

Moral Reasoning 74:
The Theory and Practice
of Republican Government

Lecture 22:
Hamiltonian and Jeffersonian Visions I

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Major Themes

- I. Institutional Model of Framers [review]
- II. Jefferson's Worries
- III. The Respected Republic
- IV. Jefferson's Agrarian Vision
- V. Hamilton's Manufacturing Republic
- VI. The Debate over a Bank, and Federalism

I. The Presidency:
The Model of the Framers

A. Presidential power:

(1) **directed**

- executor of law passed by Congress
- appoints, but w/ advice and consent of Senate
- commander of troops called into action by Congress

(2) **little or no initiative** – law-making power of president consists in Art. II, S 3, “he shall recommend to [Congress] Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient”;

B. The Arguments of Hamilton

Federalist #69: Fear not, anti-Federalists. Comparison of const president w/ King of Britain and governor of NY.

Federalist #70: like Madison's #10, a model essay. Desiderata: (1) energy, (2) safety in the executive.

For energy, need unity and duration: "Decision, activity, secrecy, and dispatch will generally characterize the proceedings of one man in a much more eminent degree than the proceedings of any greater number; and in proportion as the number is increased, these qualities will be diminished."

"In the legislature, promptitude of decision is oftener an evil than a benefit...But no favorable circumstances palliate or atone for the disadvantages of dissension in the executive department."

II. Jefferson's Worries

I do then, with sincere zeal, with an inviolable preservation of our present federal constitution, according to the sense in which it was adopted by the States, that in which it was advocated by it's friends...; and I am opposed to the monarchising it's features by the forms of its administration, with a view to conciliate a first transition to a President & Senate for life, & from that to a hereditary tenure of these offices, & thus to worm out the elective principle. I am for preserving to the States the powers not yielded by them to the Union, & to the legislature of the Union it's constitutional share in the division of powers; and I am not for transferring all the powers of the States to the general government, & all those of that government to the Executive branch."

II. Jefferson's Worries

I am for relying, for internal defence, on our militia solely, till actual invasion, and for such a naval force only as may protect our coasts and harbors from such depredations as we have experienced; and not for a standing army in time of peace, which may overawe the public sentiment; nor for a navy, which, by it's own expenses and the eternal wars in which it will implicate us, will grind us with public burthens, & sink us under them. I am for free commerce with all nations; political connection with none; & little or no diplomatic establishment."

III. The Respected Republic

Hamilton favors

- national institutions (bank, diplomacy, regulation)
- greater centralization
- energetic and durable executive
- adoption of common law.

Jefferson opposes.

What is Hamilton's reasoning? And what is Jefferson's?

III. The Respected Republic

Hamilton's concern for a strong republic

Letter to James Duane, 1780: "And in future, My Dear Sir, two things let me recommend, as fundamental rules for the conduct of Congress - to attach the army to them by every motive, to maintain an air of authority (not domineering) in all their measures with the states. The manner in which a thing is done has more influence than is commonly imagined. Men are governed by opinion; this opinion is as much influenced by appearances as by realities; if a Government appears to be confident of its own powers, it is the surest way to inspire the same confidence in others; if it is diffident, it may be certain, there will be a still greater diffidence in others, and that its authority will not only be distrusted, controverted, but contemned." (*Writings*, p. 86)

III. The Respected Republic

Report on Public Credit (1790): "To justify and preserve their confidence; to promote the respectability of the American name; to answer the calls of justice; to restore landed property to its due value; to furnish new resources both to agriculture and to commerce; to cement more closely the union of the states; to add to their security against foreign attack; to establish public order on the basis of an upright and liberal policy. These are the great and invaluable ends to be secured, by a proper and adequate provision, at the present period, for the support of a public credit." (*Writings*, p. 534)

IV. Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query XIX

“The political economists of Europe have established it as a principle that every state should endeavour to manufacture for itself; and this principle, like many others, we transfer to America, without calculating the difference of circumstance which should often produce a difference of result. In Europe the lands are either cultivated, or locked up against the cultivator. Manufacture must therefore be resorted to of necessity not of choice, to support the surplus of their people. But we have an immensity of land courting the industry of the husbandman. Is it best then that all our citizens should be employed in its improvement, or that one half be called off from that to exercise manufactures and handicraft arts for the other?”

Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query XIX

““Those who labour in the earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue. It is the focus in which he keeps alive that sacred fire, which otherwise might escape from the face of the earth. Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example. It is the mark set on those, who not looking up to heaven, [but] to their own soil and industry, as does the husbandman, for their subsistence, depend for it on the casualties and caprice of customers. Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tolls for the designs of ambition.

Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query XIX

...but, for the general operations of manufacture, let our workshops remain in Europe. It is better to carry provisions and materials to workmen there, than bring them to the provisions and materials, and with them their manners and principles. The loss by the transportation of commodities across the Atlantic will be made up in happiness and permanence of government. The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body. It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigour. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution.”

IV. Agricultural Fundamentalism

Hamilton, *Report on Manufactures*:

“It ought readily to be conceded, that the cultivation of the earth – as the primary and most certain source of national supply – as the immediate and chief source of subsistence to man – as the principal source of those materials which constitute the nutriment of other kinds of labor – as including a state most favourable to the freedom of the human mind – one, perhaps, most conducive to the multiplication of the human species – has *intrinsically a strong claim to pre-eminence over every other kind of industry.*” [Hamilton, *Writings*, 649; italics in original.]

Agricultural Fundamentalism



V. Hamilton's Manufacturing Republic

1. The division of Labour.
2. An extension of the use of Machinery.
3. Additional employment to classes of the community not ordinarily engaged in the business.
4. The promoting of emigration from foreign Countries.

V. Hamilton's Manufacturing Republic

5. The furnishing greater scope for the diversity of talents and dispositions which discriminate men from each other.

“When all the different kinds of industry obtain in a community, each individual can find his proper element, and can call into activity the whole vigour of his nature. And the community is benefitted by the services of its respective members, in the manner, in which each can serve it with most effect.”

6. The affording a more ample and various field for enterprize.

7. The creating in some instances a new, and securing in all, a more certain and steady demand for the surplus produce of the soil.”

VI. The Debate over a Bank

Hamilton: First Secretary of Treasury

Argument: Need to promote commerce. Need a stable financial system. Other countries have this, too.

Jefferson: It's not constitutional.

VI. Compact Theory of Federalism

Kentucky Resolutions:

“Resolved, That the several States composing the United States of America; are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to their General Government; but that, by a compact under the style and title of a Constitution for the United States, and of amendments thereto, they constituted a General Government for special purposes, -- delegated to that government certain definite powers, reserving, each state to itself, the residuary mass of right to their own self-government; and that whensoever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, this compact each State acceded as a State, and is an integral party, its co-States forming, as to itself, the other party...”

Hamilton v Jefferson:
The Enduring Struggle

Hamilton gets Bank

Jefferson wins election of 1800, but retains
Hamiltonian institutions

Bank gets rechartered and affirmed (McCullough v
Maryland)

Jacksonian Democracy: Jefferson reaffirmed

Hamilton "wins" in long run?
