Fitzgerald

The Whiskey Rebellion –

How will the new government deal with a minority who rebels the rule of the majority?

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| What was the burden of the Whiskey Tax? | * Would have to pay more for a “necessity”
	+ Used at weddings, funerals, warm the body in winter, refresh in the summer
* Cost average family $1.50/year
	+ Usu. drank 6 gallons/year
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| Why was whiskey so important to Western (Backcountry) farmers? | * it was their main source of cash
	+ subsistence farmers
* 1,200 lbs. of grain could be distilled into 20 gallons of whiskey
	+ The 20 gallons can be carried by mule to Philadelphia
	+ Sold for $1/gallon
* Use this money to
	+ Pay for dry goods, supplies
	+ Pay ministers’ salaries!
 | Scots-Irish – the people most famous in the world for making whiskeyDry good – sugar, salt, nails, gun, bullets |
| What was Hamilton’s goal and how did it hurt the Western farmers? | * Hamilton’s goal – pay off the war debt
	+ Raise $800,000 with this tax
* Burden to Western farmer –
* It would take $6 of the only $20 they raised annually
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| Describe the battle over this tax? | * Led to a rebellion
* Washington sends in an army of 13,500 soldiers!
	+ To show strength
* Questions –
	+ Is the rebellion justified?
	+ Was the gov’t correct in putting the rebellion down?
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| Describe the points made on each side in Congress. | * Points made against the tax
	+ Paying the debt will benefit the wealthy speculators who bought the bonds for 10 cents on the dollar and would get paid back full price
	+ People have a right to get drunk
	+ Why not tax salaries of rich guys and pensions and lawyers
	+ Tax the beer and cider of the New Englanders
* Points made for the tax
	+ Alcohol is a sinful luxury
	+ Rich already paying a tax on imports costing them more than $6/year
	+ Farmers can just raise the price of whiskey
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| Why aren’t the Democratic Republicans defending the farmers? | * They had cut a deal
	+ Would agree to pay the debt as Hamilton wanted to
	+ If the South got the capital
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| How did the farmers protest? | * Just like the colonists had!
	+ Tarred and feathered tax collectors
	+ Planted liberty poles with slogans against taxation
	+ Passed resolutions of opposition
	+ Formed committees of correspondence
 | No taxation without representation! |
| How did the government respond? | * Hamilton wanted to send the army!
* Washington says no!
* Send a proclamation saying to pay it!
* Asks Congress a law that if interfere with tax collectors must go to trial 300 miles away in Philadelphia!
	+ Just like King George took prisoners to London for trial!
 | Unconstitutional – trial must be where crime took place! |
| Describe the rebellion that broke out in 1794. | * Tax collectors attacked
* U.S. soldiers sent to help tax collectors are surrounded
* Federal officer killed
* 5,000 rebels
* Heading for Pittsburg
* Declared open rebellion by the Supreme Court
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| How is the rebellion suppressed? | * Washington and Hamilton lead an army of 13,500 men
	+ an army almost as large as the whole army ion the Revolution
* the rebellion quickly ends
* but Hamilton stays for months
* rounds up 100s of suspects
* keeps them in corrals
* only 20 actually had enough evidence against them to be taken to trial
* taken to trial in Philadelphia
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| What does Hamilton say about the rebellion? | * Only fear of punishment holds a nation together
* “The government ought to inspire respect with a display of strength.”
* The rich and the well born ought to rule.
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| What does Jefferson say about the rebellion? | * Had stated in the Declaration - The people have a right to rebel when the government deprives them of their rights
* A little rebellion now and then was a good thing – a medicine necessary for “the sound health of the government”
* “ . . . the first error was to pass it (the tax); the second was to enforce it; and the third, to make it the means of splitting the Union.”
 | John Locke’s Right of Rebellion |
| What are the final results? | * Only 2 of the 20 people brought to trial were found guilty
	+ Washington pardoned them both
* Tax was collected for 6 years
	+ The cost of putting down the rebellion was greater than the money taken in by the tax
* Jefferson repealed the tax as soon as he got into office
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