Brilliant Solution

Epilogue

p. 205, ¶ 1, line 1—“The men who framed the Constitution could not see into the future. They could not predict the rise of political factions in Congress, factions that would soon coalesce into the first national party system.”

p. 205, ¶ 1, line 6—“Nor could they ever have imagined that James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, the two pillars upon which the new government had been based, would become bitter political enemies, leaders of two opposing political parties.”

p. 205, ¶ 1, line 15—“In the same manner, the men who elevated George Washington to the presidency and declared him ‘the Father of His Country’ would have never imagined that the executive office would become more than a symbol of national unity, but the center of policy making, directing congressional action rather than simply executing it.”

p. 206, ¶ 2, line 1—“Washington’s ability to read the future was no greater than his fellow delegates to the convention. When he took office, he believed his role in government was exemplary rather than directive. He understood what Madison had realized sometime in early September 1787: that the president must be a symbol of national unity, the people’s champion, and the country’s most distinguished citizen.”

p. 206, ¶ 3, line 1—“Things did not turn out as the founding fathers hoped – or expected. Even before Washington’s first term had ended, men like Madison and Hamilton realized that the executive office would play a more active role in shaping the nation’s future than anyone at the convention had ever imagined.”

p. 206, ¶ 3, line 6—“Washington had understood… that ever step he took would set a precedent. Yet he had not dreamed this would be true not only in the symbolic realm – in his choice to be called ‘Mr. President’ rather than ‘Your Excellency’ – but also in the very tangible realm of commercial expansion and the widening embrace of the market economy and in the rising role of America in world events.”

p. 207, ¶ 2, line 1—“For as the executive branch moved to create institutions that would assist it, and as it took action to insure it could execute the law, the influence of the presidency increased and the power of the executive expanded. Consider… the establishment of the Bank of the United States in
1792. The bank was Hamilton’s brainchild, an institution that combined government funds with funds from private investors, creating a much-needed capital pool for the use of American entrepreneurs.”

p. 207, ¶ 3, line 1—“More than anything else, diplomacy and foreign affairs forced Washington and his contemporaries to realize the real, rather than the symbolic, role of the president.”

p. 208, ¶ 2, line 1—“Ironically, in every instance – the creation of the Bank of the United States, the suppression of the Whiskey rebels, the Jay Treaty – Washington helped moved the nation’s political culture closer to the two-party system. The unity the Federalists demonstrated in their struggle to ratify the Constitution was quickly splintered as fundamental disagreements over the national economy, the limits of the central government’s authority, the degree of democracy possible within a republic, and the shape of foreign alliances emerged.”

p. 208, ¶ 2, line 13—“By the time Washington left office in 1796, both the followers of Hamilton and Adams and those of Jefferson and Madison understood that party loyalty could be the key factor in legislation, domestic policy, and foreign affairs. By the time Jefferson took office in 1801, the president had become an advocated for a party program and a defender of its priorities – and an active player in assuring the triumph of both.”

p. 209, ¶ 2, line 1—“As we have seen in recent times (September 11, 2001), a national crisis can momentarily revive the notion of the president as a symbol of unity, a representative of the people, and an embodiment of the virtues of the citizens value.”

p. 209, ¶ 3, line 1—“yet the president’s symbolic role can no longer overshadow the president’s role as the leader of a political party and the developer of policy, both foreign and domestic. We live… in an era of what… historian Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. had termed the ‘imperial presidency,’ in a time when the president goes before Congress to present his agenda for the coming year, to announce the legislation he wishes the House to propose, the foreign policy he wishes the Senate to endorse.”

p. 210, ¶ 2, the whole ¶—“The founding fathers did not expect their constitution to endure for centuries. They could not predict…”