

I.

Manhattan's Struggle for Human Freedom Against The Slave Power of Virginia

A Contribution to an Ongoing Discussion

by Robert Ingraham

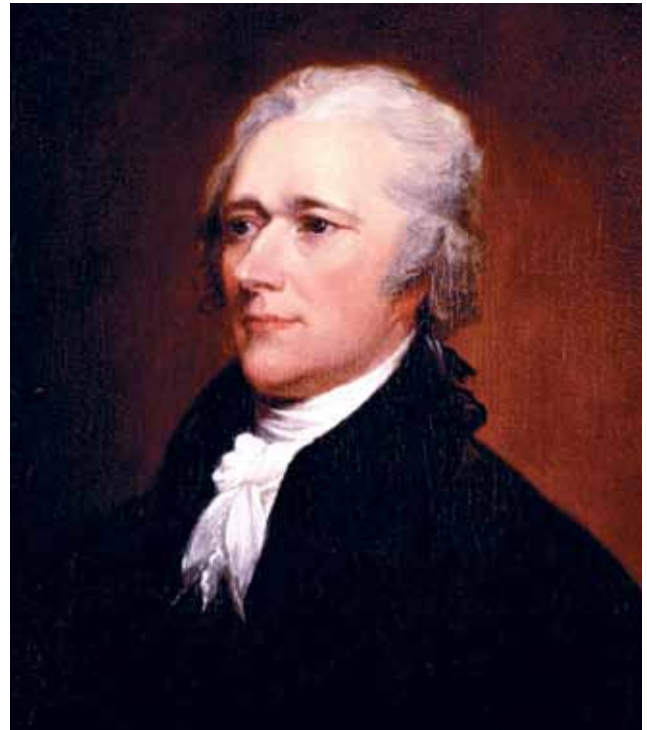
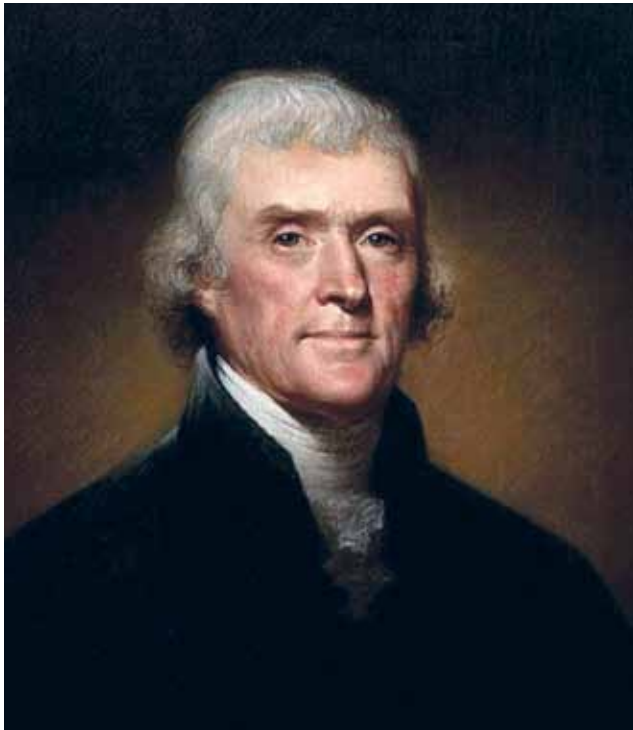
April 20—There are myths and counter-myths surrounding the early history of the United States of America. It is often difficult for the mere observer to discern what was actually going on, and what the nature of the battle was. This document will demonstrate that from the very beginning, this nation was defined by a titanic war between two opposing forces, opponents who differed not merely on practical political issues, but on the very nature of the human species itself. On the one side was the New York leadership who created the United States Constitution and defined the mission of the United States during the Presidency of George Washington. Against them were arrayed the Virginia combine of the Southern “Slave Power,” an anti-human aristocracy who were determined that it would be the slavocracy of the South who would control the future destiny of the nation. This is the story of that battle.



* * *

In the years immediately prior to the American Revolutionary War, four young graduates of King's College (today's Columbia University) in New York City began a friendship, a personal bond, from which sprang forth the leadership of a new nation. This bond was strengthened and deepened during the years of the American War for Independence, a war which also witnessed the beginning of their intimate relationship with George Washington, and later, in 1787, it would be these four,—Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Gouverneur Morris and Robert Livingston,—who performed the vital role in the creation of the finished form of the United States Constitution, as well as in that document's successful ratification one year later. Beginning in 1789, three of these individuals—Hamilton, Jay and Morris—would form the nucleus of the leadership in the new Presidential Administration of George Washington, a Presidency whose nature can only be grasped by recognizing that it was a “New York Administration.”

They were joined and supported by other key New Yorkers, including Steven Van Rensselaer, Philip Schuyler, and Isaac Roosevelt, along with Hamilton's protégé Rufus King, who moved from Massachusetts to New York at Hamilton's urging. Later, the legacy of this grouping would be continued through the efforts of DeWitt Clinton, James Fenimore Cooper, and others.



White House Historical Association

The protagonists. On the left, Rembrandt Peale's 1800 portrait of Jefferson; on the right, John Trumbull's posthumous portrait of Hamilton.

Even before the inauguration of Washington, stretching back to the Constitutional Convention and earlier, the philosophy and policy of what would become this 1789 New York Administration was ruthlessly and bloodily opposed by the Slave Interests of the South.

There are two related delusions concerning slavery and the American Republic. The first is that the founding fathers were either pro-slavery, or at least tolerant of that institution. The second is that slavery did not emerge as a decisive national crisis until the 1830s or 1840s, or until the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854. The truth, is that beginning with the inauguration of George Washington in 1789, war was declared against that Administration by the Slave Power, and beginning with the election of Thomas Jefferson in 1800, the Southern Slave Power unleashed a relentless, unceasing effort to increase its power, expand geographically and ultimately take over the entire nation.

More was at stake than simply the institution of slavery. The first Washington Administration was an experiment as to whether the principles of the new American Constitution, a constitution steered to its completion by New Yorkers, might succeed in practice. It was the Administration of Alexander Hamilton's cre-

ation of a National Bank, and Hamilton's formation of the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures. The Washington Presidency was the battleground for the creation of a type of Republic never before existent in human history. From the beginning, the mortal enemy of this design was the Slave Power of the South.

Part I

The Beginnings

John Jay and Robert Livingston met as students at King's College in the mid-1760s, and they became the closest of friends until their break in 1792-1794. Within a few years Gouverneur Morris was part of their group, and this trio was to provide the revolutionary leadership for New York State during the ensuing decade. Hamilton, the youngest of the group, was a slightly later addition, but it was this final arrival whose destiny was to be the greatest of them all. All four emerged from, or were linked to a network of prominent New York families, including the Livingstons, Van Rensselaers, Schuylers, and Morris. Alexander Hamilton and Steven Van Rensselaer both married daughters of Philip Schuyler,