

lock, another in the House of Representatives. Yet almost from the beginning, partisanship and political parties have “played havoc with the Constitution and the independence of the president.”

Appleby, a historian at the University of California, Los Angeles, says the Framers looked with dismay on the state governments created during the Revolution, with their weak executives and large, powerful legislatures that were cauldrons of factionalism and populist sentiment.

The Framers conceived of the president as a leader above politics; they did not imagine the rise of political parties. “So little did the Founders expect candidates for president to compete on the basis of ideology,” Appleby writes, “that they conceived of the vice president as a runner-up presidential candidate.”

Whatever illusions remained were dispelled by the election of 1800, which resulted in an Electoral College tie between two Democratic-Republican candidates, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr. Federalists John Adams and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney trailed. The decision was thrown into the House of Representatives, with each state casting a single vote. That scheme strengthened the Federalists’ hand, and for 35 rounds of balloting they attempted to elect one of their own. Then, Appleby says, “someone found the courage to act honorably.” Representative James Bayard, the

sole congressman from Delaware and a Federalist, withheld his state’s vote from Burr, allowing Jefferson to prevail. Bayard explained that he had acted “so as not to hazard the Constitution.”

Yet the presidency would never achieve the independence the Founders imagined. For much of the 19th century, Congress more or less ruled the roost in Washington, and until the 1960s the political parties selected their presidential candidates with barely a nod to the public. It was “de facto parliamentarism.”

President Richard M. Nixon’s decision to finance his 1972 reelection through an organization separate from the Republican Party “signaled the beginning of the end for party power brokers.” Yet this change did not produce political nirvana. Presidential candidates grew more responsive to big campaign donors, and the public turned increasingly apathetic toward politics. Which brings Appleby to the 2000 election, in which she says partisan passions found a new home: the Supreme Court. In a sense,

there is something natural about this: “The issues that Americans cared most about in 2000—abortion, school prayer, environmental protection, *Miranda* rights, workers’ safety—had already migrated from Congress to the Court.” Appleby wishes, however, that the Court had allowed the House to decide the election, acting “so as not to hazard the Constitution.”



Rep. James Bayard was the hero of the election of 1800.

Who Follows Black Leaders?

“White Residents, Black Incumbents, and a Declining Racial Divide” by Zoltan L. Hajnal, and
“The Effect of Black Congressional Representation on Political Participation” by Claudine Gay,
in *American Political Science Review* (Sept. 2001), American Political Science Assoc.,
1527 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

Does having a black representative in Congress, such as John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.), or Albert Wynn (D-Md.), encourage their black constituents to become more politically involved? Does having a black mayor make white voters more like-

ly to vote for black candidates or affect their views on racially charged issues? Two studies yield some intriguing, but disparate, results.

Hajnal, a political scientist at the University of California, San Diego, examines

why, given the choice between a white and a black candidate, “the vast majority of white Americans will vote for a white candidate, even if it means switching parties.” Voter surveys indicate that whites assume that the black candidate, once elected, would shift resources to black constituents. Yet studies show that black “leadership does not greatly improve the economic well-being of African Americans at the city, regional, or state level.” Since the white voters’ fears are rarely borne out, do their attitudes toward black candidates change once they experience a black incumbent?

To some extent, yes. Looking at mayoral contests between 1984 and 1992, some involving first-time black candidates, others pitting black incumbents against both white and black challengers, Hajnal examined both voting patterns and attitudes on a number of issues, such as school integration, affirmative action, and government assistance to blacks. He found that “on average, white support for the same black candidate increased by 25 percent when s/he became an incumbent.” Even in white-majority cities, black incumbents running against white challengers were reelected 74 percent of the time. Having a black mayor also seemed to change white attitudes on racial issues over time. Most change occurred among white Democrats, some among white moderates, and little or none among white Republicans. “Black leadership means even greater divisions between Democrats and Republicans,” concludes Hajnal.

What effect does black leadership have

on black voters? Gay, a political scientist at Stanford University, studied voter participation in 10 congressional districts represented by African Americans during the early 1990s. Most of the districts had a majority of black and other minority voters. Voting rights advocates who pushed for the creation of such districts believed that “black congressional representation [would] lead not only to more progressive legislation but also to greater appreciation by African Americans of the instrumental value of political participation.” But Gay found that “only occasionally” did black voter turnout rates rise in black-represented districts. And turnout among whites was significantly lower (by five to 18 percentage points) when compared with turnout among white voters in other districts.

The seemingly conflicting findings of these two studies may have a logical explanation. Hajnal focuses on races for local offices, which can have a more direct effect on the daily lives of voters. As Gay observes, members of Congress do not have comparable impact. Their influence stems more from the “symbolic politics” of images and issues. She theorizes that black representatives who vigorously support policies favoring their minority constituents may actually encourage *disengagement* of those constituents from politics once they achieve election. She points to the example of Maryland’s Albert Wynn, who attracted more black voters in 1994 after he began eschewing “expressions of militancy for pronouncements on national issues.”

FOREIGN POLICY & DEFENSE

What Kind of War?

“A Strange War” by Eliot A. Cohen, in *The National Interest* (Thanksgiving 2001), P.O. Box 622, Shrub Oak, N.Y. 10588-0622.

The attack of September 11 was a battle in a war Americans didn’t quite know they were fighting, declares Cohen, a professor of strategic studies at the Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University. Not for him any talk of the attack as a crime to be remedied by bringing the culprits

to justice. It was a political act.

The war may be or may become a “clash of civilizations,” in Samuel Huntington’s famous phrase, but at the very least it is a “strange” war. “Strange” because it doesn’t fit the neat categories of military doctrine, with its “end states and exit strategies.” Cohen says that the