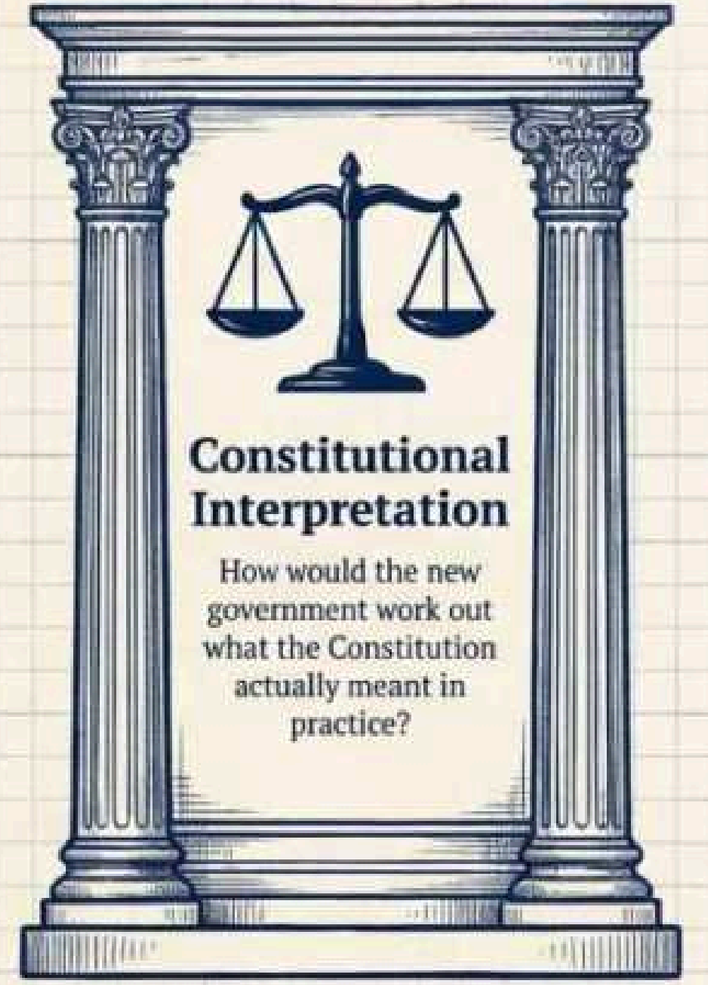
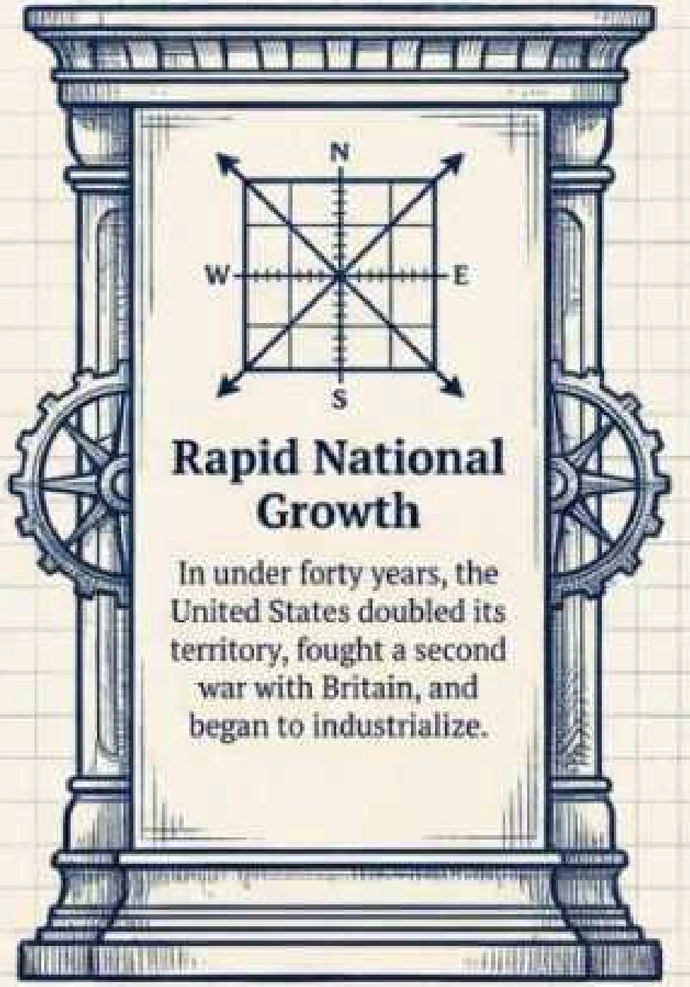
4.1 THE THREE PILLARS OF THE EARLY REPUBLIC (1789–1828)



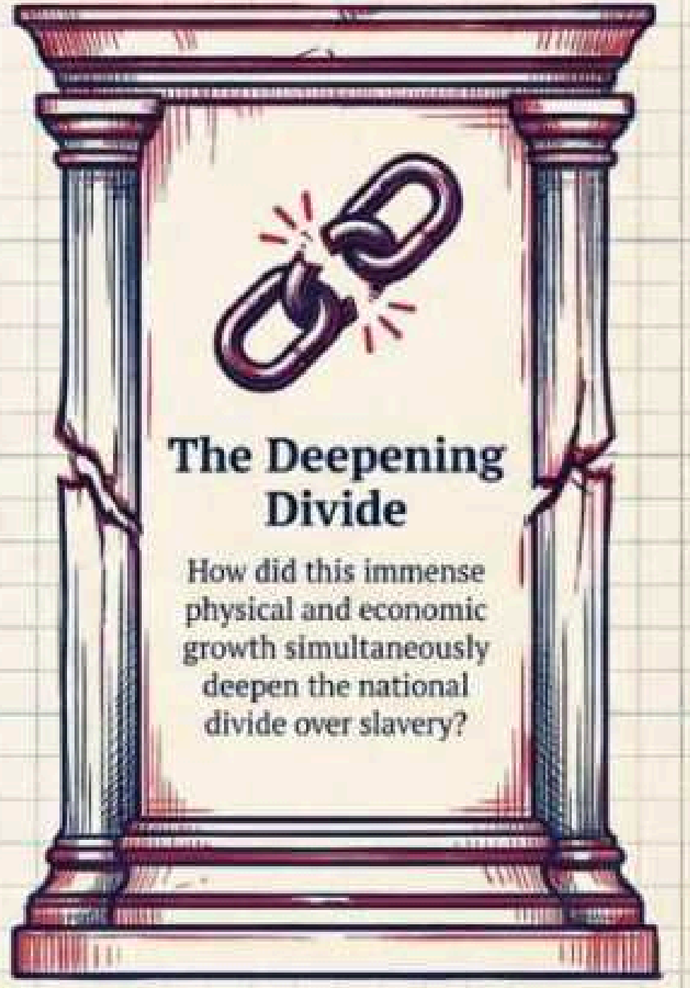
Constitutional Interpretation

How would the new government work out what the Constitution actually meant in practice?



Rapid National Growth

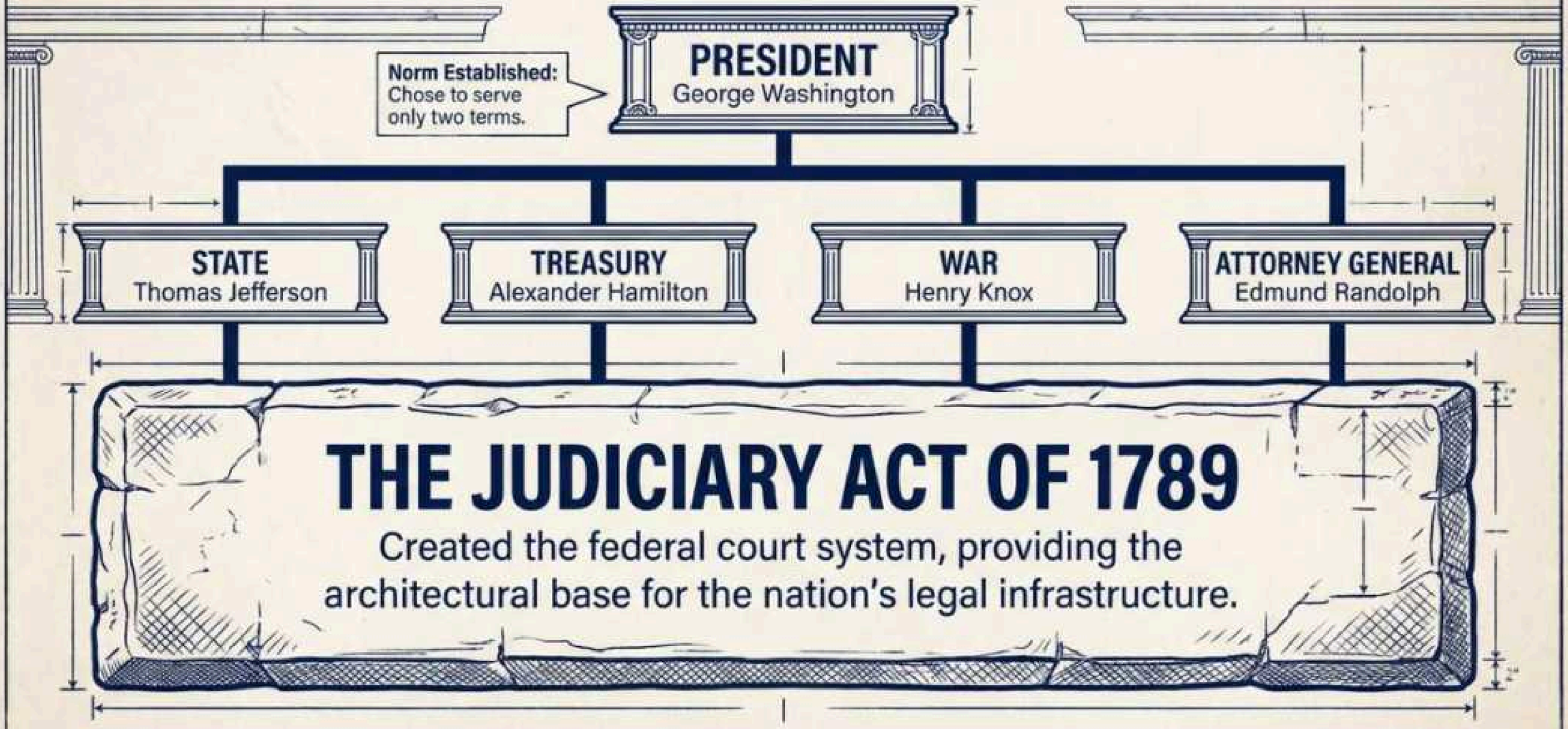
In under forty years, the United States doubled its territory, fought a second war with Britain, and began to industrialize.



The Deepening Divide

How did this immense physical and economic growth simultaneously deepen the national divide over slavery?

4.2 SETTING THE PRECEDENTS: WASHINGTON'S BLUEPRINT



4.3 HAMILTON'S BOLD FINANCIAL BLUEPRINT



HAMILTON'S PLAN

- **Assume** the states' Revolutionary War debts.
- **Charter a National Bank** (established 1791).
- **Report on Manufactures (1791):** Urged protective tariffs and federal support for industry.



THE AGRARIAN OPPOSITION

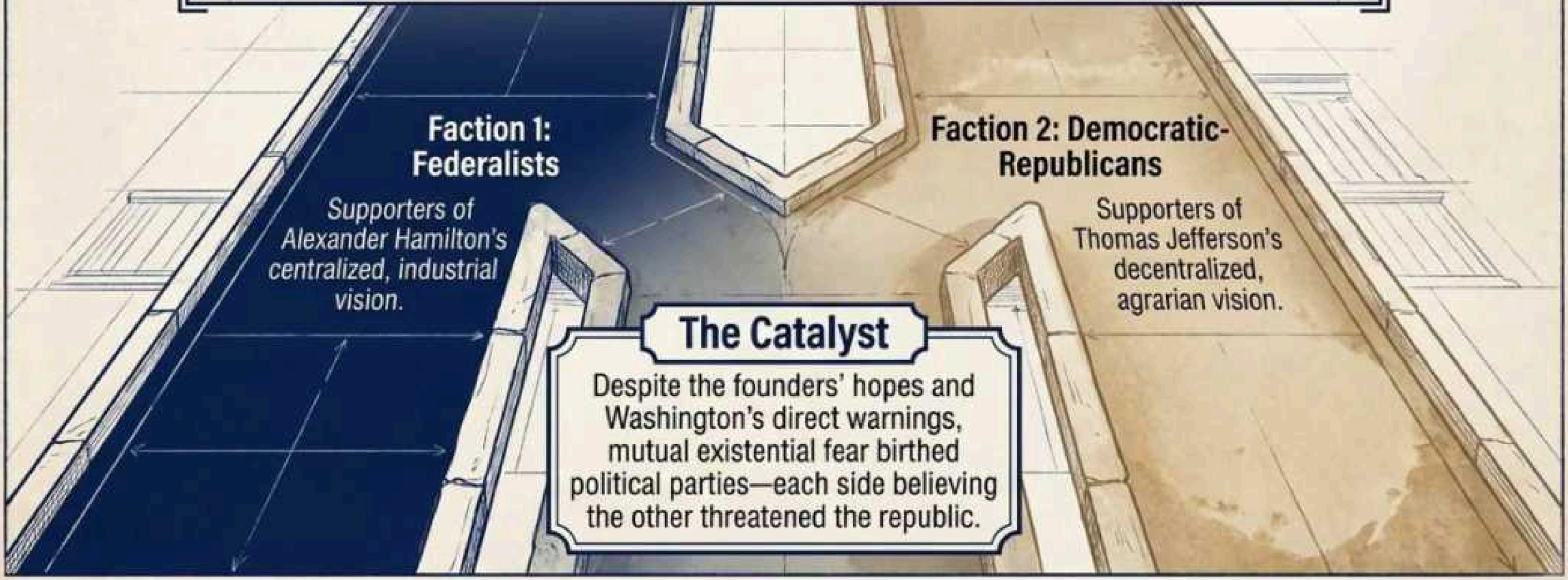
- Led by Thomas Jefferson and James Madison.
- **Constitutional Objection:** The Constitution does not authorize a national bank.
- **Economic Objection:** The plan fundamentally favors urban merchants and financiers over agrarian farmers.

4.4 THE FIRST PARTY SYSTEM EMERGES

Mechanisms of Division

The Partisan Press: Sharp, polarized newspaper networks.

Political Clubs: Localized networks formed to enforce party loyalty and organize voters.



Faction 1: Federalists

Supporters of Alexander Hamilton's centralized, industrial vision.

Faction 2: Democratic-Republicans

Supporters of Thomas Jefferson's decentralized, agrarian vision.

The Catalyst

Despite the founders' hopes and Washington's direct warnings, mutual existential fear birthed political parties—each side believing the other threatened the republic.

4.5 The Whiskey Rebellion: A Test of Federal Power

Trigger (1794)

Trigger (1794)

- Federal government levies a tax on whiskey.

Resistance

Farmers in western Pennsylvania violently resist the tax.

Response

President Washington calls out approximately 13,000 militia troops to suppress the uprising.

Result

The protest dissolves immediately upon the militia's arrival.

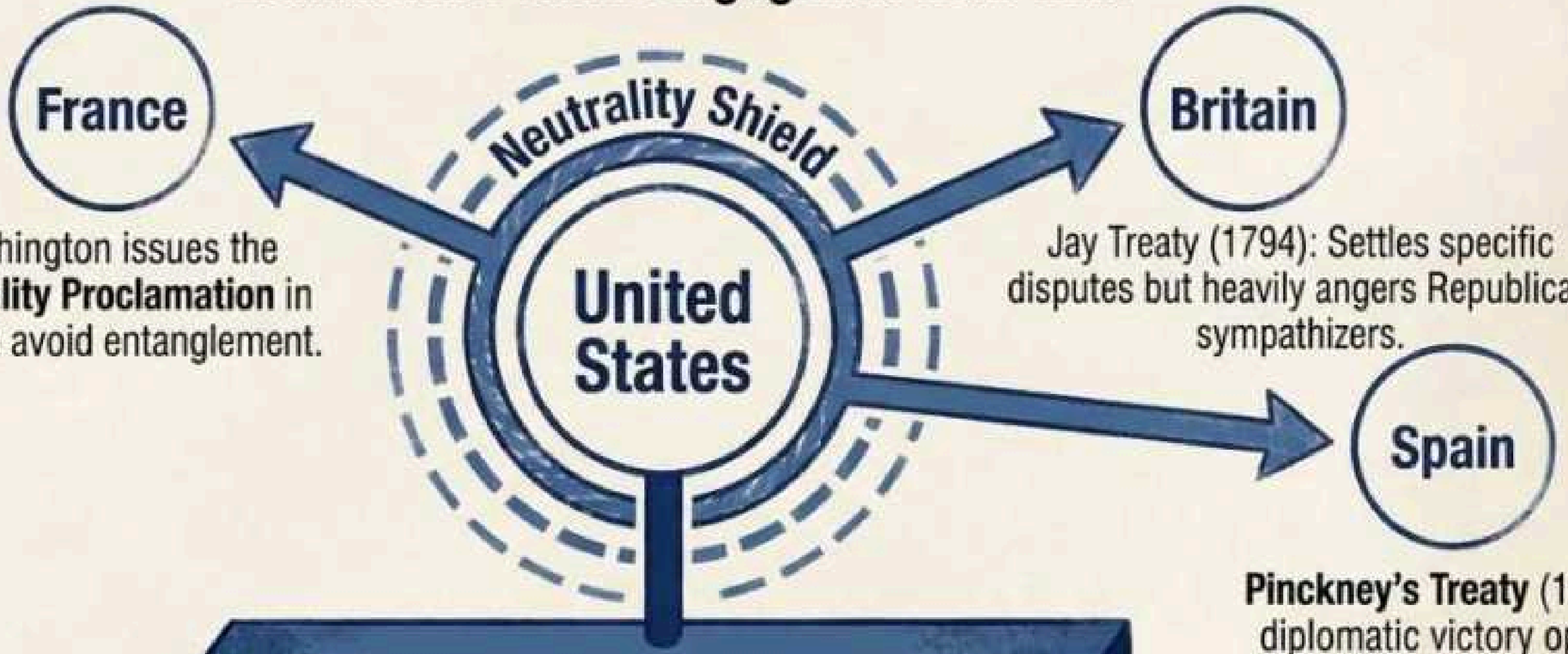


Synthesis

Unlike the weak Articles of Confederation, the episode definitively proved that the new federal government possessed the teeth to enforce its own laws.

4.6 NAVIGATING A WORLD AT WAR

The French Revolution deeply divided Americans, while Britain and France engaged in total war.



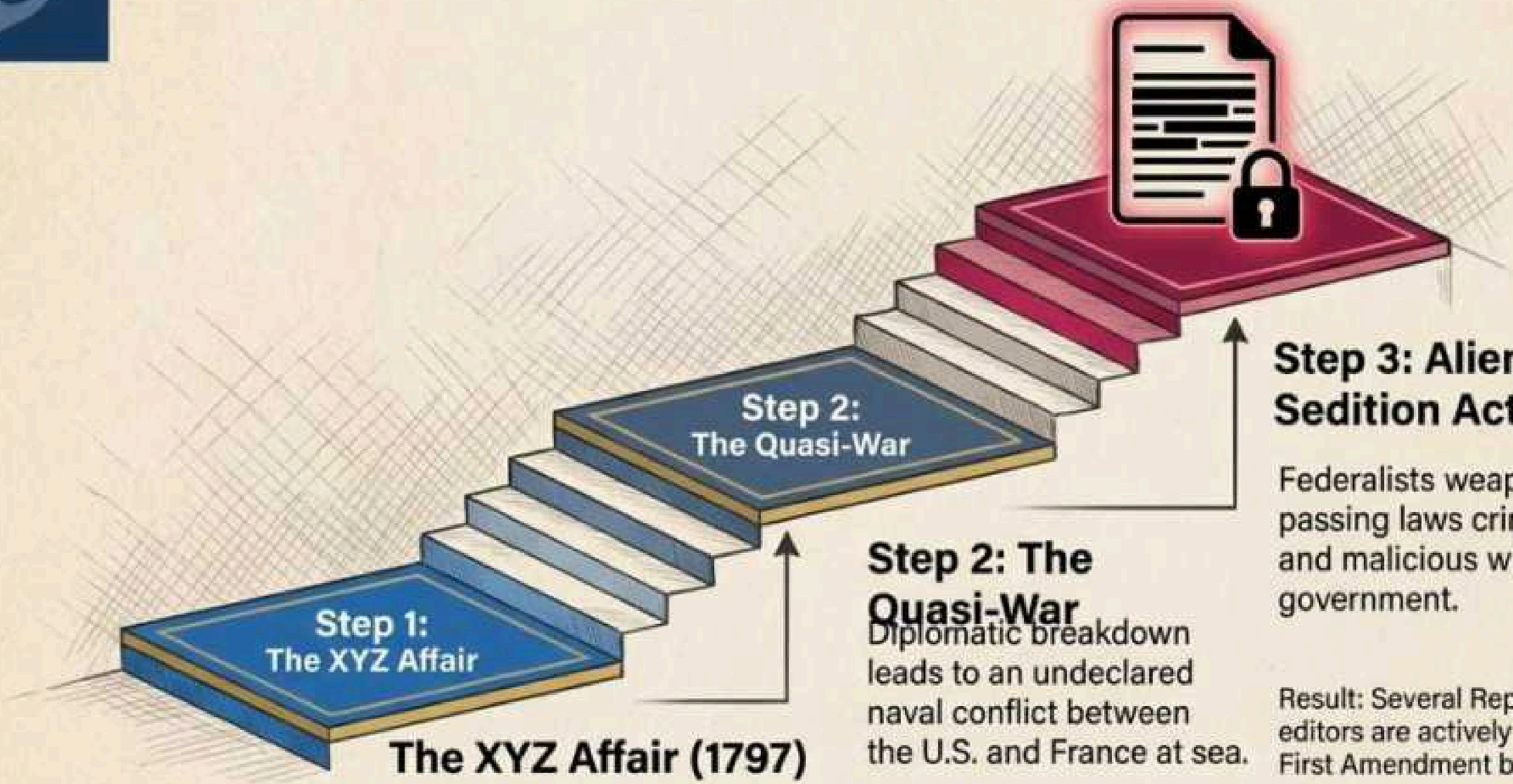
Washington issues the **Neutrality Proclamation** in 1793 to avoid entanglement.

Jay Treaty (1794): Settles specific disputes but heavily angers Republican sympathizers.

Pinckney's Treaty (1795): A diplomatic victory opening the Mississippi River to American trade.

Washington's Farewell Address (1796) establishes the ultimate doctrinal precedent: a stark warning against permanent foreign alliances.

4.7 John Adams and the French Crisis



The XYZ Affair (1797)

French agents demand bribes from American envoys, sparking national outrage.

Step 2: The Quasi-War

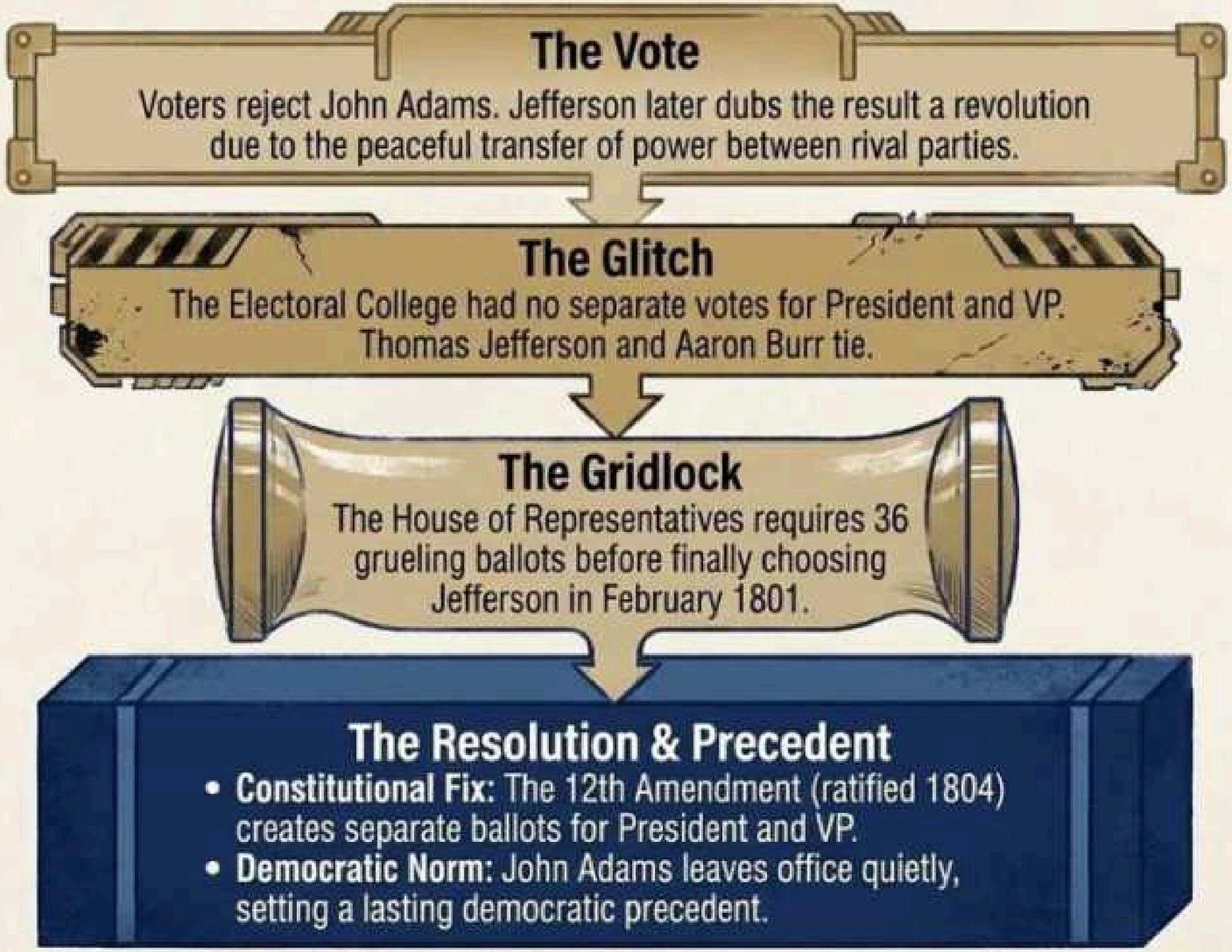
Diplomatic breakdown leads to an undeclared naval conflict between the U.S. and France at sea.

Step 3: Alien and Sedition Acts (1798)

Federalists weaponize the crisis, passing laws criminalizing false and malicious writing against the government.

Result: Several Republican newspaper editors are actively prosecuted, testing First Amendment boundaries.

4.8 The Revolution of 1800



4.9 *Marbury v. Madison*: The Supreme Court's Power

The Architect: Chief Justice John Marshall, appointed by outgoing President Adams.

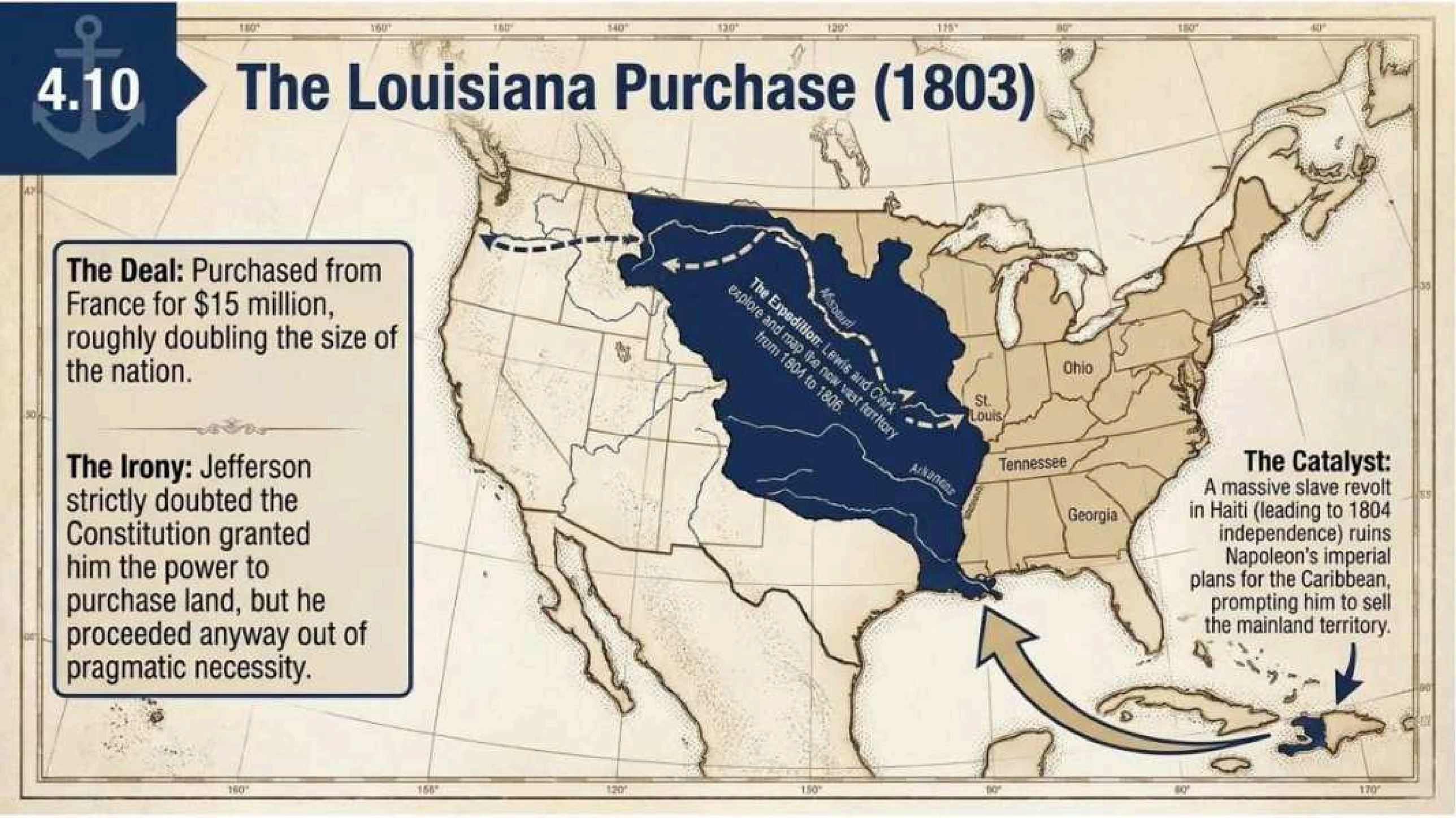
The Action (1803): Marshall rules that the Supreme Court possesses the authority to declare an act of Congress unconstitutional—establishing the doctrine of Judicial Review.



The Tact: Marshall executes this ruling carefully, establishing ultimate judicial authority in a manner that explicitly avoids a direct, winnable clash with President Jefferson.

The Legacy: Under Marshall's leadership, the Court systematically strengthens the power of the national government for more than thirty years.

4.10 The Louisiana Purchase (1803)



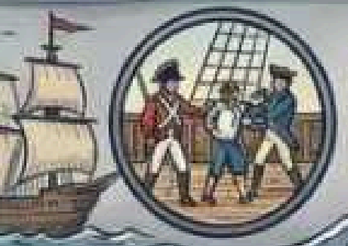
The Deal: Purchased from France for $15 million, roughly doubling the size of the nation.

The Irony: Jefferson strictly doubted the Constitution granted him the power to purchase land, but he proceeded anyway out of pragmatic necessity.

The Catalyst: A massive slave revolt in Haiti (leading to 1804 independence) ruins Napoleon's imperial plans for the Caribbean, prompting him to sell the mainland territory.

4.11 Converging Pressures: The Path to the War of 1812

Pressure 1: Maritime Hostility

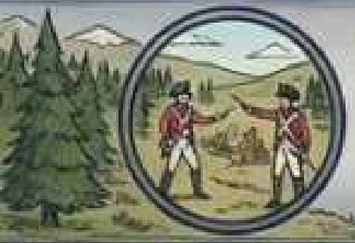


Britain systematically seizes American sailors (impressment).



Jefferson's disastrous **Embargo Act of 1807** attempts to stop exports but severely hurts American merchants more than Europe.

Pressure 2: Western Frontier Conflict



Westerners demand an end to British military support for Native nations.



Focus centers on the powerful Native confederacy led by Tecumseh.



The Point of No Return: In 1812, under President James Madison, Congress formally **declares war** on Britain.

4.12 The War of 1812: Crucible and Resolution





1813: The Frontier Collapse

Tecumseh dies in battle, fracturing the Native confederacy.

August 1814: The Capital Burns

The war goes disastrously for the U.S.; British forces capture Washington and burn the Capitol and the White House.

Late 1814: Resilience & Peace

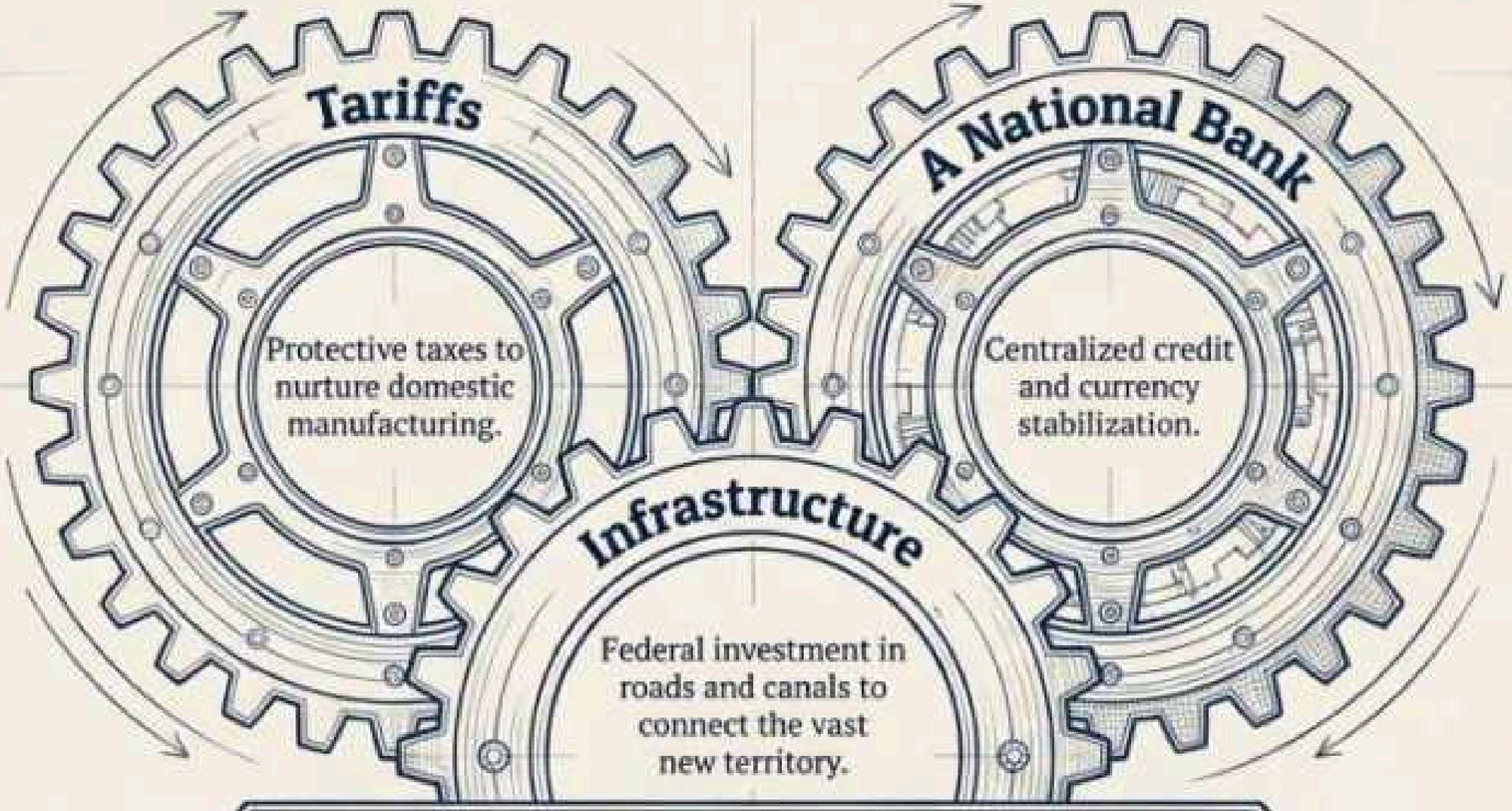
Baltimore: British forces fail to take Fort McHenry. The sight of the flag inspires Francis Scott Key to write the Star-Spangled Banner.

Diplomacy: The Treaty of Ghent officially ends the war in December 1814.

Post-Treaty Epilogue

Andrew Jackson secures a massive, reputation-defining military victory at New Orleans shortly after the treaty is signed.

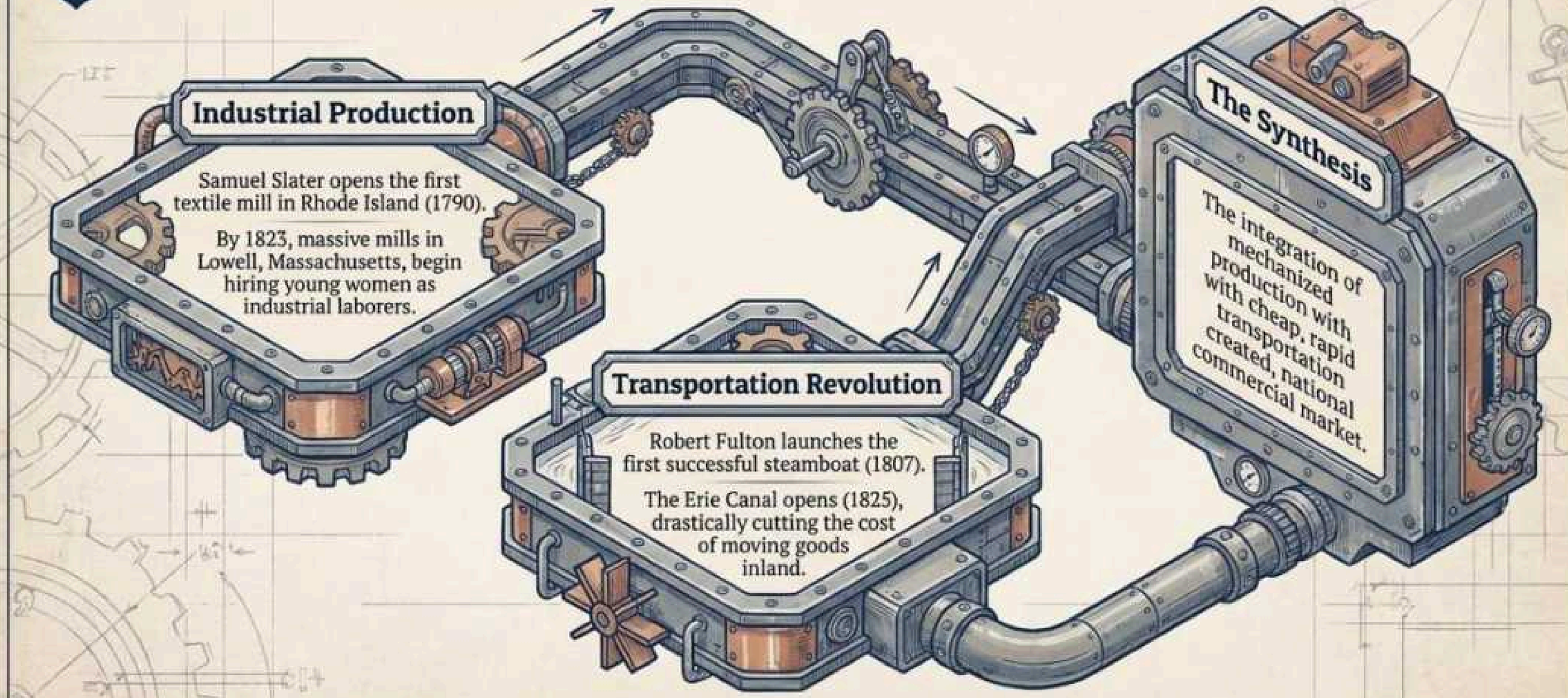
4.13 The Era of Good Feelings



McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

The Supreme Court upholds the Second Bank and officially affirms that Congress possesses implied powers beyond those explicitly listed in the Constitution.

4.14 The Engine of the Market Revolution



4.15 The Deepening of Slavery

The Catalyst (1793)

Eli Whitney patents the cotton gin, suddenly making short-staple cotton highly profitable.

The Westward Push

Planters aggressively expand operations westward into Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana to cultivate new cotton lands.

The Demographic Tragedy

Congress legally ends the international importation of enslaved people in 1808.

Result: The domestic slave trade explodes to fill labor demands.

Data Point: Historians estimate roughly 1 million enslaved people were forcibly moved from the Upper South to the Deep South between 1790 and 1860.

4.16 Resistance and Resilience

Active Resistance

Gabriel's Rebellion (1800): An enslaved man in Virginia plans a major uprising that is betrayed and brutally crushed.

Denmark Vesey (1822): A free Black man in Charleston is accused of organizing a massive rebellion plot and is executed along with others.

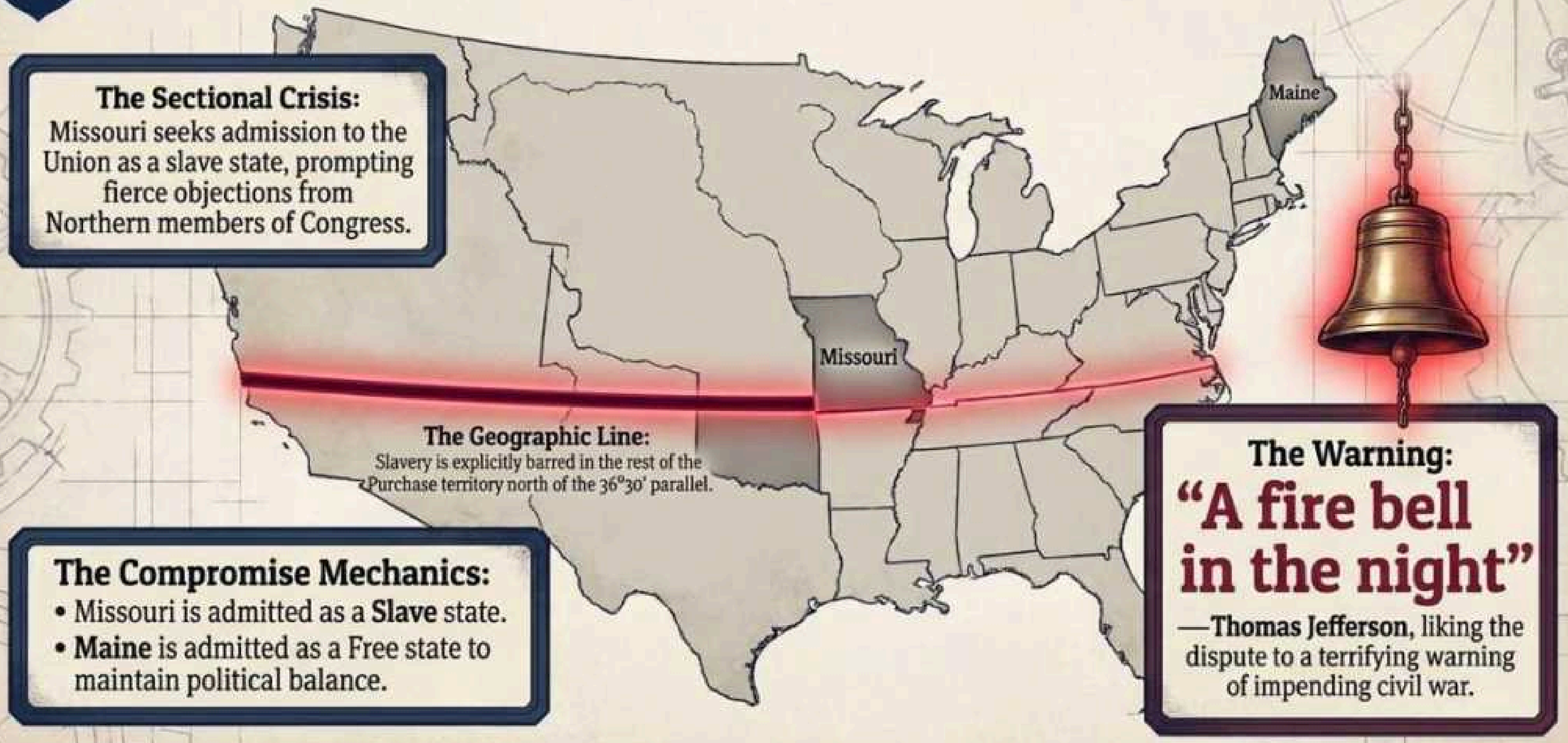
Institutional Resilience

Free Black communities actively build independent churches, schools, and mutual aid societies.

Highlight: The founding of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church by Richard Allen, cementing a lasting spiritual and institutional foundation.

4.17 The Missouri Compromise (1820)

The Sectional Crisis:
Missouri seeks admission to the Union as a slave state, prompting fierce objections from Northern members of Congress.



The Geographic Line:
Slavery is explicitly barred in the rest of the Purchase territory north of the 36°30′ parallel.

The Compromise Mechanics:
- Missouri is admitted as a **Slave** state.
- **Maine** is admitted as a Free state to maintain political balance.

The Warning:

"A fire bell in the night"

—**Thomas Jefferson**, liking the dispute to a terrifying warning of impending civil war.

4.18 The Election of 1824 & Political Shifts

The Broken Election:

Andrew Jackson wins the most votes (a plurality) but fails to secure a majority.
The decision goes to the House of Representatives, which chooses John Quincy Adams.



The Fallout:

Adams immediately names Henry Clay as his Secretary of State.
Jackson's furious supporters decry the arrangement as a corrupt bargain.



The Shifting Electorate (A Paradox of Expansion):

Expansion: States begin dropping property requirements, expanding the vote to far more white men.

Restriction: Simultaneously, states (like New York) explicitly keep or introduce strict property requirements to disenfranchise Black men.

4.19 Synthesis: The Fatal Nexus of Growth and Slavery

Territorial Growth (The Louisiana Purchase)	**Impact on Slavery:** Opened millions of acres of vast new western lands (AL, MS, LA) directly for the establishment of brutal cotton plantations.
Industrial Growth (Textile Mills & Cotton Gin)	**Impact on Slavery:** Northern mills and the cotton gin created an insatiable, highly profitable, mechanized d for slave-picked short-staple cotton.
Population & Market Shifts	**Impact on Slavery:** The end of international importation combined with explosive western demand fueled a massive, tragic domestic slave trade (1 million people forced South).

The physical and economic architecture of the early republic was fundamentally built alongside the expansion of slavery, setting the inescapable stage for the Jacksonian era of democracy and removal.