THE PAPERS OF JAMES MADISON. Volume III, 3 MARCH 1781–31 DECEMBER 1781. Edited by *William T. Hutchinson* and *William M. E. Rachal*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1963. Pp. xxv, 381. $10.00.)

ANY reviewer of this volume short on time and not handicapped by a conscience will find all the makings of his review in the editors' admirably succinct and comprehensive introduction. For the reviewer with the notion that a book must first be read to be reviewed, there are certain compensations for his by no means inconsiderable pains. As one goes through the papers of this leader of Congress written in the nine months following the ratification of the Articles of Confederation, he is first struck by the really extraordinary reticence of the man, which in turn poses an intriguing and rather important question. Even in the twenty-two letters signed by Madison alone—all but two addressed either to Jefferson or to Edmund Pendleton—Madison drops no hint of the Virginian who presumably lived and breathed in Philadelphia; and, while the letters and papers demonstrate that the mind of the public man functioned with cogency and incisiveness, Madison, by almost never succumbing to the common temptation to speculate and generalize, betrays no political philosophy nor any ultimate objectives underlying his political actions. Surely these are the papers of a politican intent on holding things together in the face of threatened disaster, judging each political measure and expedient by its immediate and direct effect and with little thought to its deeper implications for a problematic future.

But are they? Was Madison in fact always the pragmatic politician who on occasion formulated and expounded political theories or principles only for the practical and specific purposes of the moment: to create a viable union of the states, to secure the ratification of the Constitution, to oppose Hamilton's political and economic program, to thwart the Federalists and secure the election of Jefferson? Or was Madison in 1781 the canny political theorist advocating policies and measures calculated not only to serve the moment but also, and more importantly, to nudge the country toward those nationalist goals he then discreetly

pursued and would soon openly avow? The obvious answer that he was both and neither may be near the truth, but it does not take us very far unless we are sure precisely when he was the one and when the other. The case for Madison's strong nationalist bias in 1781 rests largely on his famous proposed "implied power" amendment to the Articles (March 12), but it can be argued that given the circumstance the amendment could well have been the work of an astute politician unencumbered by ideological preconceptions of any sort, and, as Donald Dewey notes in an unpublished paper, the advocates of the case for Madison's convinced nationalism in 1781 must come to terms with Madison's letter of November 18 to Jefferson.

The footnotes, though as praiseworthy, are less interesting than in the first two volumes. After constructing note after note correcting false rumors about the the southern campaign supplied to Madison by his regular Virginia correspondents, Joseph Jones and Pendleton, the editors must have greeted the news of victory at Yorktown with rejoicing, as I did.

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