The Papers of James Madison. Volume 16: *27 April 1795–27 March 1797.* Edited by J. C. A. Stagg, Thomas A. Mason, and Jeanne K. Sisson. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989. Pp. xxx, 527. $45.00.)

This volume, which covers the last two years of James Madison's service in the House of Representatives, may bring a distinguished publications venture to a sense of glimpsing the Promised Land: this volume concludes for Madison ten years of intense, brilliant, and extraordinarily influential participation in national politics, begun in February 1787 when he resumed

his seat in the Continental Congress and continued preparation for the Constitutional Convention later that year. One more volume of this series, covering Madison's years at home at Montpelier and in the Virginia legislature from 1797 to 1801, will connect the project with the first volume in the Secretary of State Series (published in 1986). At the same time the Presidential Series, begun in 1984, goes ahead. Thus one "gap" in the *Papers* of Madison will soon be closed, and the work on his sixteen years in executive office can proceed—and perhaps the editors can even glance forward to Madison's twenty years of intellectually active retirement. Madison's busy life and remarkable longevity leave the editors still with much to do, but at least some things conclude and the final shape of the project may soon come into view.

Two related matters dominate this volume: the tumultuous, fervent effort by Madison and other republicans to prevent somehow the acceptance of Jay's treaty with Great Britain and Madison's growing frustration with national politics. Madison and Jefferson wrote and worked furiously against the treaty as its contents became known in the summer of 1795. The editors provide a much improved understanding and version of Madison's draft of an anti-treaty petition for the Virginia legislature. This draft, plus his campaign to rally opposition throughout the country, are evidence that he had responded to Jefferson's frantic plea to "for god's sake take up your pen" (p. 89) to combat the pro-treaty argument.

Then Madison led the long, bitter fight in the House of Representatives, from December 1795 to April 1796, to deny the appropriations that would carry the treaty into effect. A long, exceedingly helpful editorial note gives the background needed to understand this battle and the documents related to it. Madison's speeches opposing the treaty are solid and even profound, but he was no match, in the final showdown, for the eloquence of Fisher Ames and other Federalists. Disarray among Republicans made the whole "business," Madison reported to Jefferson, "the most worrying & vexatious that I ever encountered; and the more so as the causes lay in the unsteadiness, the follies, the perverseness, & the defections among our friends, more than in the strength or dexterity, or malice of our opponents" (p. 343). The close defeat on the crucial vote, 51–48, resulted, Madison wrote Monroe in code, because "*before some were ripe for*" a compromise acceptable to all opponents, "*others were rotten*" (p. 357). These discouraging documents, plus agonizing letters about the bitter rupture between President Washington and Edmund Randolph and plaintive, laborious letters from Monroe in Paris about deteriorating relations with France (caused by Jay's treaty), underscore Madison's withdrawal from Republican leadership in Philadelphia. Together with the anticlimactic final session of the Fourth Congress in 1796–97, they mark the low point of Madison's legislative career.

Altogether, though, the documents in this volume and the rich annotation accompanying them offer indispensable insight into the trauma of the

debate over Jay's treaty. We see as well the ceaseless interest of Madison and Jefferson in every detail of the nation's public life. Jefferson, for example, asked Madison if he had "considered all the consequences" of a proposal that Congress help fund a post road from Maine to Georgia. Such a plan would precipitate an "eternal scramble among the members [of Congress to see] who can get the most money wasted in their state, and they will always get most who are meanest" (p. 251). Madison replied that he "was not unaware of the considerations you suggest," but something had to be done for the "general use" (p. 285) of the mails, so he hoped Congress and the local authorities could cooperate efficiently in the effort. Though Jefferson foresaw all too well two centuries of congressional pork barrel mania, Madison's cautious confidence in the federal system also bespeaks an important part of American politics. Once again we are grateful to the editors for providing scholars with such rich documentation on the foundations of the American polity.

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