

Madison, Hamilton, and Us

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We look back at certain past moments as idylls of unity. They may feel that way even to the people involved in them: We have won, or we are about to begin; we are all pulling together. But politics never rests, even among friends and allies. Even when they agree, there are still slight shades of difference that may deepen over time. New or ignored questions arise on which they differ greatly. And there is always ambition. Washington was president, with the approval of everybody. But there would come a time when someone else would be president. Who would that be? The second tier could not all occupy the office together.

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