

HUTCHINSON, WILLIAM T., AND RACHAL, WILLIAM M. E., editors. *The Papers of James Madison*. Volume 5, 1 Aug. 1782-31 Dec. 1782. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967. xxx, 520 pp. \$12.50.

James Madison had represented Virginia in the Continental Congress for nearly two and a half years when the period covered by this fifth volume of his papers begins in August 1782. Few new problems confronted Congress, but some solutions to old problems climaxed months of controversy and indecision. Although Madison faced reverses on some of the issues he favored, he continued to pursue his legislative goals with skill.

Financing the confederation government remained one of the most threatening issues. Madison believed the constitutional provision of implied power authorized the coercion of states refusing to act on requests of Congress. Rhode Island's failure to approve the 5 per cent impost caused Madison to "shudder" for the future. He approved the idea of using the western lands as a fund to retire the national debt but opposed the attempts of the speculators to gain control of large land claims. When Congress accepted the New York cession of western land claims against Virginia's opposition, Madison's political acumen uncovered a coalition of states motivated by opposition to Vermont statehood combined with the land companies in the middle states.

Congress debated the question of revising its instructions to the peace commissioners to permit them to make a separate peace with Great Britain if necessary. Madison concurred with the arguments of the anti-French faction, led by Arthur Lee, concerning the necessity of obtaining Newfoundland fishing rights and a western boundary at the Mississippi River, but he feared that Great Britain might revive the war if a split occurred with France over the peace. Madison's belief that France would not oppose the United States on its peace terms received a shock when he learned in December 1782 that France might not support the fisheries and the Mississippi River boundary. He concluded, however, that the United States was "more in danger of being seduced by Britain than sacrificed by France."

In urging sound policies of financing the confederation government and the wise conduct of foreign affairs, Madison had assumed the role of a national leader in Congress. His chief correspondents during this period were Edmund

Randolph and Edmund Pendleton. In November 1782, he began the practice of summarizing the debates in Congress. These notes along with his letters to and from Randolph give a rare view of the maneuvers in Philadelphia and Richmond on political questions confronting Virginia and the new nation. Madison's letters clearly reveal in a concise, analytical style his devotion to the art of government.

This edition of the Madison papers began auspiciously in 1962 with the publication of the first two volumes. Each succeeding volume has covered a shorter period, and it is becoming clear that this editorial venture poses a dilemma. Five volumes in five years with the last volume covering only five months presents a discouraging prospect in view of the long years ahead crowded with momentous events. Approximately half of the pages in the fifth volume are devoted to detailed footnotes. The introduction to Madison's Notes on Debates combines clever scholarship and interesting narrative in an excellent editorial note. The chronological list of significant events does not include Madison's committee appointments, a factor which curtails its usefulness; the comprehensive index compensates for this somewhat. Obviously this handsome edition of the *Papers of James Madison* has much to praise. Perhaps the editors in their over-all design wisely know best, but the persistent question still arises as to whether editorial judgment has James Madison in focus.

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