

journey to the lakes," but nevertheless "in better health than I have seen him."³⁰

Events conspired to thwart Madison's hope for more travel in New England. House clerk John Beckley, his intended companion, set out before Madison could leave New York, and he was unwilling to go alone in the uncomfortable stage, which, in any case, "travelled too rapidly" for his purposes. Furthermore, his horse was sick, and his own summer biliousness was soon too severe to make another journey alluring. Instead, he settled down, for nearly eight weeks, in New York, where the political controversies impending since before his vacation trip reached new intensity. The first public expression of the differences in political ideology beginning to affect public affairs had occurred after Madison passed along a copy of Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* to Jefferson. The Secretary of State in turn sent it, at the request of John Beckley, who had lent it to Madison, to a Philadelphia printer who intended its republication. In transmitting the pamphlet, Jefferson remarked he was "extremely pleased . . . something is at length to be publicly said against the political heresies which have sprung up among us. I have no doubt our citizens will rally a second time round the standard of Common Sense." In early May 1791, Jefferson was embarrassed and thunderstruck to find his remarks printed in the preface of the republication. In castigating "political heresies," Jefferson had particularly in mind John Adams' *Discourses of Davila*, published the previous year, but he never meant such criticism to appear in public over his name. Madison, on the other hand, seemed almost pleased. He "comforted" his troubled friend: "Mr. Adams can least of all complain. Under a mock defence of the Republican Constitutions of his Country, he attacked them with all the force he possessed. . . . Since he has been the 2nd magistrate in the new Republic, his pen has constantly been at work in the same cause. . . . Surely if it be innocent and decent in one servant of the public thus to write attacks against its Government, it cannot be criminal and indecent in another to patronize a written defence of the principles on which that Government is founded."³¹

Madison had a much greater part in the plan, conceived early in 1791, to induce his old college friend Philip Freneau to establish a lively, ardently republican, and nationally significant newspaper in Philadelphia to counteract the influence of John Fenno's *Gazette of the United States*, which Madison and Jefferson regarded as "a paper of pure Toryism, disseminating the doctrines of monarchy, aristocracy, and the exclusion of the influence of the people." Jefferson offered Freneau the vacant post of State Department translating clerk and such minor printing jobs as the department had at its dispensation, if that would help him establish a press in Philadelphia. The income from these tasks, however, was but a fraction of that needed by Freneau to support his growing

Madison may have agreed, as part of the negotiation to persuade Freneau to come to Philadelphia, to write a series of essays for the *National Gazette* on political economy and fundamental republican

principles. His first essay, "Population and Emigration," appeared on November 21, 1791, in the seventh newspaper *Freneau* published. In it Madison pursued further Benjamin Franklin's speculations about the very rapid increase of population in the New World. The human species, Madison wrote, had reproductive capacities which far outreached the ability of the earth to feed and maintain. Infanticide, famine, pestilence, and war had normally restored the balance between man and nature. The open lands of America, however, offered another, far less grim alternative to mankind: emigration. The free movement of peoples first across the Atlantic and then across the continent bestowed benefits everywhere. It relieved population pressure in old centers, provided markets to give employment to those who stayed behind, opened new lands for cultivation, gave opportunity to enterprising men, and improved public morals by restraining the growth of crowded cities. Therefore, Madison concluded, the United States ought to encourage both immigration from Europe and emigration to the West.³³

In later essays Madison returned to political economy. In December 1791 he published his treatise "Money," written in 1780 (see Chapter V). Its warnings about speculative finance and a national debt seemed worth repeating in the face of the recently enacted Hamiltonian program. Early in February 1792 Madison ridiculed Rousseau and other "visionary philosophers [and] benevolent enthusiasts" who entertained hopes for "universal and perpetual peace." He nevertheless scored the folly and wickedness of war and insisted, following orthodox republican theory he shared with Jefferson, that by making war possible only with the consent of the people, and by requiring each generation to pay for its own wars, bloodshed and violence could be substantially reduced. With these safeguards, human reason would seldom if ever resort to war. In March Madison argued that the best "republican distribution of citizens" would be in occupations that favored "health, virtue, intelligence and competency in the greatest number of citizens." He then expressed the conventional physiocratic doctrine that the life of the farmer best nourished those qualities and that therefore it was in the public interest to encourage agriculture. Two weeks later Madison lamented about the poor workers of England, whose livelihood often depended on the fashionable whims of the aristocratic classes, as was shown in the instance of twenty thousand buckle makers in Birmingham being thrown out of work by the caprice of the Prince of Wales in wearing only slippers or shoes with laces. How much better off were the self-sufficient farmers of the United States! In these essays Madison revealed his tenderness for the economic interests of his native region and his personal predilection for rural life, as well as his persistent concern for the social and economic foundations necessary for republican government, a concern increased, of course, by Hamilton's growing political power.³⁴

Ten other essays written during the winter of 1791-2 expressed more directly the heightened liberalism induced in Madison by his apprehensions about the political consequences of the Hamiltonian program. He sought to turn the tired debate over state versus national government into an argument that each should guard public liberty and the public welfare: let state enthusiasts prevent federal, especially executive, encroachments, and let nationalists work to eradicate "local prejudices and mistaken rivalships," each thus helping "our complicated system" to be both efficacious and freedom preserving. He then defended the *National Gazette* by arguing that a free press would help mold a "sovereign," nation-wide public opinion and therefore cement the bonds of union. Next Madison restated the lesson of *Federalist* Number 10 that only a "confederated republic" could preserve a large country from despotism, by making every citizen the "centinel" of his rights and the legitimate source of authority in the various governments. In another essay Madison, noting "the daring outrages committed by despotism on the reason and the rights of man," urged his countrymen to be faithful to the charters of government under which they lived. Only such fidelity could defend "liberty against power, and power against licentiousness." Though stated in general terms, each essay in fact reflected charges Madison and his colleagues had leveled at the Hamiltonians, and the essays were undoubtedly understood in that context by Madison's readers.³⁵

Madison then discussed even more explicitly the "party issues" before the nation. Aiming directly at Hamiltonian arguments that the government ought to favor the wealthy to consolidate the Union, he asserted that a republican government should insure political equality, encourage an equitable distribution of property, abstain from granting special privileges, and thereby diminish the *unnecessary* party strife caused by partisan measures. A balance of parties based on natural and inevitable differences would then serve the cause of freedom. Madison next asserted that the British government, far from being a good example of a balance of "king, lords, and commons," in fact was virtuous only insofar as public opinion influenced it. So much for John Adams and other misguided admirers of Britain, Madison meant his readers to think. The true model for a balance of powers that would prevent abuses was the American system, with its separation of the departments in the federal government and the division of powers between it and the states. Madison counseled that "those who love their country, its repose, and its republicanism, will study to avoid the alternative" of disunion or tyranny by observing scrupulously the prescribed limits, and particularly by desisting from acts that would heighten jealousies and animosities. So much for Hamilton's programs to favor the commercial classes and to consolidate power in the federal government. In another essay Madison was even more

pointed: "a government operated by corrupt influence; substituting the motive of private interest in place of public duty," and depending on bribes, privileges, and selfishness, was an "imposter." He hoped such a government (obviously he had Great Britain in mind) would never be established in America, though he clearly meant to warn his readers that the Hamiltonian system led inexorably in that direction.³⁶

In a remarkable essay entitled "Property," Madison explained the full republican meaning of the maxim invoked by Locke and others that the purpose of government was the protection of property. The particular meaning of property, Madison stated, was the "domination which one man claims and exercises over the external things of the world, in exclusion of every other individual," but its "larger and juster meaning . . . embraced every thing to which a man may attach a value or have a right; and *which leaves to everyone else the like advantage.*" Thus a man's land or merchandise or money were his property, but so were his freedom of expression, his liberty of conscience, his safety of person, and his opportunity to use his faculties as he chose. "In a word," Madison concluded, "as a man is said to have a right to his property, he may be equally said to have a property in his rights. . . . Government is instituted to protect property of every sort; as well that which lies in the various rights of individuals, as that which the term particularly expresses. This being the end of government, that alone is a *just* government, which *impartially* secures to every man, whatever is his *own.*" According to this standard, a government that protected possessions but did not protect human rights deserved little praise. In fact, Madison hinted, the preservation of rights was, because more basic and more universally applicable, more important than mere protection of possessions. Inequitable taxes, arbitrary seizures, and special privileges bestowed by law were, because they weighed unfairly on some citizens, likewise unjustifiable. Even under the narrow meaning of property, the need, as Madison had observed in *Federalist* Number 10, was to protect "unequal faculties for acquiring property." To this liberalized understanding of the obligation to protect property in its "particular" meaning, he added the equal or possibly prior claims of the "property in rights." He thus rejected the obsession with material possessions immemorially characteristic of merely plutocratic governments.³⁷

Having expressed this vital republican principle, Madison turned on the Hamiltonians: the real enemies of the free union of the American states were those who favored measures pampering speculators, those who promoted unnecessary accumulations of the national debt, those who by "arbitrary interpretations and insidious precedents" perverted the Constitution, and those who avowed cynical, aristocratic, or selfish maxims of government. On the other hand, the *real* friends of the Union were the supporters of the principles of free government that were the true bonds uniting the people of the United States.³⁸

In the fall of 1792, as party lines hardened during the effort to supplant John Adams from the vice presidency and during a bitter paper war between Hamilton and defenders of Jefferson, Madison wrote two final essays, expressing clearly partisan views. Examining political disputes in the United States, he declared that unhappily one party "from particular interest, from natural temper, or from the habits of life, are more partial to the opulent than to the other classes of society; and having debauched themselves into a persuasion that mankind are incapable of governing themselves, it follows with them, of course, that government can be carried on only by the pageantry of rank, the influence of money and emoluments, and the terror of military force. Men of those sentiments must naturally wish to point the measures of government less to the interest of the many than of a few, and less to the reason of the many than to their weaknesses." Another party retained faith in the people and believed in government by consent. For the first time using the word "Republican" in a formal sense to describe his party, Madison concluded his essays in the *National Gazette* with a dialogue on "Who Are the Best Keepers of the People's Liberties?" In it he repudiated the assertion that liberty was something bestowed on the people by a firm, paternalistic government and asserted instead that the people themselves, controlling their own government, were the best protectors of their rights. On this point, Madison said, the growing party disputes turned.³⁹

Thus the author of the "Memorial and Remonstrance" against religious persecution and the chief architect of the Constitution expounded the theoretical bases of the emerging Republican party. Though public interest during 1792 centered on the war of words between the partisans of Hamilton and of Jefferson, Madison's essays helped importantly to clarify the broader principles that separated the two factions. Furthermore, in the earlier essays, in supporting a liberal emigration policy, frugal, simplified government finance, practical fashions, and an agrarian society, Madison summarized the essential political economy of the Republican party. His deep commitment and unquestionably partisan propagandizing purpose, however, resulted in oversimplification and distortion; the Federalists, for example, were not monarchists or corrupt spoilsmen. Nonetheless, the essays reflect accurately both Madison's apprehensions about the direction of Federalist policy and the Republican "party line" as it appeared in the newspapers.