal authority during the Revolutionary era. Nevertheless, adherence to concepts of deferential politics and "virtual representation" persisted among widely diverse segments of the population. Nathan Hatch, *The Sacred Cause of Liberty* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), pp. 115-116; Kenneth S. Greenberg, "Representation and the Isolation of South Carolina, 1776-1860," *Journal of American History* 64 (Dec. 1977): 723-743.

81. James R. Sharp, "The Whiskey Rebellion and the Question of Representation," in Steven

R. Boyd, ed., *The Whiskey Rebellion: Past and Present Perspectives* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), pp. 119-133; Yazawa, *Colonies to Commonwealth*, pp. 128-135, 158-165. The Jeffersonian view that all men possessed a "moral sense," enabling them intuitively to decide correctly questions of right and wrong, was a legacy of Francis Hutcheson and the Scottish "common sense" philosophers; it comprised an important tenet of the party ideology. See the discussions in Adrienne Koch, *The Philosophy of Thomas Jefferson* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1943), pp. 15-20; White, *Philosophy of the American Revolution*, pp. 113-114; Lee Quinby, "Thomas Jefferson: The Virtue of Aesthetics and the Aesthetics of Virtue," *American Historical Review* 87 (April 1982): 337-356; Bernard W. Sheehan, *Seeds of Extinction: Jeffersonian Philanthropy and the American Indian* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1974), pp. 27-32; and Richard K. Matthews, *The Radical Politics of Thomas Jefferson* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1984), pp. 57-66. On the maturation of the concept of the "sovereignty of the people," see Cathy D. Matsom and Peter S. Onuf, *A Union of Interests: Political and Economic Thought in Revolutionary America* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990); Wood, *Creation of American Republic*, esp. pp. 372-383, 524-536, 593-615.

82. Smith, *Freedom's Fetters*, pp. 189-203, and idem., "The Aurora and the Alien and Sedition Laws. Part I. The Editorship of Benjamin Franklin Bache," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 77 (Jan. 1953): 3-23; Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 370-390; Miller, *Crisis in Freedom*, pp. 60-66, 93-96. Dunbar, "Monarchical Tendencies", 121-22 describes the Aurora's virulent attack on Adams in 1798 and Bache's denunciation of his alleged regal aspirations and corrupt use of presidential patronage; she ignores his earlier praise, however. Good general treatments of this crucial period include, among others, Buel, *Securing the Revolution*, pp. 158-261; Dauer, *Adams Federalists*, pp. 137-237; and Kurtz, *Presidency of John Adams*, pp. 284-333.

83. On the formidable Republican campaign organization in 1800, see Cunningham, *Jeffersonian Republicans*, pp. 144-210; William N. Chambers, *Political Parties in a New Nation:*

The American Experience, 1776-1809 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 150-165; Sisson, *Revolution*, pp. 345-355. For another overlooked turning point in the evolution from deferential to participatory politics in the United States, see C. Edward Skeen, "Vox Populi, Vox Dei: The Compensation Act of 1816 and the Rise of Popular Politics," *Journal of the Early Republic* 6 (Fall 1986): 253-274. Insightful analyses of parties as the mainspring of democracy, centering on developments in the 1790s, include: Chambers, *Political Parties in a New Nation*, pp. 10-16, 106-112; idem., "Party Development and Party Action: The American Origins," *History and Theory* 3 (1963): 91-120; and the same author's "Party Development and the American Mainstream," in W. N. Chambers and Walter D. Burnham, eds., *American Party Systems: Stages of Political Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 3-32. Paul Goodman, "The First American Party System," *ibid.*, 56-89, stresses the role of parties in the collapse of elites' monopoly of political power, while Walter D. Burnham, "Party Systems and the Political Process," *ibid.*, 289-291, downgrades the significance of the first party system. See Clinton Rossiter, *The American Presidency* (New York: New American Library, 1960), pp. 77-78, 101, 202-203; and Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, p. 22, on the Patriot President.

84. Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order*, pp. 70-78, quoted, p. 104. See also Formisano, *Transformation of Political Culture*, pp. 128-148; Yazawa, *Colonies to Commonwealth*, pp. 187-190.

85. Ketcham, *Presidents Above Party*, pp. 230-231. See also Hofstadter, *Idea of a Party System*, chap. 6; Richard P. McCormick, "Political Development and the Second Party System," in Chambers and Burnham, eds., *American Party Systems*, pp. 90-116; and Michael Wallace, "Changing Concepts of Party in the United States: New York, 1815-1828," *American Historical Review* 74 (Dec. 1968): 453-491.

86. Bache's illness and death are chronicled in Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 396-400; Smith, *Freedom's Fetters*, pp. 203-204; Fäy, *Two Franklins*, pp. 356-361; and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, p. 163. Though Fäy is sympathetic toward Bache and laments his depiction by previous historians as "a vicious boy" (p. 361), nevertheless he agrees with critics' view of him as an inveterate extremist, "the man who first gave its form to radical opinion in the United States and fashioned the Democratic Party" (*ibid.*) Thus his opinion is not far from Tagg, who regards Bache as presaging the vision of a "new democratic and working-class radicalism" (pp. 401-403), though the *Aurora's* pages contain little about artisans' affairs, and it generally shared the widespread rhetorical preference for the farm over the city. See also Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, p. 136. This essay has tried to depict the "classical republican" side of Bache (and of the Democratic-Republicans) and to show that it was compatible with their emphasis on the primacy of popular sovereignty and majority rule (for the latter, see Tagg, *Bache and the Aurora*, pp. 137-141; and Smith, *Franklin and Bache*, pp. 123-125).