

# The Papers of George Washington: 1 June-31 August 1793 (Presidential Series)

George Washington

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Volume 13 of the Presidential Series documents the period from 1 June through 31 August 1793, a time when Washington focused his efforts as president on keeping the United States neutral during the war between France and Great Britain. The greatest challenge came from the presence in U.S. ports of both British and French privateers and their prizes. Frequent correspondence with the state governors, especially Thomas Mifflin of Pennsylvania and George Clinton of New York, kept the president informed of the latest arrivals. The cabinet, consisting of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of War Henry Knox, and Attorney General Edmund Randolph, met frequently at Washington's behest, both with and without him. These meetings produced a series of cabinet opinions delineating America's neutrality policy. An effort to solicit the Supreme Court for an opinion on regulations designed to enforce America's neutrality policy, however, failed. The administration also was unsuccessful in its attempt to prosecute American citizens who enlisted for service on French privateers. At the same time, Charles Edmond Genet, the French minister plenipotentiary to the United States, failed to cooperate with the administration's directives concerning French privateers and prizes. This fact, combined with his attempt to influence the American political process, led to the cabinet's decision to ask the French government for Genet's recall. While some Americans opposed the neutrality policies of the administration, others did not, and Washington received numerous letters of support from municipal and civic organizations in the maritime states.

Other issues of national concern included Washington's approval of additional foreign loans and the administration's preparations for a peace treaty with hostile Indians in the Northwest Territory. The president also paid considerable attention to the desire of the citizens of South Carolina and Georgia for a military expedition against the Cherokees, Creeks, and other southern Indians. Washington, however, decided against the use of force at this time.

In his private life, Washington continued his efforts to manage his Mount Vernon farms while living in Philadelphia. The death of his estate manager in June provided additional anxiety as Washington searched for a replacement. He also continued his role as the patriarch of an extended family. He was particularly engaged in offering advice on estate management to Frances Bassett Washington, the widow of his nephew George Augustine Washington.



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