

***Republican In Name Only:
James Madison's Friends,
Parties and Liberties***

Didaskalos

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Right to dub.

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Made in the Usurped States of America.

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For James ...

Revolutionary notes

James Madison was in the US House of Representatives in 1792; he was there on April 9th when the others first voted for the representation usurpation and against the Republic. Below are three political essays Madison wrote that year and published in the Philadelphia National Gazette.

The essays are easily found online (Facebook for example) and in the excellent collection *James Madison Writings*, The Library of America, 1999: pages 517-18 and 530-34.

Editing notes include the keeping of old spellings (“encreasing” and “chusing” for example) and the addition of a few footnotes.

Bryan W. Brickner
20 February 2016
Vandalia Michigan

Friends¹

The Union: Who Are Its Real Friends?

Not those who charge others with not being its friends, whilst their own conduct is wantonly multiplying its enemies.

Not those who favor measures, which by pampering the spirit of speculation within and without the government, disgust the best friends of the Union.

Not those who promote unnecessary accumulations of the debt of the Union, instead of the

¹ Madison saw it coming; Friends was published a week before Usurpation Day 1792, the first day the House, in voting for 33,000 instead of using the constitutional 30,000, usurped representation.

best means of discharging it as fast as possible; thereby encreasing the causes of corruption in the government, and the pretexts for new taxes under its authority, the former undermining the confidence, the latter alienating the affection of the people.

Not those who study, by arbitrary interpretations and insidious precedents, to pervert the limited government of the Union, into a government of unlimited discretion, contrary to the will and subversive of the authority of the people.

Not those who avow or betray principles of monarchy and aristocracy, in opposition to the republican principles of the Union, and the republican spirit of the people; or who espouse a system of measures more accommodated to the depraved examples of those hereditary forms, than to the true genius of our own.

Not those, in a word, who would force on the people the melancholy duty of chusing between the loss of the Union, and the loss of what the union was meant to secure.

The real FRIENDS to the Union are those,

Who are friends to the authority of the people, the sole foundation on which the Union rests.

Who are friends to liberty, the great end, for which the Union was formed.

Who are friends to the limited and republican system of government, the means provided by that authority, for the attainment of that end.

Who are enemies to every public measure that might smooth the way to hereditary government; for resisting the tyrannies of which the Union was first planned, and for

more effectually excluding which, it was put into its present form.

Who considering a public debt as injurious to the interests of the people, and baneful to the virtue of the government, are enemies to every contrivance for *unnecessarily* increasing its amount, or protracting its duration, or extending its influence.

In a word, those are the real friends to the Union, who are friends to the republican policy throughout, which is the only *cement* for the Union of a republican people; in opposition to a spirit of usurpation and monarchy, which is the *menstruum*² most capable of dissolving it.

Philadelphia, National Gazette
April 2, 1792

² Usurpation is a solvent: *menstruum* is a substance that dissolves a solid or holds it in suspension.

Parties

A Candid State of Parties

As it is the business of the contemplative statesman to trace the history of parties in a free country, so it is the duty of the citizen at all times to understand the actual state of them. Whenever this duty is omitted, an opportunity is given to designing men, by the use of artificial or nominal distinctions, to oppose and balance against each other those who never differed as to the end to be pursued, and may no longer differ as to the means of attaining it. The most interesting state of parties in the United States may be referred to three periods: Those who espoused the cause of independence and those who adhered to the British claims, formed the parties of the first period; if, indeed, the disaffected

class were considerable enough to deserve the name of a party. This state of things was superseded by the treaty of peace in 1783. From 1783 to 1787 there were parties in abundance, but being rather local than general, they are not within the present review.

The Federal Constitution, proposed in the latter year, gave birth to a second and most interesting division of the people. Every one remembers it, because every one was involved in it.

Among those who embraced the constitution, the great body were unquestionably friends to republican liberty; tho' there were, no doubt, some who were openly or secretly attached to monarchy and aristocracy; and hoped to make the constitution a cradle for these hereditary establishments.

Among those who opposed the constitution, the great body were certainly well affected to the union

and to good government, tho' there might be a few who had a leaning unfavourable to both. This state of parties was terminated by the regular and effectual establishment of the federal government in 1788; out of the administration of which, however, has arisen a third division, which being natural to most political societies, is likely to be of some duration in ours.³

One of the divisions consists of those, who 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

³ As of April 2016, the duration will have been 224 years.

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; hoping perhaps in proportion to the ardor of their zeal, that by giving such a turn to the administration, the government itself may by degrees be narrowed into fewer hands, and approximated to an hereditary form.

The other division consists of those who believing in the doctrine that mankind are capable of governing themselves, and hating hereditary power as an insult to the reason and an outrage to the rights of man,⁴ are naturally offended at every public measure that does not appeal to the understanding and to the general interest of the

⁴ This is a reference (and shout-out) to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (France, August 1789).

community, or that is not strictly conformable to the principles, and conducive to the preservation of republican government.

This being the real state of parties among us, an experienced and dispassionate observer will be at no loss to decide on the probable conduct of each.

The antirepublican party, as it may be called, being the weaker in point of numbers,⁵ will be induced by the most obvious motives to strengthen themselves with the men of influence, particularly of moneyed, which is the most active and insinuating influence. It will be equally their true policy to weaken their opponents by reviving exploded parties, and taking advantage of all prejudices, local, political, and occupational, that may prevent or disturb a general coalition of sentiments.

⁵ The few: usurpers, citizens who support the usurpation.

The Republican party, as it may be termed, conscious that the mass of people in every part of the union, in every state, and of every occupation must at bottom be with them, both in interest and sentiment, will naturally find their account in burying all antecedent questions, in banishing every other distinction than that between enemies and friends to republican government, and in promoting a general harmony among the latter, wherever residing, or however employed.

Whether the republican or the rival party will ultimately establish its ascendance, is a problem which may be contemplated now; but which time alone can solve. On one hand experience shews that in politics as in war, stratagem is often an overmatch for numbers: and among more happy characteristics of our political situation, it is now well understood that there are peculiarities, some temporary,

others more durable, which may favour that side in the contest. On the republican side, again, the superiority of numbers is so great,⁶ their sentiments are so decided, and the practice of making a common cause, where there is a common sentiment and common interest, in spite of circumstantial and artificial distinctions, is so well understood, that no temperate observer of human affairs will be surprised if the issue in the present instance should be reversed, and the government be administered in the spirit of form approved by the great body of the people.

Philadelphia, National Gazette
September 26, 1792

⁶ Madison means We the People.

Liberties⁷

Who Are the Best Keepers of the People's Liberties?

Republican. – The people themselves. The sacred trust can be no where so safe as in the hands most interested in preserving it.

Anti-republican. – The people are stupid, suspicious, licentious. They cannot safely trust themselves. When they have established government they should think of nothing but obedience, leaving the care of their liberties to their wiser rulers.

⁷ An American republican supports representation at the constitutional ratio of “one for every thirty Thousand” (USC Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3).

Republican. – Although all men are born free, and all nations might be so, yet too true it is, that slavery has been the general lot of the human race. Ignorant – they have been cheated; asleep – they have been surprized; divided – the yoke has been forced upon them. But what is the lesson? That because the people *may* betray themselves, they ought to give themselves up, blindfold, to those who have an interest in betraying them? Rather conclude that the people ought to be enlightened, to be awakened, to be united, that after establishing a government they should watch over it, as well as obey it.

Anti-republican. – You look at the surface only, where errors float, instead of fathoming the depths where truth lies hid. It is not the government that is disposed to fly off from the people; but the people that are ever ready to fly off from the government. Rather say then, enlighten the government, warn it to be vigilant, enrich it with

influence, arm it with force, and to the people never pronounce but two words – *Submission* and *Confidence*.

Republican. – The centrifugal tendency then is in the people, not in the government, and the secret art lies in restraining the tendency, by augmenting the attractive principle of the government with all the weight that can be added to it.⁸ What a perversion of the natural order of things! to make *power* the primary and central object of the social system, and *Liberty* but its satellite.

Anti-republican. – The science of the stars can never instruct you in the mysteries of government. Wonderful as it may seem, the more you increase the attractive

⁸ Our Constitution mandates (see Enumeration/Census) We the People add representatives to the House every ten years: this is what usurpation has usurped.

force of power, the more you enlarge the sphere of liberty; the more you make government independent and hostile towards the people, the better security you provide for their rights and interests. Hence the wisdom of the theory, which, after limiting the share of the people to a third of the government, and lessening the influence of that share by the mode and term of delegating it, ⁹ establishes two grand hereditary orders, with feelings, habits, interests, and prerogatives all inveterately hostile to the rights and interests of the people, yet by a *mysterious* operation all combining to fortify the people in both.

Republican. – Mysterious indeed! But mysteries belong to religion, not to government; to the ways of the Almighty, not to the works of man. And in religion itself there is nothing mysterious to its author;

⁹ Madison is referring to April's representation usurpation.

the mystery lies in the dimness of the human sight. So in the institutions of man let there be no mystery, unless for those inferior beings endowed with a ray perhaps of the twilight vouchsafed to the first order of terrestrial creation.

Anti-republican. – You are destitute, I perceive, of every quality of a good citizen, or rather of a good *subject*. You have neither the light of faith nor the spirit of obedience. I denounce you to the government as an accomplice of atheism and anarchy.

Republican. – And I forbear to denounce you to the people, though a blasphemer of their rights and an idolater of tyranny. Liberty disdains to persecute.¹⁰

Philadelphia, National Gazette
December 22, 1792

¹⁰ See the French Reign of Terror (1793-4) for a Liberty that favored persecution.

