Chapter 7
The Federalist Republic
1789-1799

President George Washington
• Elected president in 1789 without opposition
• John Adams elected vice president
• Adams & Washington are not allies.
• Judiciary Act of 1789 becomes law
• Amendments that make up Bill of Rights passed

Success Not Assured
• “The loyalty of its citizens was untested, and thus its survival was uncertain. Its legitimacy rested, for the moment, solely upon the ratification process. If public support waned or protest against its policies and programs grew vocal, that legitimacy could be challenged.” (p. 191)
• History’s rear view mirror dynamic creates illusions of certitude and confidence.

Washington’s Presence Vital
• “For the moment what the new government needed was a charismatic figure who held the people’s affection and loyalty by the force of personality and character alone – and who was willing to spread the protective blanket of that widespread devotion over the newly established government. Fortunately, it had such a man in George Washington.” (p. 191)

Not All States Participated
• “On February 4, 1789, electors in eleven states had met to cast their votes for the first president of the United States.” (p. 192)
• Rhode Island and North Carolina had not yet ratified the Constitution.
• Smart move to proceed without them.
• They eventually overcame their objections rather than to be left out of the process.

Washington Only Candidate
• “The election was unique in American history, not simply because a unanimous vote had swept someone into office. No one had campaigned for election.” (p. 192)
• It was presumed by all that Washington, the only true national figure, and Revolutionary War hero, would be president.
Washington A Reluctant Candidate

• “The leading candidate was well-known to be the most reluctant candidate; indeed, he had repeatedly expressed his desire to retire from public life and spend the remaining years as a farmer.” (p. 193)
• It was not false humility. He was best a military strategist, and good at presiding, but he was not strong on policy.

Washington’s Health Problems

• “He was in poor health, suffering once again from debilitating bouts of rheumatism and the nagging pain produced by dentures made of everything from hippopotamus teeth to ivory and lead. At fifty-seven, he felt old, and his longing to spend his days riding the fields and enjoying the quiet comforts of his fireside was guise to hid ambition.” (Berkin, p. 193)

New York City is Capital

• “Meanwhile, Congress busied itself with finding appropriate housing for the president-elect and planning for his inauguration. A letter went out to Washington, asking when and where he would like to take the oath.” (p. 195)
• Economically the most important city in the nation, central in location, an international harbor.

Delegates in New Government

• Many of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention ran and had won office.
• “That so many of the men who had framed the Constitution would be there to see it through its first years must have been heartening to the new president.” (p. 198)
• Many of those who hadn’t run would be appointed to important positions.

Inauguration Day 1789

• “On April 30 – inauguration day – the city was awakened to the sound of church bells and the roar of cannon from Bowling Green.” (Berkin, p. 198)
• “Scores of New Yorkers assembled in churches, where they heard their ministers ‘implore the blessings of Heaven on the nation.’” (Ibid.)

Presidential Precedents

• “At precisely twelve noon, the senators and representatives chosen to escort the president assembled at his home. They found Washington waiting. Always sensitive to the symbolic possibilities of dress, Washington had chosen to wear a dark brown coat, waistcoat, and breeches, and white silk stockings, all made from American cloth.” (Berkin, p. 199)
Washington Not Religious
• “With little or no attachment to any church, Washington had two intense organizational commitments: Freemasonry and the Society of Cincinnati.” (Berkin, p. 199)
• Despite modern religious leaders’ claims to the contrary, in an effort to place specific religions into government, many of the Founders were only nominally Protestant.

Vice President John Adams
• “Unlike the president-elect, the short, chunky Adams had shown a preference for splendor over simplicity in selecting his inauguration-day suit.” (Berkin, p. 200)
• Adams represented an alliance of different regions. The first ticket balancing.
• Washington was a Virginian and must be balanced by a northerner like Adams.

Adams & Washington Not Allies
• “Washington acknowledged the elaborately dressed Adams politely but not warmly, for the two men were far from friends. Adams burned with a jealousy of Washington’s fame and popularity that he was unable to hide. For his part, Washington found Adams too ‘Yankee’ in his unpolished manners, blunt speech, and open ambition.” (Berkin, p. 200)

Washington’s Emotions
• “The Bible was raised and George Washington leaned low to kiss its open pages. As he did, he said, ‘I swear’ – and then, visibly moved by the moment, he closed his eyes and added, ‘So help me God.’” (Berkin, p. 201)
• Often used as a means to promote religion in government, it was an improvised expression personally made by him.

First Inaugural Speech
• “Washington’s concern for the task before him was evident in the short, but moving inaugural speech that followed his oath taking. His hands trembling and his voice unsteady, Washington described his election as a ‘vicissitude,’ rather than a delight and spoke frankly of his anxiety in the face of ‘the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me.’” (Berkin, p. 201)

Washington Was A Deist
• “With a Deist’s sensibility and vocabulary, he spoke of America’s dependence upon ‘the Great Author of every public and private good,’ whose ‘Invisible Hand’ in the political affairs of men ought to be acknowledged by the American people.
He invited Congress, and the citizens they represented, to join him in recognizing the influence of the Almighty Being in the ‘proceedings of a new and free government.’” (Berkin, p. 202)

**Inaugural Speech Lacks Policy**

- “Acknowledging that one of his duties was to make recommendations to Congress, Washington nevertheless carefully avoided proposing any specific measures in his inaugural address.” (Berkin, p. 202)
- Many of Washington’s preconceived notions about the presidency would prove to be idealistic if not outright naive.

**Washington Opposes Party & Regional Politics**

- “Chief among their (Congress’s) virtues, he continued, was the pledge that they would not succumb to ‘local prejudices or attachments… [nor] separate views nor party animosities.’” (Berkin, p. 202)
- He rightly feared the impact of conflicts between regions and partisan politics.

**Divisions Emerge Early**

- “…Washington would be sorely disappointed, for by his second term in office, a growing division between champions of agriculture and the champions of commerce, between Francophiles and Anglophiles, and between the followers of Jefferson and the advocates of Hamiltonian economics would create the very political parties Washington so abhorred.” (Berkin, p. 202)

**Founders Were Wise Not Omniscient**

- “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.” (Berkin, p. 205)
- The world, medicine, technology & culture would change.

**Hamilton vs. Jefferson**

- “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)
- The challenge of disagreeing without becoming disagreeable existed even then.

**The Pro-Active Presidency**

- “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.” (Berkin, p. 205)

**Early Misconceptions**

• “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.” (Berkin, p. 206)

**Symbolism Still Significant**

• “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.” (Berkin, p. 206)

**Unanticipated Innovations**

• “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.” (Berkin, p. 207)
• Promoters of “original intent” have the challenge of freezing everything as it was.

**President and Fiscal Policy**

• 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.” (Berkin, p. 207)
• Washington thought he’d just preside.

**Unintended Outcomes**

• “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.” (Berkin, p. 208)
• Even as a military strategist Washington was wrong more often than he was right.
The Federalists Splinter

- “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)
- Jefferson was a reluctant Federalist.

Political Parties Emerge

- “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.” (Ibid)
- These alliances were unknown because the former colonists had opposed the English and that unified them artificially.

President as Political Partisan

- “By the time Jefferson took office in 1801, the president had become an advocate for a party program and a defender of its priorities – and an active player in assuring the triumph of both.” (Berkin, p. 208)
- Subsequent presidents have all been partisan, all that has varied was the degree of partisanship.

The Imperial Presidency

- “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,’”
- Some politicians even equate support of the president to national loyalty; patriotism.

The Federalist’s Party

- Hamilton’s branch of the Federalist movement took the name “Federalists.”
- It was not federalist in its philosophy, they believed in a strong national government.
- The elite that Hamilton thought should rule wanted authority concentrated where their base was in national politics.
- The elite class often shift philosophies as the political culture requires.

Federalist Party Policy

- Pro-British, that is, Anglophile.
- Strong central government base on a loose interpretation of the Constitution.
• Were appalled by the French Revolution.
• Their power base was in New England with some support in northern Mid-Atlantic.
• Favored a more equitable treatment of Native Americans.

Jefferson’s Party
• Sometimes called the Democratic-Republicans, other times Republicans.
• Not the same party founded by Lincoln and others in 1860.
• Strict interpretation of the Constitution.
• Opposed strong central government.
• Favored expansion into west at the expense of Native Americans.

Washington’s Second Term
• 1792 Washington re-elected without opposition
• France’s Ambassador Genet recruits Americans for French Revolution
• Jefferson accused of collusion with Genet resigns as Secretary of State
• Whiskey Rebellion suppressed in western Pennsylvania

Whisky Rebellion
• The first test of the strength of the government founded on the new Constitution was made in Pennsylvania, in 1794, by a rebellion against the payment of the excise tax.
• Hundreds of residents took arms against federal officials charged with collecting a tax on liquor distilled at home
• Though it is often described as a tax revolt it had more to do with class conflict.

Legacy of Whiskey Rebellion
• Revolt is crushed by federal troops
• No Right to Bear Arms to challenge government after the Constitution is written
• This is yet another proof that what the Founders meant about the “Right to Bear Arms
• Second Amendment did not mean arming to resist federal or any legal authority.
• It meant protection against Indians primarily.

Growth West of Appalachians
• England had inhibited growth west of the Appalachian Mountains
• The English had armed and encouraged Native American tribes to attack settlers.
• American settlers had defrauded the Indians
• Cherokee join the English during Revolution
• Treaty of Holston (1791) tries to ease tensions.
• Tennessee governor violates treaty agreements.

**Interactions With Spanish**
• American settlers meet Spanish who had taken over French territories in west.
• Spanish had armed Indian tribes to resist
• Eventually Spanish allow Americans to settle in their territories, they will regret it.
• Federal government controls the Northwest Territory which reduces conflict with Indians
• 1790 is peak of Spanish control in America

**International Problems For America**
• Conflicts between England and France were ongoing for centuries; both sides aggressive.
• Jefferson favors the French Revolution
• Federalists favor English in conflict
• The excesses of that revolution were just emerging, at first the changes were moderate
• Spanish restrict use of Mississippi River
• Pirates attack American ships

**Citizen Genêt**
• Franco-American Treaty of Alliance of 1778 makes two countries long-term allies.
• U.S. too weak to get embroiled in war.
• On April 22, 1793 President Washington announces French treaty no longer valid.
• As French envoy, Genêt outfits captured English ship in Savannah to attack British navy.
• Relations severely damaged when Genêt evicted

**Privateers**
• During the Revolutionary War the colonies had only 31 ships to engage British navy.
• Americans commission privately owned ships to attack & confiscate British ships
• Letters of Marque were the official authorization by the government.
• The operated in the “grey area” of legality
• Some were merely pirates allowed to steal
Jay Treaty (1794)
• Neither England nor America abide by all the provisions of the Treaty of Paris.
• England did not abandon Ohio valley forts
• America did not reimburse Loyalists
• England did not return what it confiscated
• England began kidnapping Americans who had at one time been English citizens.
• Jay negotiates these problems fairly.

Evolving Political Differences
• Hamilton did not trust the masses, he wanted to limit democratic input
• Jefferson believed that the people had a voice which was a right
• Those underlying philosophies have different expressions now.
• Those who don’t trust the masses tend to favor more control going to the states where it is easier to control the political environment.

The Republic without George Washington
• Washington could have served as long as he wanted– he knew what he did was precedent.
• Decided to do what would become a precedent until Franklin Delano Roosevelt
• Following Roosevelt an Amendment would be created to make two terms mandatory
• Washington dies in while suffering with a lung ailment (possibly pneumonia)

The Election of 1796
• Washington voluntarily steps down.
• Adams runs against Jefferson.
• At this point the most votes becomes president and the 2\textsuperscript{nd} most becomes VP.
• Adams wins with Jefferson as VP
• Immediately they will see that this system is impractical and change it.
• The 12\textsuperscript{th} Amendment changes rules.

John Adams Elected President
• Veteran of nearly every important political event in America’s short history.
• Portly, he lacked Washington’s charisma.
• More of an intellectual than a leader.
• A lawyer who discussed the complexities.
• Hoped that Federalists & Republicans would not devolve into partisan bickering.
• He would be wrong.
U.S. and France in Conflict

• Republicans and Jefferson favor France.
• Adams and Federalists favored England.
• French begin to seize American ships.
• France’s revolution was a threat to all governments, democratic or monarchial.
• Federalists favored war with France
• Republican resistance prevented war.

Constitutional Rights Challenged

• The Naturalization Act--Extended residency requirements from 5 to 14 years
• The Alien Act--President can deport foreigners identified as posing danger to U.S.
• The Sedition Act--Outlawed criticism of government or its officials.
• Suppressing free speech was an early crisis.