

## PART TWO: Building the New Nation, 1776–1860

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### DBQ 3

#### Thomas Jefferson and Philosophical Consistency, 1790–1809

**Directions:** In this DBQ, you must compose an essay that uses both your interpretation of Documents A–E and your own outside knowledge of the period mentioned in this question.

In the 1790s Thomas Jefferson was a major advocate of states' rights and critic of Federalist policies. He advised a Connecticut correspondent in the summer of 1800,

*"Let the general government be reduced to foreign concerns only, and let our affairs be disentangled from those of all other nations, except as to commerce . . . and our general government may be reduced to a very simple organization, and a very unexpensive (sic) one—a few plain duties to be performed by a few servants."*

After his election in 1801, however, Jefferson often vigorously exercised the power of the national government and of the presidency in particular. Determine to what extent Jefferson, after entering the White House, maintained or altered his earlier philosophy of government.

Use these documents and your knowledge of the period from 1790–1809 to compose your answer.

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#### Document A

Source: Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, letter, 1794.

The excise law is an infernal one. The first error was to admit it by the Constitution; the second, to act on that admission; the third and last will be to make it the instrument of dismembering the Union, and setting us all afloat to choose which part of it we will adhere to.

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#### Document B

Source: The Kentucky Resolutions, 1798.

Resolved, that the several states composing the United States of America are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to the general government; but that, by 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.

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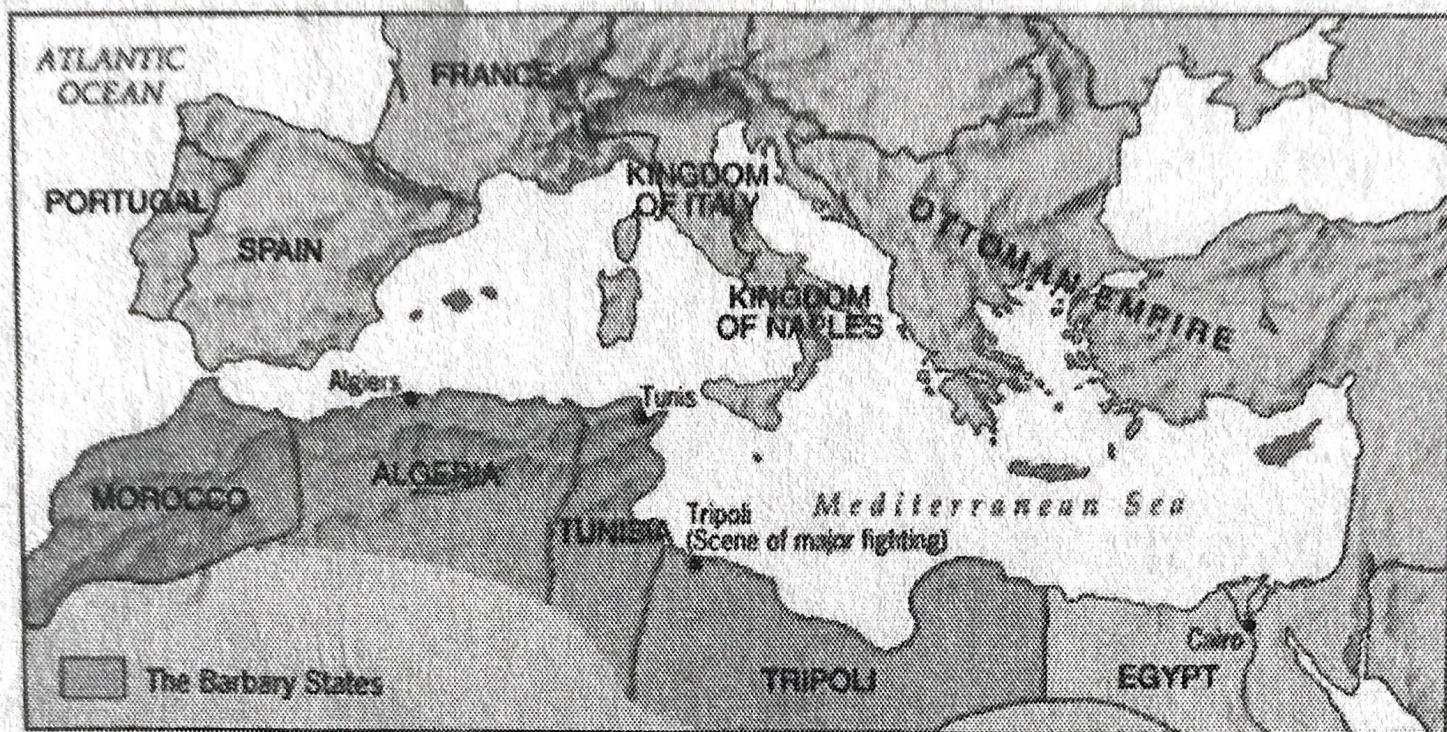
#### Document C

Source: Thomas Jefferson to John Breckinridge, letter, 1803.

The Constitution has made no provision for our holding foreign territory, still less for incorporating foreign nations into our Union. The Executive, in seizing the fugitive occurrence which so much advances the good of their country, have done an act beyond the Constitution. . . . It is the case of a guardian, investing the money of his ward in purchasing an important adjacent territory; and saying to him when of age, "I did this for your good. I pretend to no right to bind you; you may disavow me, and I must get out of the scrape as I can. I thought it my duty to risk myself for you."

## Document D

Source: Four Barbary States of North Africa, c. 1805.  
(See text p. 220 for full-size map.)



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## **Document E**

**Source: Federalist Circular in Massachusetts, c. 1808.**

Let every man who holds the name of America dear to him, stretch forth his hands and put this accursed thing . . . from him. Be resolute, act like sons of liberty, of God, and your country; nerve your arm with vengeance against the Despot [Jefferson] who would wrest the inestimable germ of your Independence from you—and you shall be *Conquerors!!!*