ing the removal power down to the Civil War, which was held to yield the following results: "Article II grants to the President the executive power of the Government, i.e., the general administrative control of those executing the laws, including the power of appointment and removal of executive officers—a conclusion confirmed by his obligation to take care that the laws be faithfully executed; that Article II excludes the exercise of legislative power by Congress to provide for appointments and removals, except only as granted therein to Congress in the matter of inferior offices; that Congress is only given power to provide for appointments and removals of inferior officers after it has vested, and on condition that it does vest, their appointment in other authority than the President with the Senate's consent; that the provisions of the second section of Article II, which blend action by the legislative branch, or by part of it, in the work of the executive, are limitations to be strictly construed and not to be extended by implication; that the President's power of removal is further established as an incident to his specifically enumerated function of appointment by and with the advice of the Senate, but that such incident does not by implication extend to removals the Senate's power of checking appointments; and finally that to hold otherwise would make it impossible for the President, in case of political or other differences with the Senate or Congress, to take care that the laws be faithfully executed." [555]

The holding in *Myers* boils down to the proposition that the Constitution endows the President with an illimitable power to remove all officers in whose appointment he has participated, with the exception of federal judges. The motivation of the holding was not, it may be assumed, any ambition on the Chief Justice's part to set history aright—or awry.[556] Rather, it was the concern that he voiced

---

[555] 272 U.S. at 163–64.

[556] The reticence of the Constitution respecting removal left room for four possibilities: first, the one suggested by the common law doctrine of "estate in office," from which the conclusion followed that the impeachment power was the only power of removal intended by the Constitution; second, that the power of removal was an incident of the power of appointment and hence belonged, at any rate in the absence of legal or other provision to the contrary, to the appointing authority; third, that Congress could, by virtue of its power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper," etc., determine the location of the removal power; fourth, that the President by virtue of his "executive power" and his duty "to take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed," possesses the power of removal over all officers of the United States except judges. In the course of the debate on the act to establish a Department of Foreign Affairs (later changed to Department of State) all of these views were put forward, with the final result that a clause was incorporated in the measure that implied, as pointed out above, that the head of the department would be removable by the President at his discretion. Contemporaneously, and indeed until after the Civil War, this action by Congress, in other words "the decision of 1789,"