

EARLY PARTY MACHINERY IN THE UNITED STATES

Pennsylvania in the Election of 1796

THE fathers of the American Republic, when they founded their government, intended it to be based on justice and liberty. Few of them had read the whole of the *Spirit of Laws* of Montesquieu, but all of them knew his theory that a republic can not live where there is no virtue, and no unity of purpose.¹ They agreed with him; private morality, public honesty seemed to them the two essential pillars of the new constitution. Even those who were inclined to have a somewhat more cynical view of human nature recognized the need of moral order and ethical discipline in the young nation. They did their best to eliminate from the government's organization everything that tended toward unfairness, corruption, graft, strife and hatred. And first of all they meant to suppress all party spirit.

Jean Jacques Rousseau had spoken with eloquence in his *Contrat social* of the necessity of moral unity in a republic, and each one of the political leaders of the thirteen States had seen for himself, between 1780 and 1790, what resulted from intense political quarrels, so that they realized fully the danger of allowing the seeds of division to grow among the citizens. The Constitution of 1788 was in fact a sincere effort to reconcile the views of the factions and to bring together all the citizens; its limited scope, its vagueness and its perfectibility would, it was hoped, enable everybody to agree to it without any bitter feeling or any deep-seated discontent, and thus prevent the formation of parties. The unanimous election of Washington as the first President was also a clear proof that national unity and moral dignity were the first two aims of the founders of the Union.² Washington himself felt very deeply the weight of the responsibility he was taking upon himself, and when he finally accepted it, it was with the deepest emotion, and with an anxiety akin to despair.³ He had firmly resolved to

¹ Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws*, bk. iii, ch. 3; bk. v, ch. ii.

² Ford, ed., *Writings of Washington*, XI. 332-34.

³ *Ibid.*, XI. 336-38, 352, 366, *passim*.

be the brother of all the citizens, and to allow no prejudice to separate him from anybody, in short, to banish all party views from his mind and not to tolerate any around him. The idea that American citizens could, under his presidency, gather into opposite parties and fight each other was most odious to him, and he labored strenuously to overcome all the difficulties or misunderstandings which stood in his way. The lists of people he invited to his dinners and receptions at the beginning of his administration are most enlightening, as they prove that he chose men of all kinds and particularly men who had expressed views contrary to what he himself thought to be right.⁴ He meant to establish the new régime on the firm ground of universal coöperation and unanimous acceptance of the new constitution.

It does not seem that in 1789 and 1790 the average politician and the man in the street realized clearly how unavoidable was the rise of parties in America. The idea of the legitimacy of parties in a democracy was not then familiar to most Americans. From 1774 to 1784 the country had in fact lived under the "one party system"; the "patriots" alone being recognized and given a chance to express freely their views and wishes. That the Federalists had still in mind a régime of the same kind is proved by the Alien and Sedition Acts, as they were passed in 1798. Once the Constitution was ratified by all the states, the general feeling was that the issue was over and nothing ought to divide the citizens. Groups of Anti-Federalists were still to be found here and there, but they could not be considered as a national party. It can even be said that everybody agreed on this point: the Federalists, who were looking forward to a steady strengthening of government, did not like the prospect of parties, which could endanger the efficiency of the Administration; what was left of the opposing forces, being mostly made up of ardent democrats, who believed in the wisdom of the people and in the holiness of national unity, did not feel that the division of the people into parties would be a good thing for democracy. Such was clearly the attitude of Franklin and his speech at the end of the Constitutional Convention of Philadelphia shows it without ambiguity.

Unfortunately, while the anti-federalist rage was cooling down and Washington was elated with the prospect of the complete disappear-

⁴ For instance, Ædanus Burke, who had bitterly and unfairly attacked the Society of Cincinnati, of which Washington was then president.

ance of parties, a new division was creeping in and the symbolic conflict between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton rapidly made all citizens conscious of a political rift that was widening in Philadelphia. Probably too much has been said of the antagonism between Jefferson and Hamilton;⁵ that the two men did not like each other is true, but on the other hand Jefferson was going to owe his election as President to Hamilton, who had never been able to get rid of a certain bitter admiration for Jefferson; and in the same way Jefferson was never free from some intellectual respect for Hamilton. If the conflict between the two men can be taken as the deciding factor in making the politicians of the country realize the coming of new party divisions in America, it ought to be added that the party feeling itself can be traced to several other sources and that the organization of the Republican-Democratic party was also largely due to people who were not primarily interested in the Jefferson-Hamilton quarrel.

Hamilton was an organizer. He had money at his disposal and when he was in Philadelphia he founded the Federalist press (through the agency of Fenno and the *Gazette of the United States*); he cemented the Federalist group in Congress, and gave it such a pointed efficiency that even when the majority was in fact made up of Jeffersonians, he was able to dominate it and manoeuvre it,⁶ as is proved by the long discussions and final votes on the Jay treaty. He had also created a network of correspondents all over the country through his war-comrades, his business associates, his personal friends and the numerous people whom he had been able to oblige. His shrewdest move was his way of using Washington's prestige and the war memories, the Cincinnati and the other veterans' associations. The Federalist party was his achievement.

The way of Jefferson was different; he did not like stiff social framework, and he disliked clear-cut responsibilities. He was a good architect, when he had a pencil in his hand, but as a philosopher he preferred trusting the natural impulses of the people, and subtly working in an underhand fashion. It does not seem that his rôle as an organizer of the early Republican-Democratic party can be paralleled with that of Hamilton. To his office can indeed be traced many of the

⁵ B. Fay, *The Two Franklins*, 134-44.

⁶ E. E. Robinson, *The Evolution of American Political Parties*, 65.

ideas, mottoes, and hints which stirred up the masses of Americans between 1790 and 1800, but the organization itself was rather the product of other men's activity and of more reckless leaders. One of the obvious reasons is that Jefferson as a Virginian did not find the same geographical facility as Hamilton for establishing contacts with all the democratic leaders of the North, the South, the East, and the West. Jefferson was a Virginian, and Philadelphia happened to be the center of the Republican-Democratic party.

This could not be helped; the location of Philadelphia, the presence of Congress and of the President in the city obliged the opposition, if it hoped to have anything to say, to build its central organization where the center of the fight was. As early as 1794 Francis Bailey, the publisher, printed a pamphlet by Colonel John Taylor, *A definition of Parties, or the political effect of the paper system considered* which appeared in Philadelphia April 5, 1794. The author stated at the beginning that "the existence of two parties in Congress are apparent," and he added that these two parties were "nearly poised as to numbers." These lines indicate that in fact party machinery originated in and around Congress.

With Jefferson, unwilling and temporarily unable to perform the task of organizing, it befitted other people to take it up, and two groups of leaders volunteered to discharge this task. Both of these groups, I think, have been too much overlooked by historians: (1) the old friends of Franklin; (2) the old rivals of Washington.

Up to the very end of his life (April, 1790) Franklin was an important political factor in Pennsylvania, but he was systematically ignored by the leading group of Federalists. Their reasons for doing so were many; the most obvious one was that Franklin's long sojourns in Europe since 1757, had made him lose touch with the politicians at home and with Congress. Consequently there was in Philadelphia a majority of delegates who strongly disapproved of his diplomacy in France; and the fact that the high esteem of Louis XVI and the personal affection of Vergennes had prevented their recalling the patriarch from Versailles made them even more angry and spiteful. They showed their feelings by the abrupt dismissal of his son-in-law Richard Bache, from his position of Postmaster General (1781) and by their flat refusal to appoint to any diplomatic position his beloved grandson and collaborator, William Temple Franklin. Their ill-will against

him expressed itself again by their stubborn neglect of his complaints between 1785 and 1790. Benjamin Franklin, who, as a diplomat, had done more for his country than any other man, was never able to induce Congress to settle his accounts and pay him what he thought was his just due.⁷ During five years he steadily insisted with the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Congress, but they would never do anything about the matter. When the new government was in process of being formed Richard Bache and William Temple Franklin went to New York, still hoping for a Post-Mastership and a diplomatic position; they were disappointed.⁸ The Federalists would have nothing to do with the Franklin family.

They were making a serious mistake. It is true Franklin was dying, but what could be called the "Franklin feeling" was still very strong in Pennsylvania, and more particularly among the state employees and the educated middle-class. For three years (1785-1788) Franklin had been President of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and the administration of this commonwealth included many people who had been given jobs by Franklin, and who had learned to admire and love him as their chief. On the other hand everybody in Philadelphia during the last decade of the eighteenth century was proud of the activities of the American Philosophical Society, where the old and young friends of Franklin were an overwhelming majority and which then exercised a very great influence, both intellectual and political, on the "bourgeoisie" of America. In fact it provided the enthusiasm which stirred up the democratic faith of many people.

The young grandson of Franklin, Benjamin Franklin Bache, was a member of the American Philosophical Society, as were also the old friends of Franklin, Dr. Logan of Stenton, Dr. Rush, Dr. Rittenhouse, Dr. Hutchinson, all prominent Republicans, and some young lawyers such as Alexander James Dallas, whose first political beliefs came from Benjamin Franklin.⁹ All of them took a foremost part in the political contests of these years and provided many worries for the Federalists.

Fighting in close coöperation with them we find another group of people who are seldom mentioned. It is true that Washington as a

⁷ Fay, *op. cit.*, 115.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 114-16.

⁹ George M. Dallas, *Life and Writings of Alexander James Dallas*, 21.

patriot and as a general was the great hero of the United States and enjoyed more popularity than any other man in America, yet, as a general he had had to punish or to discipline quite a few soldiers and officers, and, as a man, he had aroused the jealousy of a goodly number of his colleagues in the army who had not easily accepted his supremacy. John Hancock showed it foolishly when he received the President in Boston in 1789, and a little less crudely, but with more efficiency, General Mifflin, who ran the government of Pennsylvania between 1790 and 1799, made everybody feel that there was no love lost between him and the President.

These two classes of men were the backbone of the early Republican-Democratic party as it existed between 1793 and 1800; with this general staff, the French Minister as adviser and sponsor, and Thomas Jefferson as guardian angel, it was able to fight the Federalists. But, of course, its popular force came from other sources. The opposition between "the moneyed interests" and the "people" was then growing acute and the new prosperity of the country was creating at the same time a widespread feeling of excitement, a sharp feeling of jealousy, which was embittered by the contrast between the cities where reigned a comfort, a luxury, and social habits "just imported from Europe," and the country, especially the West, where the most primitive conditions prevailed. Even in the big cities unrest was rampant and nothing could prevent the conflict between the rich and smug business oligarchy and the huge masses of half-starving immigrants who were arriving from Europe, dissatisfied and excited. With them came also French pamphlets, French newspapers, and French principles. Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charleston were the sore spots of the continent.

Thus, let us remark it here, economic factors were bringing men to enlist into two conflicting parties; but let us add also that political preoccupations, general principles, and deep feelings were fanning the fires of partisanship. The years 1795-1796 were largely devoted in Congress to the discussion of the Jay treaty, and nobody can deny that this prolonged parliamentary and press debate did much to embitter the party-spirit throughout the country. Economic preoccupations played their part in this battle, but the issue was more general and more human. People thought that civilization was at a cross-road, and that they had to choose between two opposite types of govern-

ment, of life, of ideals. It was a war of social, of moral, and of intellectual forces.

It happened that Philadelphia had become the storm-center of the United States. In Virginia and all through the South the great name of Washington and his personal prestige had a soothing effect on the popular passions. The fact that the population was more scattered in the southern districts also made for a quieter state of mind. In New England the clergy and the big merchants, all of them, unknowingly and unwillingly, but very tightly, bound with English tradition, managed to a very large degree to curb the popular feeling and to keep their political leadership. The situation in New York was not very different.

Philadelphia had no such well-organized body of aristocrats. The Revolution had smashed the supremacy of the Quaker gentry, and the "Robert Morris party" which had taken their place after 1780 was rather shaky in 1795 because of Morris's business difficulties. The rich merchants and the Church of England people formed the backbone of good society and of the circles in which moved the members of Congress and the national functionaries, but their political influence was small. Pennsylvania was divided into many complicated groups, where the problems of religion, race, trade, and class, created all kinds of cross-currents. The chaos might have been complete if political machinery had not been organized on both sides.

Hamilton had provided the Federalists with a good national framework, and Thomas Jefferson, without acting personally or getting involved in any troublesome business, had done the same for the Republicans through some of his young friends. As long as he stayed in Philadelphia, he faithfully attended the meetings of the American Philosophical Society and surrounded himself with young men who had a great democratic zeal and who worshipped him. These young men and the older members of the Philosophical Society, with a few Congressmen (such as Swanwick, who provided most of the funds), became the governing board of the Republican party. The three outstanding ones among them seem to have been Benjamin Franklin Bache, grandson of Franklin, and editor of the *Aurora*, the foremost Philadelphia newspaper, Alexander James Dallas, a young Scottish lawyer of uncommon ability, who from 1790 to 1799 was Secretary of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and intimate adviser to

Governor Mifflin, and finally John Beckley, of Virginia. None of these three men is known by the public or appreciated by historians as I think he ought to be. But the most mysterious and most unknown of the three is John James Beckley, a personal friend of Jefferson, who had been appointed, through Jefferson's agency, Clerk of the House of Representatives, where he stayed from 1789 to 1797, and from 1801 to 1807. The Federalist majority had him dismissed in 1797, because of his political activities, but it did not discourage him; he was responsible for the first pique between Jefferson and Adams, as he was the one who had given to Jefferson the pamphlet of Paine in answer to the Adams' family's productions. He worked for Jefferson at the House of Representatives; he collected information for Jefferson through John Temple, the British Consul General, with whom he was mysteriously intimate; his close friendship with Bache and with the leading publishers of Philadelphia enabled him to print in 1800 a warm apology for Jefferson which he signed *Americanus: Address to the people of the United States with an epitome and vindication of the public life and character of Thomas Jefferson*. For all this he was rewarded by being made the first Librarian of Congress, a post which he held from 1802 until his death in 1807.¹⁰ It is thus clear that he was a very active man, but he was also a very discreet man and the little we know of him is through indirect information.

These three young men did not spare their time and efforts, and Jefferson knew how to stir them up without ever himself appearing. He would advise Bache on the pieces to be inserted in his paper. He would keep in touch with Mifflin through Dallas, and Beckley would discreetly spread through the House of Representatives and the Philadelphia book-shops the hints that his great friend would pass to him.

Unfortunately, in 1796, Jefferson was not in Philadelphia. He was not even at hand to advise the party workers and, for many reasons, he was unwilling to do so.¹¹ Retired on his estate of Monticello, he was taking care of his health, which he thought was in great need of being mended, and watching the political situation, which he judged

¹⁰ There is nothing on Beckley except a few lines in Charles Lanman's *Biographical Annals of the Civil Government of the United States* (Washington, 1876), 27, and the scattered information I have been able to collect in my *Two Franklins*.

¹¹ *Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Monticello edition), IX, 350-60.

much too critical to be mended even by the most superior statesman. In a word, while he was not ready to withdraw from the political arena, Jefferson was not desirous of taking any responsibility, and he allowed his young friends to take it.

In the summer of 1796, while Jefferson was thus resting in Virginia, the three young Republican chieftains were full of sanguine expectations. They felt that if Washington withdrew from the presidency and was not a candidate the most prominent and most respected man in the country was clearly Thomas Jefferson. They thought he could be elected to succeed Washington, if his candidacy were properly put before the country; but they knew also that he would not do anything himself and that he had many enemies. They were not unaware of the strong hold that the Federalist party had on the country. Consequently they were anxiously waiting for developments. They realized that if Washington should again be a candidate, the Republicans would have no chance, but they were sure that he would not. Washington was a good politician; he meant to help the Federalists. Realizing the popularity of Jefferson and the force of the democratic machine he was trying to give them as little chance as possible by delaying the announcement of his withdrawal. This gave the Federalists, who already knew his intentions, the advantage of being able to organize their propaganda while the Republicans, who were still guessing, could not.

In Philadelphia the Republican leaders were anxiously watching the great man and trying to get information. Consequently it was with a burst of joy that on September 14 they heard he had signed the letter announcing his final determination to abandon forever the presidency of the United States. From that minute the fight began in earnest, and we shall be able to follow it closely through the letters and instructions which were sent by Beckley, on behalf of the governing board of the Philadelphia Republicans, to one of the best political chieftains of the middle counties, the old revolutionary leader General William Irvine.¹² As it was generally conceded that the North would be solidly for John Adams, and the South for Thomas Jefferson, Pennsylvania was the central battleground and would probably be the deciding factor. Hence the importance of this campaign and of

¹² The papers of General William Irvine are in H. S. P.

this correspondence, which begins on September 15 by a letter from Beckley:

Philadelphia, September 15, 1796.

The President has at last concluded to decline a reelection, and has forwarded on to the Governor of each State a notification thereof, to be published here about the first of next month. You will readily perceive that the short notice is designed to prevent a fair election, and the consequent choice of Mr Jefferson. It will not however produce that effect if your State makes but a reasonable exertion. The general sentiment is in favor of Jefferson, and I think a little exertion by a few good active republicans in each County would bring the people and defeat the influence of your little rotten towns such as Carlisle, Lancaster, York, etc. A silent but certain cooperation among the Country people may do much. In my next I will send you a list of the republican electors, that have been agreed upon for this State, and hope you will be able to scatter a few copies thro' *some proper hands*. It will not be forgotten that no ticket must be printed. From Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee, we expect unanimous vote, half Maryland and Delaware, some in New Jersey, and several to the Eastward,¹⁸ so that, if Pennsylvania do well, the election is safe. In the City and county we expect to carry the republican ticket by a large majority. Have you any western friends that you can drop a line to, to assist us? What seems to be the sentiment, if any, in the country you passed through? Cannot an effectual exertion be made? It is now or never for the republican cause.

After this stirring exhortation the correspondence goes on merrily and actively. On September 22, Beckley sends to Irvine the text of Washington's declaration, and a letter to urge him to do his utmost in favor of the Republican cause. He gives him the "list of electors agreed upon here just before the Assembly adjourned," and announces that Mifflin is taking the place of Dr. Rittenhouse, who had just died. He repeats that he feels safe for the South, but not for the North and adds: "*Your State must decide it.*" He moreover explains to him what to do: "A few copies of the lists of the electors, with the names plainly written, dispersed in a few judicious hands in the country, and copies of them scattered in different neighborhoods, would do great good, if the people are warned of the day, and a few popular men will endeavor to bring them out. By next post I will endeavor to send you some handbills by way of Addresses to the People of Pennsylvania, showing the strong reasons there is for this State having a southern rather than an eastern President."

¹⁸ Beckley was going to be disappointed; Jefferson had no electoral votes from states north of Pennsylvania; the Republicans who were elected there gave Burr thirty votes and Samuel Adams fifteen votes, but none to Jefferson. Maryland gave only four votes to Jefferson and seven to Adams. For the list of electors in Pennsylvania see page 390.

On September 30, Beckley dispatches to Irvine "the ticket for electors," and announces "twelve or more handbills on the same subject." He gives also some general information on the prospects: Thomas Jefferson is expected to carry the whole South with the exception of Maryland, where he is likely to get one-half of the delegates. East of the North River, Beckley thinks he can count on at least eight Republican votes, the whole delegation from Rhode Island, two from New Hampshire, three or four from Massachusetts, one or two from Vermont and Connecticut. "If Pennsylvania stirs, the business is safe" is his conclusion. But he regrets, "It is not possible to get a character of the two tickets as you suggested." To compensate, he promises to do something just as effective. And he announces that the choice of candidates for Congress will be very careful. "Swanwick and General Morgan will run for Philadelphia, P. Muhlenberg for Montgomery."

His indefatigable activity does not diminish during the following weeks; on October 4 he sends from Philadelphia six copies of the *Address to the People of Pennsylvania*, and promises that he will send a hundred more as soon as he has "a certain opportunity." Concerning them he gives the following instructions: "It would be most adviseable . . . to push them on over the mountains before they are circulated below, which will prevent any counter-address." A thousand had been printed and were to be distributed in that fashion so as to make an effect on the remote district, "before they can come back to the city." The letter contains finally a most important piece of news: "I am this moment advised by a letter from New York that Mr. Hamilton publicly declared that he thinks it would be best on the score of conciliation and expedience to elect Mr. Jefferson President since he is the only man in America that would secure us the affection of the French Republic. Will it not be adviseable to throw this paragraph in the Carlisle paper?"

It was the time when Adet, the French Minister, was trying to capitalize this rumor, and published his famous, and infamous, *Notes adressées par le Citoyen Adet, Ministre plénipotentiaire de la République Française près les Etats Unis d'Amérique, au Secrétaire d'Etat des Etats Unis*, which meant to make clear that the French Republic saw with a friendly eye Jefferson, and him alone of all the candidates. It was thought that such an outburst would deeply impress

people, and greatly help Jefferson's election. At any rate the hopes of Beckley at that period were high. He claimed that the "aristocrats" acknowledged that the Republican ticket was far the best and would win. "Many of them prefer Pinckney to John Adams, and there will be great schism amongst them. Our accounts South and East look well, and we have great hope in New Jersey."

The campaign fever was running higher and higher and thirteen days later Beckley wrote to his friend the following letter which is probably the most typical of all:

Philadelphia, October 17th, 1796.

Dear General,

By old Dr. Nesbit, I had forwarded to you a packet with handbills, which I must try your goodness to put under way for the Western country, so as to reach it before the Election for Electors. You best know what characters to address them to. In a few days a select republican friend from the City, will call upon you with a parcel of tickets to be distributed in your county. Any assistance and advice you can furnish him with, as to suitable districts and characters, will, I am sure, be rendered. He is one of two republican friends who have undertaken to ride thru all the middle and lower counties on this business, and bring with them six or eight thousands tickets. It is necessary at the same time to aid the common object by getting all our friends to write as many tickets as they can, in their respective families before the Elections. The great victory obtained here over the united and combined forces of the British and Aristocrats, gives us great confidence and is a presage of success in the choice of Electors; to throw out Muhlenberg, who gave the casting vote for the British treaty and elect Blair McClenachan in his room, who recommended to kick the treaty to hell, and to reelect Swanwick against the most violent exertions ever made in this City, are sufficient to show that republican [torn] here. I hope you are and will be as firm and zealous in Cumberland [torn]. [I have] letters from Virginia, which assure me that notwithstanding every exertion of the Aristocracy the Republicans count with certainty on an unanimous vote in favor of Jefferson [torn]. Have you heard of Findley and Gallatin's elections, how did they go? Who succeeded in Cumberland? I hope they trimmed the trimmer Gregg, as they did Christie in Maryland. We continue in great hopes of several votes in the Eastern States for Jefferson, since it begins to be suspected that Pinckney and not Adams is designed by Hamilton for President. Perhaps their intrigues may benefit us.

I enclose a few copies of the ticket to disperse among such good friends as will exert themselves to get as many copies before the election as they can. I shall hope to hear from you by next mail. Mrs B. wrote Mrs Irvine a few days ago, when she forwarded the quilt. [two sentences torn] and I am, My dear General, your [torn] John Beckley.

The end of October and the beginning of November saw the excitement reach its highest pitch. Beckley, on November 2, wrote to Irvine that success seemed assured; with the republican victory in Philadelphia itself, with the good prospects in the "counties below the moun-

tains," everything looked favorable, and Beckley hurried to send "a copy of the last Address of the Republicans to the people" to be used for the final drive. He promised to keep the General well informed and wanted to receive prompt and frequent news.

Unfortunately the Federalist campaign was also well managed, and the growing dissatisfaction with the French Republic had given a good chance to the party of "law and order" to hit back at the Republicans. As the first results of the elections came in Beckley and his friends realized that they had been fighting against too many odds, and, on December 16, Beckley, in a letter to Irvine, conceded defeat: "After all our exertions, I feel Jefferson will fail altogether." With the vote of the East, except Vermont, Rhode Island and New Hampshire, and with the votes of Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey and Virginia also known, John Adams was running much ahead with 54 votes, while Pinckney had 44, and Jefferson 38. The campaign was lost. Beckley, Irvine, Bache, Dallas were in despair and Thomas Jefferson relieved.

In fact it was not as bad as Beckley thought at the time; the final returns were to make Jefferson Vice-President, and to show that Adams' margin was very small. Adams himself, the day when he was declared elected President of the United States, was not very sure he had a majority, and if Jefferson had been willing to fight who knows what might have happened? But Jefferson did not choose to fight then.

The desire of bringing recognition to hitherto too little known political leaders would not have been sufficient to prompt me to publish the Beckley letters if I did not think that they illustrate a historical truth often neglected.

When we speak of political parties, we seem to forget that parties, as they have existed for three centuries in Europe and America are the by-product of the parliamentary system. In America, as in France and in England, the national party machinery was made necessary in the parliamentary game by the need of establishing a firm control over the votes of the members of the assemblies, and an even firmer control over the popular vote, without which the control of the assemblies would, in the long run, become inefficient or impossible.

To reach these two results party machines have had to use different

means; discipline has been required from members of assemblies and political workers, and has not been very difficult to enforce as these men needed the support of the party for their very bread and butter. But it was not so easy to govern the electors; the only sure means has been by building a "public opinion," which meant organizing a steady propaganda. The letters printed above show how the leaders of the early Republican-Democratic party in America handled this problem during the first contested presidential election. What Beckley, Irvine, Bache, and Dallas did in 1796, all political parties had to do and have to do. Democratic institutions imply the party system which in turn implies propaganda.

The outstanding fact of modern times is that, since the beginning of the seventeenth century we have lived in an atmosphere of propaganda. Before 1600 governments lied, and that was enough for their purpose; since then they have been forced to use propaganda, if they wish to survive. From Cromwell to Stalin the chain is uninterrupted, but Beckley did not realize it.

BERNARD FAÿ

APPENDIX

At a meeting of a number of citizens, on Saturday evening, at Mr. Litle's school house, Colonel John Barker in the chair, the following address was unanimously agreed upon, and ordered to be published.

TO THE FREEMEN OF PENNSYLVANIA.¹⁴

Fellow Citizens,

At this eventful period, when Republicanism itself is menaced, when every thing dear to a freeman is involved in the issue of the approaching election, permit us to sound the tocsin of alarm. The independence of our country, accomplished by the energy of freemen and cemented with their best blood, rent asunder the bands which united us to a corrupt monarchy. A common danger pressed us together during our revolutionary struggle, and we achieved by sympathetic and enthusiastic operation, what the energy of government alone on common occasions could have effected. When the revolutionary ardor had begun to spend itself in calm and philosophic reflection, a sense of mutual interest and a sentiment of republicanism, led us to strengthen our bond of union under a constitution of virtual instead of nominal authority. This constitution formed and accepted by the people has guaranteed to them republican rights,

¹⁴ This address was published on the eve of the ballot, which came on November 4, and the Federalists did not have much time to answer it.

and among those, the right to elect their chief magistrate. On the proper exercise of this right depends the future liberties and happiness of our country. Attempts are at this moment making to place in the presidential chair, a man who has proclaimed to the world his hostility to republican government. John Adams is in nomination for the Presidency of the United States! He who is the professed champion of the British constitution—he who is the declared advocate of ranks and orders in society—he who is the enthusiastic friend of hereditary power—he who has avowed, that the government ought to have the authority of changing the Constitution*—this is the man who is held up to your view as a fit character for President of the United States.

Beware, fellow citizens, how you are insidiously led to give your suffrages to men who favour Mr. Adams's election. Neither the rights which you have derived from nature and your revolution, nor the constitution under whose beneficent shade you promised yourselves security, can afford you protection, when you place at the head of your government the declared enemy of republicanism, and the man who contends for the right of those in authority to change the social compact. The existence of a standing army may be the "*critical occasion*" which he contends for, and the will of a President, with such an instrument to exact obedience, may be substituted for your constitution. We pronounce with the utmost solemnity, that our constitution will afford no bulwark against encroachments on our rights, when administered by men who contend for the power of moulding it according to their own sense of expediency.

Beware fellow citizens, of the artifices made use of by the friends of Mr. Adams. They have framed a ticket correspondent with their wishes, and this ticket they have denominated the Jefferson ticket, and have palmed it upon numbers of republicans under that treacherous garb. Aware of the badness of their cause, they are compelled to retreat to dishonest means to accomplish their purposes. Such a cause, like the bird of night, skulks from the light of the sun. Be not imposed upon—The ticket which they have promulgated is composed of characters, that they believe will befriend the election of Mr. Adams. This alone is sufficient to stamp it with your abhorrence.

Friday the 4th of November will be the day of election. Let no consideration prevent you from asserting the most invaluable right of a freeman on that day. Neglect may make it the last day on which you will have the opportunity of exercising such a privilege. Mr. Adams may be elected through your inattention, and his "*critical occasion*" may occur, which will rob you of your birth-right for ever. Let every citizen be impressed with the belief, that his single vote will decide the fate of his country, and he will then be animated with a proper sense of the importance of the occasion, and his zeal will be correspondent. As the election is to be by the state at large, every vote will be of importance; to neglect giving a vote, therefore, under the belief, that you are in a minority in any par-

* "The very act by which septennial parliaments were established in England affords sufficient proofs that the power of altering the constitution itself might be delegated, and even exercised by the governments upon certain critical occasions."

"Answer to Paine's Rights of Man, by John Adams, Esq.["]

ticular district, will be a serious evil and ought to be cautiously guarded against. The state of things has placed the decision of this important question in the hands of Pennsylvania, viewing therefore the importance and responsibility attached to our situation, our exertions ought to receive an additional excitement.

Thomas Jefferson is the man on whom the friends of republican government case their eyes—A man of such enlightened views, such pure patriotism, such unsullied integrity, and such zeal for human happiness, can alone make our country flourishing, tranquil and happy. He will be the cement of discordant interests and of jarring passions—Of no party but the great party of human benefactors, he will allay the fears of our country, heal its divisions, and calm the boisterous elements of political controversy—Under the administration of a man untinctured with party spirit, citizen may smoke the calumet of peace with citizen, and every man may sit down in quiet under his own vine and his own fig-tree—To promote the election of the great Jefferson ought to be the object of every friend to republicanism and his country, to this end the following ticket was framed and is recommended to your serious attention.

ELECTORS.

Thomas M'Kean—CITY of PHILADELPHIA.

Jacob Morgan—COUNTY of d°

James Boyd—CHESTER.

Jonas Hartzell—NORTHAMPTON.

Peter Muhlenberg—MONTGOMERY.

Joseph Heistler—BERKS.

William M'Clay—DAUPHIN.

James Hanna—BUCKS.

John Whitehill—LANCASTER.

William Irwin—CUMBERLAND.

Abraham Smith—FRANKLIN.

William Brown—MIFFLIN.

John Piper—BEDFORD.

John Smilie—FAYETTE.

James Edgar—WASHINGTON.

By order of the Meeting,

JOHN BARKER, Chairman

JOHN CLOYD, Secretary.