Pact with Great Britain riles the American public

By the 1790s, relations between Great Britain and the United States deteriorated nearly to the point of war. Knowing that his young country could not suffer another armed conflict, Washington turned to diplomacy.

Washington sent Supreme Court Justice John Jay to England to negotiate a treaty. Afterwards, Americans – outraged by terms they believed favored the British – burned Jay in effigy and angrily denounced Washington. The flawed agreement, however, successfully saved the country from war and gave it time to grow stronger.