
The Papers of James Madison. Volume 3—3 March 1781-31 December 1781. Edited by William T. Hutchinson and William M. E. Rachal. (Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press. 1963. Maps, illustrations, notes, and index. Pp. xxv, 381. \$10.00.)

The third volume of *The Papers of James Madison* continues the exhaustingly thorough documentation of Madison through his letters, congressional papers (he was a delegate through all of 1781), and documents of even incidental association. The proliferation of documents and editorial comments makes *The Papers* invaluable for the person seeking information on even the most insignificant matter relating to Madison, but the multiplicity of references makes easy access to key information difficult. By such projects as this the fascinatingly detailed background of the early national history of the United States is made accessible.

The year 1781 was an important one for James Madison. Rising to leadership in the Confederation Congress he was concerned with such problems as the Northwest Territory, negotiations with Spain, the interpretation of the Articles of Confederation, and hopefully viewing the war for some sign of American victory. Before the year ended the Americans won at Yorktown and Madison believed that "it seems scarcely possible for them much longer to shut their ears against the voice of peace."

Meanwhile, the day to day events of Congress demanded his attention. The 1781 portion of the struggle to prevent land speculators from profiting from the cession of Virginia's western lands to the central government is recorded by a series of letters, motions, and protests by Madison. He desired the utilization of these lands for the benefit of the entire nation and seems (though at times primarily a Virginian) to have seen the necessity for strong national government. Recognizing that the newly adopted Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union created a weak government at best, he spoke of the

"variety of publick embarrassments" which plagued Congress and stated that "if the States will not enable their representatives to fulfill their engagements, it is not to be expected that individuals either in Europe & [or] America will confide in them."

In trying to enhance the power of the government under the Articles Madison expressed the vitally important idea that an "implied power is vested in the United States in Congress assembled" but seeing this idea denied pinned his hopes on additional support from the States. Massachusetts and Rhode Island prevented the passage of a 5 per cent duty on trade, however, and as the year ended even Madison's native Virginia suspended its approval of the duty until all 12 of the other States had accepted it. This foreshadowed the failure of all attempts to give real power to the government under the Articles and Madison came to lead the movement to create the Constitution of 1787. The succeeding volumes of *The Papers of James Madison* should tell with thoroughness Madison's part in creating a nation from the 13 former British colonies in North America.

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