

**UNIVERSITÉ DE TOULON ET DU VAR
FACULTÉ DES LETTRES ET SCIENCES HUMAINES**

SESSION / SEMESTRE	: session 2, semestre 2
DÉPARTEMENT	: LLCE anglais
CODE U.E. / ANNÉE	: 23b / 2009-2010
MATIÈRE	: civilisation américaine
DURÉE de l'ÉPREUVE	: 1h30
DATE ET HEURE	: 21 juin 2010, 8h30 – 10h30
SALLE	: Y' 008
ENSEIGNANT	: P.-F. Peirano
DOCUMENTS AUTORISÉS:	néant

I. Answer **two** of the following four questions (4 pts).

- What were the main events during the Philadelphia Convention of 1787?
- What was known as the "XYZ affair" in 1797? What consequences did it have in the United States?
- Why was the presidential election of 1800 given the name of "The Revolution of 1800"?
- What were the causes of the war between the United States and Great Britain between 1812 and 1814?

II. Comment on **one** of the two texts (16 pts).

Text 1.

**A letter from John Adams to James Warren¹
(22 April 1776).**

The United Colonies are advancing by slow but sure steps, to that mighty² Revolution which you and I have expected for some time. Forced attempts to accelerate their motions would have been attended with³ discontent and perhaps convulsions.

¹ James Warren was a statesman who, at the time, was part of the Massachusetts government.

² Mighty: *puissant*.

³ To be attended with (here): *être suivi de*.

5 The news from South Carolina⁴ has aroused and animated all the continent. It has spread a visible joy, and if North Carolina and Virginia should follow the example, it will spread through the rest of the colonies like electric fire.

10 I think it is now the precise point of time for our Council and House of Representatives either to proceed to make such alterations in our Constitution⁵ as they may judge proper, or to send a petition to Philadelphia for the consent of Congress to do it. It will be considered as evidence of our spirit and vigour, and will give life and activity and energy to all the other colonies. Four months ago, it might have been disagreeable and perhaps dangerous; but it is quite otherwise
15 now. Another thing, if you are so unanimous in the measure of independency, and wish for a declaration of it, now is the proper time to instruct your delegates to that effect. It would have been productive of jealousies perhaps, and animosities, a few months ago; but, now, it would have a contrary tendency. The Colonies are all at this moment turning their eyes that way. Vast majorities in all
20 the colonies now see the propriety⁶ and necessity of taking the decisive steps, and those who are averse to it⁷ are afraid to say much against it. [...]

All great changes are irksome⁸ to the human mind, especially those which are attended with great dangers and uncertain effects. No man living can foresee the consequences of such a measure, and therefore I think it ought not to have
25 been undertaken⁹ until the design of Providence, by a series of great events, had so plainly marked out the necessity of it. We may feel a sanguine confidence of our strength! Yet in a few years it may be put to the trial.

We may please ourselves with the prospect of free and popular governments, but there is great danger that these governments will not make us
30 happy. God grant¹⁰ they may! But I fear that in every Assembly members will obtain an influence by noise, not sense; by meanness¹¹, not greatness; by ignorance, not learning. I fear, too, that it will be impossible to convince and persuade people to establish wise regulations.

⁴ In March 1776, the Provisional Congress of South Carolina had expressed its wish to draft a Constitution.

⁵ Be careful! John Adams is talking about the State Constitutions – not the Federal one, which would be drafted later.

⁶ The propriety: *la convenance*.

⁷ Those who are averse to it: those who are against it.

⁸ Irksome: *ennuyeux*.

⁹ It ought not to have been undertaken: *cela n'aurait pas dû être entrepris...*

¹⁰ To grant: *garantir*.

¹¹ Meanness (here): *la mesquinerie*.

35 There is one thing, my dear sir, that must be attempted and sacredly
observed, or we are all undone¹². There must be decency and respect and
veneration introduced for persons in authority, of every rank, or we are undone.
In a popular government this is the only way of supporting order, and in our
circumstances, as our people have been so long without any government at all, it
is more necessary than in any other.

Text 2.

**A letter from Thomas Jefferson to Dr. Joseph Priestley
(21 March, 1801).**

DEAR SIR,—What an effort have we gone through¹³! The barbarians really
flattered themselves they should be able to bring back the times of Vandalism,
when ignorance reigned. We were to look backwards, not forwards, for
improvement. Those who live by *charlatanerie* endeavored¹⁴ to crush our model
5 of government. [...] But now, our countrymen have recovered from the alarm
into which they had been thrown; science & honesty are replaced on their high
ground. It is with great satisfaction that, in the first moments of my public
action¹⁵, I can welcome you to our land, cover you under the protection of those
laws which were made for the wise and good like you, and disdain¹⁶ the
10 legitimacy of that former legislation, which under the form of a law, was for
some time placed among them.

As the storm is now subsiding, and the horizon becoming serene, it is
pleasant to consider the phenomenon with attention. We can no longer say there
is nothing new under the sun. For this whole chapter in the history of man is
15 new. The great extent of our Republic is new. Its sparse¹⁷ habitation is new. The
mighty wave of public opinion which has rolled over it is new. The order & good
sense displayed in this recovery from delusion¹⁸, and in the crisis¹⁹ which lately

¹² Or we are all undone: *ou nous sommes tous perdus*.

¹³ To go through: *traverser*.

¹⁴ To endeavor(u)r: *s'efforcer de*.

¹⁵ Jefferson is, of course, referring to his role as President of the United States.

¹⁶ To disdain: *dédaigner*.

¹⁷ Sparse: *rare*.

¹⁸ Delusion: *l'illusion, la tromperie*.

¹⁹ Jefferson is referring to the 1800 presidential election, for which an extra vote at the House of Representatives was necessary.

arose, really bespeak²⁰ a strength of character in our nation which augurs well for the duration of our Republic; & I am much better satisfied now of its stability
20 than I was before it was tried.

I have been, above all things, solaced²¹ by the prospect which opened on us, in the event of a non-election of a President; in which case, the federal government would have been in the situation of a clock or watch run down²². There was no idea of force. A convention, invited by the Republican members of
25 Congress, with the virtual President & Vice President, would have been set up in 8 weeks, would have repaired the Constitution where it was defective, & wound it up²³ again. This peaceable & legitimate resource shows a precious principle of self-preservation in our²⁴ composition, till a change of circumstances shall take place, which is not within prospect at any definite period.

²⁰ To bespeak: *témoigner de*.

²¹ To solace: *consoler, soulager*.

²² Run down (here): *démonté*.

²³ To wind up (a watch): *remonter*.

²⁴ This pronoun is referring to the American people.