

Public Virtue and the Roots of American Government

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The idea of virtue was central to the political thought of the founders of the American republic. Every body of thought they encountered, every intellectual tradition they consulted, every major theory of republican government by which they were influenced emphasized the importance of personal and public virtue. It was understood by the founders to be the precondition for republican government, the base upon which the structure of government would be built. Virtue was the common bond that tied together the Greek, Roman, Christian, British, and European ideas of government and politics to which the founders responded. There were, of course, a variety of views among the framers, yet there was general agreement over two critical elements of republican government: first, that there were essential preconditions that must exist before republican government is a possibility and that those preconditions must be continually fostered and maintained; and second, that the elements of republican government included public and private institutions, governing structures and procedures, popular beliefs, personal character, and shared commitments.

As the leaders of the new American states considered the viability of a republic, the fundamental question they asked was whether Americans had sufficient virtue to make self-government work: to soften the sharpest edges of self-interests, to temper the most disruptive personal and social passions, and to ensure sentiments of support and patriotism for the polity. Given the nature of man as they understood it, they were not at all confident that self-government over time was even a possibility. But of one thing they appear to have been certain: a citizenry lacking in virtue was not capable of sustaining a democratic republic, whatever its structure.

The founders repeatedly emphasized the importance of the character of the people and their political culture as the precondition for republican government. James Madison, for example, the foremost political theorist of the founding generation, emphasized the importance of the “genius of the people of America, [which is] the spirit, which actuates the state legislatures, and the principles which are incorporated with the political character of every class of citizens.”¹ For Madison, republican government was the only form of government “reconcilable with the genius of the people of America; [and] with the fundamental principles of the revolution.”² In his

important discussion of the structure of government in *The Federalist*, Madison wrote that “a dependence on the people is no doubt the primary controul on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions.”³ The structure of government, the separation of powers and checks and balances, the scheme of representation—all were auxiliary to the primary protection against the excesses of governmental power.

Constitutional structures and procedures were designed to filter out corrupt leaders and promote virtuous officials to exercise political power. While the Federalists and Anti-Federalists disagreed over how to assure virtuous government, they agreed on its importance and argued together that a virtuous people were essential for republican government. Government itself was necessary because of a lack of virtue, because men were not “angels,” as Madison put it. The less virtue possessed by the people, the more government they needed. The less able they were to exercise their rights and liberties in moderation, the greater need there would be for government coercion and limitations on individual actions.

The Evolution of Modern Virtue

Unlike the classical idea of virtue, where the organized development of civic virtue in the citizenry was the prime objective of government, the founders saw virtue as a means to assure individual liberty and self-government. The concept of virtue had evolved considerably from the Greeks’ understanding of it. In part, however, virtue was still equated with “public regardedness,” a willingness to sacrifice individual concerns for the benefit of society as a whole; but this was seen as a concern for the common well-being, not an all-consuming and unqualified acquiescence to the political regime. It was expected that people would voluntarily temper and moderate their demands and pursuits enough so that liberty could flourish. The ideal of virtue was an important source of personal restraint and willingness to contribute to the common good. Colonial Americans claimed that they possessed these qualities necessary for self-government.⁴ And, in part, virtue was equated with wisdom and foresight, enlightened leadership and statesmanship. The cardinal virtues dating from classical times—wisdom, courage, discipline, and justice—were still considered important, although with somewhat different connotations. An appeal to virtue in elected officials meant that their pride and desire for a positive reputation, as well as the pride of the people in being represented by virtuous men, would cause them to rise above selfish, narrow concerns.⁵

Virtue became intertwined with the Judeo-Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity (or love and benevolence). People were to be motivated by a sincere interest in and love for one another, so that the freedom and pursuit of their own self-interest would be voluntarily channeled and constrained.

Social peace and harmony could not proceed from governmental direction alone; there must be popular commitment to those values as well.⁶ Religion was expected to lead to a fusion of *personal and public* virtue—a modern republican virtue—that represented an amalgam of some elements of traditional civic virtue and of personal virtue, imbued with biblical moral theology.

The founders believed that virtue was a practical necessity for a people determined to govern themselves. More than the classical notions that emphasized such ideas as patriotism and willingness to fight and die for the state, public virtue represented voluntary self-restraint, a commitment to moral social order, honesty and obedience to law, benevolence, and a willingness to respect the unwritten rules and norms of social life. Whether this was a result of fear of God's wrath and judgment or a pure love of others did not particularly matter to the polity as a whole. It was *assumed* that there was sufficient virtue to make a system based on individual liberty work. If there were insufficient virtue, then order would have to be imposed by force and coercion, by pervasive governmental intervention in individuals' lives. The founders clearly recognized that contradiction, and their whole effort in forming a government assumed it could be avoided.

During the same period that Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* was being published in Paris (1835), an Austrian immigrant named Francis Grund published two commentaries in the United States (1837 and 1839), which were similar in observation to de Tocqueville's work. Grund was singularly impressed with the domestic virtue he perceived among the American people in his day and suggested that there was a relationship between the "domestic habits" of Americans and their beliefs. In all the world, he wrote, "few people have so great respect for the law and are so well able to govern themselves." Perhaps, he surmised, they were "the only people capable of enjoying so large a portion of liberty without abusing it." He continued:

I consider the domestic virtue of the Americans as the principal source of all their other qualities. It acts as a promoter of industry, as a stimulus to enterprise and as the most powerful restraint of public vice. . . . No government could be established on the same principle as that of the United States with a different code of morals. The American Constitution is remarkable for its simplicity; but it can only suffice a people habitually correct in their actions, and would be utterly inadequate to the wants of a different nation. Change the domestic habits of the Americans, their religious devotion, and their high respect for morality, and it will not be necessary to change a single letter in the Constitution in order to vary the whole form of their government.⁷

Out of this concern for the necessity of virtue came the belief that virtue and morality—specifically biblical morality—were synonymous, although they were sometimes referred to as separate concepts. Moral theology had

pushed the stark differences in behavior expectation between the clergy and the masses, once typical in Europe, into the background. Modern casuistry, using a scriptural base, presented to the common man—as well as the “elites”—a code of moral or virtuous behavior to which he too was expected to adhere. The growth of sentiments of human dignity was fertilized by the belief of a direct relationship between man and his Creator. This belief in turn stimulated the growth of theology, and together they enhanced a vital, revolutionary sense of individualism and individual worth. Virtue came to be seen as a form of restraint against corruption and, at the same time, as a stimulator of positive moral action. Virtuous restraint applied to governments, to sovereigns, and to individuals. On the other hand, virtuous obligation to purposeful moral behavior as expounded by the Bible became incumbent on every person. The Bible was a guide that left little doubt about what constituted individual virtuous or moral behavior. Indeed, the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and a variety of other biblical exhortations provided a yardstick, an expected norm, with which to measure not only the actions of individuals, but the relative “justice” of government. “Individualism” was expected to lead not to anarchy but to personal energy and creativity, held in bounds by responsible behavior. Together, these beliefs helped energize a common system of symbols and values that contributed to the unity of society.

While some of the colonial thinkers apparently believed that virtue could be inculcated through reason, most thought its primary source to be in religion. Yet the founders were vigorously opposed to establishing a state church; their concern was with freedom of conscience and religion as a fundamental right for all Americans to enjoy. To a substantial degree, they saw virtue as a product of the general Judeo-Christian beliefs that permeated the colonies, and of organized religion and family life.⁸ Virtue was primarily to be privately developed and nurtured. The state itself was not to be responsible for it. Since general Christianity and the different churches were already viewed as a primary source of virtue, government need only keep from interfering in these areas. There was a clear and fundamental recognition of the importance of religion and its relationship with republican government, as reflected in legislation enacted by the first Congresses. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787, which was reenacted by the first Congress, declared that “religion, morality, and knowledge, being necessary to good government and the happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall forever be encouraged.” As Clinton Rossiter has noted, schools in America had long since been actively involved in promoting virtue, “whether designed to reinforce true religion or ‘to form the Minds of the Youth, to Virtue, and to make them useful Members of Society.’” Primary education had been devoted to what Rossiter calls the five R’s—“Reading, Riting, Rithmatic, Rules of virtuous conduct, and Religion.”⁹

State constitutions and declarations reinforce the idea of the importance of religion in making self-government possible. The final clause in the Virginia Declaration of Rights, for example, states that “it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity, towards each other.”¹⁰ A religious oath was often required of candidates running for elected office. In Pennsylvania, each member of the legislature was required to make the following declaration: “I do believe in one God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the wicked. And I do acknowledge the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament to be given by Divine inspiration.”¹¹ There would be no national religious orthodoxy, and the idea of an ecclesiastical policy or theocracy was clearly rejected. Freedom of belief and conscience were to be assured. But the assumption was that there would be a moral foundation for republican government and that private religion and general Christian beliefs would serve as an important source of that foundation.

Virtue, Liberalism, and Republicanism

The failure to recognize the evolution in the meaning of public virtue has led some scholars to argue that the framing of the Constitution did not presuppose the continued existence of public virtue, that the idea of public virtue was central to the Revolution but had lost its significance by 1787. Madison and others are described as accepting the decline in virtue and embracing the belief that the common good was but the outcome of the mediation of individual conflict and competition. Gordon S. Wood, for example, has argued that the founders abandoned the idea of public virtue because Americans as a people failed to satisfy the classical expectations essential to virtue. Wood claims that the lack of a natural aristocracy and the absence of class differentiations caused Madison and others to give up the idea of public virtue and resign themselves to facilitating the pursuit of self-interest and hoping that the ensuing conflict would produce the public interest. While Wood acknowledges that the founders continued to champion virtue, he concludes that the lack of the necessary cultural preconditions meant that virtue would not be part of the new American republic and that, indeed, the Constitution had provided a new revolutionary republic “which did not require a virtuous people for its sustenance.”¹² John argues in his study of American political thought that “the Classical idea of Virtue . . . was an idea whose time had come and gone by 1787.”¹³ Similarly, J. G. A. Pocock has written that the “decline of virtue had as its logical corollary the use of interest,” and that the idea of classical virtue gave way to the belief that individuals would only pursue their own desires. Interests and factions were to function in an atmosphere not constrained by notions of virtue, but by the inevitable restraints imposed as individual interests collided.¹⁴

These interpretations among scholars can be traced, at least in part, to the beliefs that virtue and self-interest are incompatible; that the founders recognized the pervasiveness of self-interest and simply concluded that virtue was not possible; that their attention shifted to structural and procedural devices to check the effects of the pursuit of unbridled self-interest; and that they became convinced that pluralistic competition would produce the public, collective good they sought. Conflicting interpretations are further rooted in efforts to place the founders in one of two basic schools of political thought. For some, the founders were champions of liberalism, of a Lockean economic, materialistic individualism that sought to maximize opportunities for the pursuit of self-interest. For others, the founders were republicans, following Montesquieu, the English Commonwealthmen, and Machiavelli in the “tradition of republican humanism” that “called upon the citizen to control his passions and subordinate his interests to the common good.” Liberalism and republicanism are offered as contradictory explanations of the intellectual roots of the American founding.¹⁵

The founders attempted to respond to both traditions and were ultimately successful. They believed republican virtue and liberal *individualism—self-interest, properly understood*—are compatible and interdependent. Liberty requires individual restraint. If those restraints are developed voluntarily to a substantial degree, then external, governmental coercion may be minimal. If voluntary restraints are lacking, if the people are not able to limit their own interests when necessary to accomplish public purposes or to protect the rights of others, then government intervention becomes increasingly pervasive and the purposes of liberalism are not achieved.

The tension between liberal and republican ideas is greatly reduced when we recognize the evolutionary nature of virtue. Actually, the kind of stringent classical virtue identified by Wood, Diggins, Pocock, and others *was*, to a significant degree, rejected by the founders as inconsistent with the “genius” or spirit of the American people. They clearly believed that some of the more severe classical notions of virtue were inappropriate for modern republics, and especially the American. But they also recognized that a *modern* virtue was very much a part of the American political culture of the eighteenth century. Thus, while rejecting the extremes of one meaning of virtue, they built their scheme of government upon a substantially modified conception of virtue.

The Constitution itself makes no mention of public virtue. For the framers, personal and public virtue were a *precondition* for the kind of government embodied in the Constitution. Public virtue, general religious beliefs, personal restraint, and concern for others were not to be provided for through national governmental institutions in the classical tradition, but through private efforts and primary institutions, supported by local

government. The idea of religious freedom precluded constitutional provisions establishing national orthodoxy. State governments could encourage and support religious activity, but the political culture of civic virtue was to be produced primarily by the individual churches, family life, local education, and by a general commitment to Christian principles of personal restraint and benevolence.

While much of their attention was directed to the structure of government and the governing process, the framers of the Constitution held a sober view of human nature and its consequences for the prospects of self-government. They were keenly aware of the interaction of the framework of government and the people who were to serve in it and be governed by it. The constitutional structure, the separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, and enumerated powers cannot be understood without recognizing the expectation of public virtue on which they were built. These constitutional elements were “auxiliary precautions,” designed in response to the limitations of human nature. The structure of government was to channel and check the ambition and factionalism the framers believed to be inherent in human nature and social life. But they did not believe that structure was sufficient, that process alone could produce effective and restrained government. The Constitution was ultimately nothing more than “parchment barriers” to tyranny if there was not at least some commitment to self-restraint, to making the constitutional checks and balances work in a way that constrained power and made self-government possible.

The founders understood well the nature of man. Madison, Hamilton, and others viewed man as possessing a dual nature of both good and corruption, with corruption predominate. It was man’s fallen nature that made government necessary and yet made a lasting democracy impossible. “Why has government been instituted at all?” asked Hamilton. “Because the passions of men will not conform to the dictates of reason and justice, without constraint.”¹⁶ “If men were angels,” Madison concurred, “no government would be necessary. . . . But what is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature?”¹⁷ Madison typically referred to “the caprice and wickedness of man,”¹⁸ and Franklin was convinced that men “are generally more easily provok’d than reconcil’d, more disposed to do Mischief to each other than to make Reparation, much more easily deceiv’d than undeceiv’d, and having more Pride and even Pleasure in killing than in begetting one another.”¹⁹

The American founders had no illusions about man and virtue. They avoided the temptation, typical of utopians, to glorify man, creating expectations that were impossible to fulfill. If, however, they had stopped here in their evaluation of man, their response would undoubtedly have been that, after all, an attempt to establish a democratic republic would be futile and

they would have been driven, in desperation, to return to the idea of monarchy. Yet, inherent in their religious tradition was the belief, similar to that of the Renaissance or Christian humanists, that while man was “fallen,” and as such prone to depravity, he was capable of regeneration and virtue, and therefore possessed the potential for self-government. Perhaps in this new land man could rise above himself. “As there is a degree of depravity in mankind which requires a certain degree of circumspection and distrust,” Madison argued, “[s]o there are other qualities in human nature which justify a certain portion of esteem and confidence.”²⁰ Hamilton suggested that one should be disposed “to view human nature as it is, without either flattering its virtues or exaggerating its vices.”²¹

Jefferson, Adams, and Paine were among those who believed that God had created man with the necessary qualities to live in a social environment. “The Almighty has implanted in us these unextinguishable feelings for good and wise purposes,” wrote Paine at the conclusion of his *Common Sense*. “They are the guardians of his image in our heart. They distinguish us from the herd of common animals.” According to Adams, men were “intended for society,” and therefore the Creator had “furnished them with passions, appetites, and propensities . . . calculated . . . to render them useful to each other and in their social connections.”²² Man has a dual nature. His “passions and appetites are parts of human nature,” but so are “reason and the moral sense.”²³ “It would have been inconsistent in creation,” confirmed Jefferson, “to have formed man for the social state, and not to have provided virtue and wisdom enough to manage the concerns of the society.”²⁴ “The Creator would indeed have been a bungling artist, had he intended man for a social animal, without planting in him social dispositions.”²⁵ Jefferson emphasized that this “moral sense” or “conscience” was not left by the Creator to the wiles of men’s intellect; it was rather part of their makeup: “I believe . . . that it is instinct, and innate, that the moral sense is as much a part of our constitution as that of feeling, seeing, or hearing; as a wise creator must have seen to be necessary in an animal destined to live in society.”²⁶

The founders accepted the necessity of a “science of politics”²⁷ that would, without sacrificing “the spirit and the form of popular government,” provide a working republic free of the infectious diseases that had forever prostituted and destroyed republics, “a Republican remedy for the diseases most incident to Republican Government,”²⁸ and a “defense against the inconveniences of democracy consistent with the democratic form of government.”²⁹ What was needed was a structure and program that would help check the vices of men while allowing and promoting the development of virtue and talents; a firm basis to overcome the baseness in man without destroying his spirit, energy, and freedom; a rejuvenating

principle that would have the tendency to elevate man to a higher plane of existence. As Clinton Rossiter puts it,

If man was a composite of good and evil, of ennobling excellencies and degrading imperfections, then one of the chief ends of the community, an anonymous Virginian advised, was “to separate his virtues from his vices,” to help him purposefully to pursue his better nature. The achievement of this purpose called for two types of collective action: establishing or encouraging institutions, especially religious and political institutions, that would give free play to his virtues while controlling or suppressing his vices; educating him to recognize the sweet harvest of the one and bitter fruits of the other. True religion encouraged man to suppress his savage impulses; constitutional government forced him to think before acting; sound education taught him the delights of virtue and liberty.³⁰

Virtue and a Natural Aristocracy

The scheme of government envisioned by the framers accepted as given a moderately virtuous people and moderately virtuous officeholders. Some of the American founders were so concerned that “men of talents and virtue” be selected to manage republican government that they perceived the necessity of a particular kind of “elite”: a *natural* aristocracy, one that was compatible with “modern” virtue. Edmund Burke had written of a “natural aristocracy” of men possessing extraordinary wisdom, talents, and virtue who emerged to leadership in society by means of their excellence. Without this “natural aristocracy,” Burke had reasoned, “there is no nation.”³¹ John Adams wrote that “although there is a moral and political and natural Equality among Mankind, all being born free and equal, yet there are other Inequalities which are equally natural, such as Strength, Activity, Industry, Genius, Talents, Virtues, Benevolence.”³² Hamilton agreed that “there are strong minds in every walk of life that will rise superior to the disadvantages of situation, and will command the tribute due to their merit, not only from the classes to which they particularly belong, but from the society in general.”³³ “There are men,” he emphasized, “who, under any circumstances will have the courage to do their duty at every hazard.”³⁴ Like Burke, Hamilton believed that these highly qualified and virtuous individuals served in political office in a form of stewardship, where they might at times hold opinions different from those of their constituents. In that case, while “the republican principle demands, that the deliberate sense of the community should govern the conduct of those to whom they [the people] intrust the management of their affairs; but it does not require an unqualified complaisance to every sudden breeze of passion, or to every transient impulse which the people may receive from the arts of men, who flatter their prejudices to betray their interests.” Since the people will constantly be faced with “the wiles of parasites and sycophants, by the

snarers of the ambitious, the avaricious, the desperate, by the artifices of men who possess their confidence more than they deserve it, and of those who seek to possess rather than to deserve it," the natural aristocracy must hold its ground:

When occasions present themselves, in which the interests of the people are at variance with their inclinations, it is the duty of the persons whom they have appointed to be the guardians of those interests, to withstand the temporary delusion, in order to give them time and opportunity for more cool and sedate reflection. Instances might be cited in which a conduct of this kind has saved the people from very fatal consequences of their own mistakes, and has procured lasting monuments of their gratitude to the men who had courage and magnanimity enough to serve them at the peril of their displeasure.³⁵

Jefferson expressed his belief that "there is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this," he submitted,

are *virtue* and *talents*. . . . The natural aristocracy I consider as the most precious gift of nature, for the instruction, the trusts, and government of society. And indeed, it would have been inconsistent in creation to have formed man for the social state, and not to have provided virtue and wisdom enough to manage the concerns of society. *May we not even say, that that form of government is the best, which provides the most effectually for a pure selection of these natural aristos into the offices of government?*

Here Jefferson saw republicanism as the best possible form of government to secure men of virtue and wisdom for these offices.

I think the best remedy is exactly that provided by all our constitutions, to leave to the citizens the free election and separation of the aristo from the pseudo-aristo, of the wheat from the chaff. In general they will elect the really good and wise. . . . *It suffices for us, if the moral and physical condition of our own citizens qualifies them to select the able and good for the direction of their government*, with a recurrence of election at such short periods as will enable them to displace an unfaithful servant, before the mischief he mediates may be irremediable.³⁶

Many at the founding saw the Constitutional Convention as an example of this natural elite. Madison marveled that there never had been "an assembly of men . . . who were more pure in their motives, or more exclusively or anxiously devoted to the object committed to them"—that of "devising and proposing a constitutional system . . . to best secure the permanent liberty and happiness of their country."³⁷ John Jay praised the

Convention, composed of men who possessed the confidence of the people, and many of whom had become highly distinguished by their patriotism, virtue, and wisdom, in times which tried the minds and hearts of men. . . . In the mild season of peace, with minds unoccupied by other subjects, they passed many months in cool, uninterrupted, and daily consultation; and

finally, without having been awed by power, or influenced by any passions except love for their Country, they presented and recommended to the people the plan produced by their joint and very unanimous councils.³⁸

Virtue and the Anti-Federalists

While the Anti-Federalists shared the Federalists' concern for virtue, they feared that Madison's extended republic would be inimical to its strength. They had a tendency to accept the classical ideal, and many believed, with Montesquieu, that republican government could thrive only in a relatively small geographic unit with a limited and homogeneous population, where public interest would be more pronounced, obvious, and acknowledged, and where abuse would be more quickly identified and exposed. They argued that a large republic would be unable to adjust to the cultural diversity and the sectional and economic differences of the people in the new thirteen states, that human wisdom was incapable of controlling or administering a continental republic, that local concerns and interests would be sacrificed, and that the close relationship between the citizens and their representatives would be lost. A large republic, they feared, would diminish civic virtue and lead to factional conflict, corruption, and tyranny. The further removed the representatives were from their electoral source, the more difficult it would be to select representatives sensitive to the people's sentiments.³⁹ James Winthrop of Massachusetts reasoned that a large republic would prevent the people from enjoying the same "standard of morals, of habits, and of laws."⁴⁰

Like the Federalists, many Anti-Federalists argued that the virtue of rulers could not be counted upon. Federalists were frequently charged with excessive optimism in human nature and for not fitting adequate safeguards against corruption and tyranny, such as a bill of rights, into the proposed Constitution. While Madison argued that a large republic, rather than a small one, was more conducive to the selection of virtuous political leadership, Anti-Federalists such as George Mason and Patrick Henry offered the very opposite view. Both Federalists and Anti-Federalists were concerned about the dangers inherent in trusting men with political power, and sought ways to perpetuate virtue in the people and rules of government. As one scholar has argued, Madison believed "that the level of virtue necessary to make small republics and by extension the state constitutions work was unrealistically high. Madison and other leading framers sought to establish a constitution, still republican in character, that could be founded on a more realistic level of virtue."⁴¹ At the same time Madison apparently believed that there was a greater chance of electing men of character and virtue to a national legislature than was generally possible in the state systems characterized by "factious" tempers and "local prejudices."

The Anti-Federalists countered with the proposition that representatives close to and similar to their constituencies would best share their moral sensibilities, their character, and their needs; and hence a greater influence would be exerted upon those representatives to be virtuous spokesmen. But Hamilton argued that the criteria advocated by Montesquieu for small states had already been outgrown by the American states, leaving only “the alternative, either of taking refuge at once in the arms of monarchy, or of slitting ourselves into an infinity of little, jealous, clashing, tumultuous commonwealths, the wretched nurseries of unceasing discord, and the miserable objects of universal pity or contempt.”⁴²

Virtue, Corruption, and the Republic

Both Federalists and Anti-Federalists were searching for the best way to promote virtue, for neither side believed that a corrupt people could sustain a republic, large or small. With Montesquieu, Americans of the Revolutionary era had concluded, “Fear is the principle of a despotic, honour of a kingly, and virtue is the principle of a republican government.”⁴³ Writing in 1775, Samuel Williams declared, “In a *despotic government*, the only principle by which the Tyrant who is to move the whole machine, means to regulate and manage the people, is *Fear*; by a servile dread of his power. But a *free government*, which of all others is far the most preferable, cannot be supported without *Virtue*.”⁴⁴

If virtue was essential to a popular republic, as both Federalists and Anti-Federalists believed, then immorality and corruption could be looked upon as forerunners of tyranny.⁴⁵ Benjamin Franklin, in the Constitutional Convention of 1787, voiced his concern that although the new government would likely “be well administered for a course of years,” it would “end in Despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall have become so corrupted as to need despotic Government, being incapable of any other.”⁴⁶ “Only a virtuous people,” he said on another occasion, “are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need of masters.”⁴⁷ In a letter to Lafayette in 1778, Washington reasoned that “when a people shall have become incapable of governing themselves and fit for a master, it is of little consequence from what quarter he comes.”⁴⁸ He also declared, “Free suffrage of the people” can be assured only “so long as there shall remain any virtue in the body of the people.”⁴⁹

In giving his assent to the Constitution in the Massachusetts ratifying convention, John Hancock expressed his belief that the people would be secure under the new government “until they themselves become corrupt.”⁵⁰ Before the Virginia ratifying convention, Madison stated: “To suppose that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without any virtue in the people, is a chimerical idea.”⁵¹ Samuel Adams agreed that “neither

the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt.” “If we are universally vicious and debauched in our manners,” he warned, “though the form of our Constitution carries the face of the most exalted freedom, we shall in reality be the most abject of slaves.”⁵² To Richard Henry Lee he wrote that whether or not America was to be able to enjoy its hard won “independence and freedom . . . depends on her virtue.”⁵³

Madison believed that in an extended republic, based upon *representation*, the “effects” of factions or political divisions might best be controlled. In a small democracy or republic, with relatively fewer factions, it would be easier for a large fiction or class, or a corrupt coalition of factions, to become a tyrannous majority and thus the oppressors of the minority fiction or fictions. But an extended republic, with its system of representation, would open promises for the “cure we are seeking.” The system of representation would allow the republic to grow both in terms of its geographical size and its population, thus allowing the republic to absorb a large population and multiple interests. In a further turnabout of traditional republican theory, Madison suggested that *multiple* factions in an extended republic might well be a *stabilizing* force, which would allow the expression of self-interest without endangering public liberty. Not only would these fictions tend to check and balance each other, but each representative would have to take into consideration the fact that he represented multiple interests, a phenomenon that would tend to moderate his performance if not his views. In order to be elected, he would have to pull himself in from extreme political fringes to more moderate public attitudes and expectations.

Madison believed that the selection of representatives whose responsibility would generally extend to a comparatively large population with multiple interests would better tend to promote men of virtue. He championed the idea that the citizens would be more likely to select men of virtue at the national than at the state level, since

the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice. . . . [A]s each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small Republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practice with success the vicious arts, by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established characters.

In pure democracies and small republics, “men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people.” On the other hand, “extensive republics are more favorable to

the election of proper guardians of the public weal”—that is, men of substantial civic virtue. “It follows,” reasoned Madison, “that, if the proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than the small republic, the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.”⁵⁴

Madison emphasized his belief that it was not only important “to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part.” Here the variety of interests and the multiplicity of factions in the new republic came into play, nurturing in society “so many separate descriptions of citizens, as will render an unjust combination of a majority of the whole, very improbable, if not impracticable.” Although “all authority in [the federal republic] will be derived from and dependent on the society, the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority.” The pluralistic, multi-faceted society, then, would support so many different interests, from the economic to the religious, as to support the civil rights of each. *“In the extended republic of the United States, and among the great variety of interests, parties, and sects which it embraces, a coalition of a majority of the whole society could seldom take place on any other principles than those of justice and the general good.”*⁵⁵ The extended republic would, by its nature, tend to frustrate the building up of a national majority faction. Madison concluded:

Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked, that where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always checked by distrust, in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.⁵⁶

Throughout *The Federalist*, one finds the argument that the elaborate constitutional structure the Federalists proposed would provide structural and functional “filters” that would tend to sift out the least virtuous while allowing the more virtuous to gain political power. In this, Madison hoped to avoid the loss of virtue that had plagued earlier republics. In *The Federalist*, Hamilton suggests that “the institution of delegated power implies, that there is a portion of virtue and honor among mankind.”⁵⁷ And also in *The Federalist*, Madison contends that “Republican government presupposes the existence of these qualities in a higher degree than any other form.” Indeed, if man were not in possession of these “other qualities in human nature,” a Hobbesian monarchy rather than a democratic republic would

be necessary. "Were the pictures which have been drawn by the political jealousy of some among us, faithful likenesses of the human character," continued Madison, "the inference would be that there is not sufficient virtue among men for self-government; and that nothing less than the chains of despotism can restrain them from destroying and devouring one another."⁵⁸ In his "Address to the States" of April 1783, Madison saw virtue as synonymous with true liberty:

If justice, good faith, honor, gratitude, and all the other qualities which enoble the character of a nation and fulfill the ends of government, be the fruits of our establishments, the cause of liberty will acquire a dignity and luster which it has never yet enjoyed, and an example will be set which cannot but have the most favorable influence on the rights of mankind. If, on the other side, our governments should be unfortunately blotted with the reverse of these cardinal and essential virtues, the great cause which we have engaged to vindicate, will be dishonored and betrayed; the last and fairest experiment in favor of the rights of human nature will be turned against them.⁵⁹

Madison left no doubt that the future of the republican system would depend to a significant degree upon the amount of virtue displayed by the people of the republic. It was his belief that reason had "clearly decided in favor of" a large republic, where the greatest possibility existed for the selection of virtuous men as the representatives of the people, "whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of injustice." He believed that the scheme of representation announced in *The Federalist* would not only make the extended republic possible, but would, in the process, elicit a more virtuous representative republic. He argued, "it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose."⁶⁰ A large republic, in Madison's view, would have a greater number of fit men to be selected as representatives by extended constituencies. The "greater sphere," he argued, would tend to engender better representation. The election of "proper guardians of the public weal" is therefore much more likely in an "extensive republic" than a small one.⁶¹

Jay agreed with Madison that an extended republic provided the greatest opportunity for the selection of men of virtue and quality to political power. He reasoned:

When once an efficient national government is established, the best men in the country will not only consent to serve, but also will generally be appointed to manage it; for altho' town or country, or other contracted influence, may place men in State assemblies, or senates, or courts of justice, or executive departments, yet more general and extensive reputation for talents and other qualifications will be necessary to recommend men to offices under the national government,—especially as it will have the widest field for choice,

and never experience that want of proper persons which is not uncommon in some of the States. Hence, it will result that the administration, the political counsels, and the judicial decisions of the national government will be more wise, systematical, and judicious than those of individual States, and consequently more satisfactory with respect to other nations, as well as more *safe* with respect to us.⁶²

Virtue, the People, and the Republic

Even though Madison believed the citizens of the republic would be more likely to elect proper guardians at the national level than at the state level, he did not simply assume the virtue of those who ruled. The interim period between the Revolution and the Constitution had taught the bitter lesson that virtue in government cannot be taken for granted. Madison was also concerned with *keeping* men virtuous once they had obtained political power. “The aim of every political Constitution,” he reasoned, “is or ought to be first to *obtain for rulers men who possess most wisdom to discern, and most virtue to pursue, the common good of the society*; and in the next place, to take the most effectual precautions *for keeping them virtuous* whilst they continue to hold their public trust.” One of the most effectual means to secure this in republican government, he surmised, was limited terms of office and periodic elections: “a limitation of the term of appointments as will maintain a proper responsibility to the people.”⁶³

Madison clearly recognized both the limits and necessity of structural arrangements and emphasized the importance of the spirit of the people. Representatives, according to his view, “will have been distinguished by the preference of their fellow citizens, we are to presume, that in general, they will be somewhat distinguished also, by those qualities which entitle them to it, and which promise a sincere and scrupulous regard to the nature of their engagements.” These representatives

will enter into the public service under circumstances which cannot fail to produce a temporary affection at least to their constituents. There is in every breast a sensibility to marks of honor, of favor, of esteem, and of confidence, which, apart from all considerations of interest, is some pledge for grateful and benevolent returns. Ingratitude is a common topic of declamation against human nature; and it must be confessed that instances of it are but too frequent and flagrant, both in public and in private life. But the universal and extreme indignation which it inspires is itself a proof of the energy and prevalence of the contrary sentiment.

At the same time, the “pride and vanity” of the representative will generally

attach him to a form of government which favors his pretensions and gives him a share in its honors and distinctions. Whatever hopes or projects might be entertained by a few aspiring characters, it must generally happen that a great proportion of the men deriving their advancement from their influence

with the people, would have more to hope from a preservation of the favor, than from innovations in the government subversive of the authority of the people.

The real check upon oppression at any level or branch of government was bound up in the “genius of the whole system; the nature of just and constitutional laws; and above all, the vigilant and manly spirit which actuates the people of America—a spirit which nourishes freedom, and in return is nourished by it.”⁶⁴

The Federalists emphasized that in their proposed federal republic the final depository of power would remain in the people. Madison wrote that “the people are the only legitimate fountain of power, and it is from them that the constitutional charter, under which the several branches of government hold their power, is derived.”⁶⁵ Madison had successfully argued that ratification of the Constitution ought to be consummated by special conventions in each state rather than by the state legislatures. As far as he was concerned, the Constitution became a compact not between the states, but by the people:

Our governmental system is established by a compact, not between the Government of the United States and the State governments, but between the States as sovereign communities, stipulating each with the other a surrender of certain portions of their respective authorities to be exercised by a common government, and a reservation, for their own exercise, of all their other authorities.⁶⁶

In Madison’s concept of the people as “the only legitimate fountain of power,” he assumed a people possessed of sufficient virtue to support a republic. At the same time, the want of “better motives” of human nature dictated that this moderately virtuous people would need “auxiliary precautions” to help maintain a certain “equilibrium” in the republic. Since the citizens were the only proper objects of government, it was to be the responsibility of government to regulate their “common concerns” and preserve “the general tranquility.” Madison believed that the

policy of supplying [compensating for], by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs, private as well as public. We see it particularly displayed in all the subordinate distributions of power; where the constant aim is to divide and arrange the several offices in such a manner as that each may be a check on the other; that the private interest of every individual may be a sentinel over the public rights. These inventions of prudence cannot be less requisite in the distribution of the supreme powers of the State.⁶⁷

The major “auxiliary precautions”—federalism, separation of powers, and checks and balances—were inextricably intertwined with Madison’s beliefs concerning human nature. He warned that “enlightened statesmen

will not always be at the helm.”⁶⁸ This statement not only emphasizes the need for “auxiliary precautions,” but illustrates the point that writers such as Willmoore Kendall and George Carey have tried to make: that the founders still believed in the need for virtuous leaders as well as citizens. Government and society could survive lapses in virtue, but not its complete disappearance.⁶⁹

In constructing the Constitution of the United States, the American founders dealt with problems that were ancient in origin and yet still problematic. The authors of *The Federalist* assumed that passion, self-interest, ambition, and faction would have to be dealt with by “auxiliary precautions” and “safeguards.” Yet, at the same time, the founders assumed that there was a measure of virtue in man, especially the American, which, balanced against his less praiseworthy characteristics and motives, provided a foundation upon which a republic could be built and maintained.

Structures, separations of power, and checks and balances are simply not enough to maintain equilibrium or order in a democratic republic whose citizens are not supportive of the system, or who are motivated purely by crass self-interest and contentious and factious ambition. Even more importantly, government officials must place some restraints on the pursuit of their own individual and political interests in order to maintain the viability of constitutional government. Officers of the government must have some personal commitment to making the constitutional system work. Madison, in a well-known phrase in *The Federalist*, argued that “ambition must be made to counteract ambition.” The next sentence explains how that is to take place: “The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place.”⁷⁰ This assumes that elected officials will be virtuous, that they will be selected by the people because of their virtue, and that they will be possessed of “enlightened views and virtuous sentiments” that would “render them superior to local prejudices and to schemes of in justice.”⁷¹

However, it is not necessarily in the self-interest of the individual to attempt to counter ambition in others so as to protect the integrity of a constitutional institution. Constitutional “safeguards” can be circumvented, as well as protected by self-interest. When government officials work to protect the integrity of their offices, that is, when they merge their interests with the rights and obligations of their offices—thereby in turn protecting the integrity of the Constitution—they reflect the kind of civic virtue essential for republican government. The Constitution is not simply a mechanical device, but requires a careful balance between the structure of government and the nature and political culture of the people who are required to make it work.

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¹James Madison, no. 55 of *The Federalist*, ed. Jacob E. Cooke (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1961), 375–76 (hereafter referred to as *The Federalist*).

²James Madison, no. 39 of *The Federalist*, 250.

³James Madison, no. 51 of *The Federalist*, 349.

⁴See chap. 3 of Gordon S. Wood, *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776–1787* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969).

⁵See chap. 27 of Garry Wills, *Explaining America: The Federalist* (Garden City, N.J.: Doubleday, 1981).

⁶See Donald S. Lutz, “Bernard Bailyn, Gordon S. Wood, and Whig Political Theory,” *Political Science Reviewer* 7 (Fall 1977): 118–19.

⁷Francis Joseph Grund, *Aristocracy in America* (New York: Harper, 1959), 212–13. We appreciate being introduced to Grund’s writing in Sydney Ahlstrom, “The Puritan Ethic and American Democracy,” in *Calvinism and the Political Order*, ed. George L. Hunt (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965). See also “The Americans in Their Moral, Social, and Political Relations,” in *America in Perspective*, ed. Henry S. Cornmanger (New York: Random House, 1948).

⁸See, generally, Dante Germino, “Carl J. Friedrich on Constitutionalism and the ‘Great Tradition’ of Political Theory,” in J. Roland Pennock and John W. Chapman, *Constitutionalism* (New York: New York University Press, 1979), 19–31; Paul Sigmund, “Carl Friedrich’s Contribution to the Theory of Constitutionalism-Comparative Government,” in Pennock and Chapman, *Constitutionalism*, 32–46.

⁹Clinton L. Rossiter, *The First American Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1956), 193, and *The Political Thought of the American Revolution* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1963), 195.

¹⁰Quoted in Cecilia M. Kenyon, “Constitutionalism in Revolutionary America,” in Pennock and Chapman, *Constitutionalism*, 97.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 101.

¹²Wood, *Creation*, 52; see also 474–75, 507–8, 543–45, 562–63, 606–15.

¹³John Patrick Diggins, *The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest, and the Foundations of Liberalism* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 12; John Patrick Diggins, “Republicanism and Progressivism,” *American Quarterly* 37 (Fall 1985): 572–98.

¹⁴J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), 520–26: “*The Machiavellian Moment* Revisited: A Study in History and Ideology,” *Journal of Modern History* 53 (March 1981): 49–72; J. G. A. Pocock, “Virtue, Rights, and Manners: A Model for Historians of Political Thought,” *Political Theory* 9 (August 1981): 353–68. See also Jack H. Hexter, “Republic, Virtue, Liberty, and the Political Universe of J.G.A. Pocock,” in *On Historians* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 255–303.

¹⁵Diggins, *Lost Soul*, 16. For a more complete study of this debate, see Isaac Kramnic, “Republican Revisionism Revisited,” *American Historical Review* 87 (June 1982): 629–64; Pocock, *Machiavellian Moment*; Forrest McDonald, *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas State, 1985); Robert A. Goldwin and William A. Schambra, eds., *How Democratic Is the Constitution?* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1980); and Robert H. Horwitz, ed., *The Moral Foundations of the American Republic*, 3d ed. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1986). Further important insights on this subject may be found in Lance Banning, “Jeffersonian Ideology Revisited: Liberal

and Classical Ideas in the New American Republic,” and Joyce Appleby, “Republicanism in Old and New Contexts,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 43 (January 1986): 20–34. Appleby has also edited an informative special issue on “Republicanism in the History and Historiography of the United States,” *American Quarterly* 37 (Fall 1985).

¹⁶Alexander Hamilton, no. 15 of *The Federalist*, 96.

¹⁷James Madison, no. 51 of *The Federalist*, 349.

¹⁸James Madison, no. 57 of *The Federalist*, 387.

¹⁹*Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Albert Henry Smyth, 10 vols. (New York: Haskell House, 1970), 8:451–52.

²⁰James Madison, no. 55 of *The Federalist*, 378.

²¹Alexander Hamilton, no. 76 of *The Federalist*, 514.

²²*The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States*, ed. Charles Francis Adams, 10 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1850–56), 6:232.

²³*Ibid.*, 6:115.

²⁴Lester J. Cappon, ed., *The Adams-Jefferson Letters*, 2 vols. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 2:388.

²⁵*The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Andrew A. Lipscomb and Albert E. Bergh, 20 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1903–5), 14:142.

²⁶*Adams-Jefferson Letters*, 492.

²⁷Alexander Hamilton, no. 9 of *The Federalist*, 51.

²⁸James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 65.

²⁹*The Writings of James Madison*, ed. Gaillard Hunt, 9 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1900–1910), 3:103.

³⁰Rossiter, *Political Thought*, 99. But see two books by Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It* (1948; reprint, New York: Vintage, 1974), and *The American Republic* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1959).

³¹Edmund Burke, “Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs,” in *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, 12 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1901), 4:174–75. The theory that an “elite” will, in fact, role in any social or political organization is of long standing. According to Harold J. Laski, “What, as a matter of history, can alone be predicted of the State is that it has always presented the striking phenomenon of a vast multitude owing allegiance to a comparatively small number of men” (*A Grammar of Politics* [London: George Allen and Unwin, 1925], 21). Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan insist that “whether a social structure is democratic depends not on whether or not there is an elite, but on the relations of the elite to the mass—how it is recruited and how it exercises its power” (*Power and Society: A Framework for Political Inquiry* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950], 202).

³²John Adams, “Literary Notes and Papers,” quoted in John R. Howe, Jr., *The Changing Political Thought of John Adams* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), 137.

³³Alexander Hamilton, no. 36 of *The Federalist*, 223.

³⁴Alexander Hamilton, no. 73 of *The Federalist*, 497.

³⁵Alexander Hamilton, no. 71 of *The Federalist*, 482.

³⁶*The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* 13:396–401 (emphasis added).

³⁷*The Writings of James Madison* 2:411–12.

³⁸John Jay, no. 2 of *The Federalist*, 10–11.

³⁹See Jackson Turner Main, *The Anti-Federalists: Critics of the Constitution, 1781–1788* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961); and Herbert J. Storing, *The Complete Anti-Federalist*. 7 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

⁴⁰Quoted in Paul Leicester Ford, *Essays on the Constitution of the United States* (Brooklyn, N.Y.: Historical Printing Club, 1892), 65.

⁴¹Paul Peterson, "Republican Virtue and the Federalist: A Consideration of the Wills Thesis" (Paper presented at the American Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, 1–4 September 1983), 18.

⁴²Alexander Hamilton, no. 9 of *The Federalist*, 52–53.

⁴³Rossiter, *Political Thought*, 199.

⁴⁴Samuel Williams, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country* (Salem, Mass.: N.p., 1775), 13–14.

⁴⁵"American colonists of the latter part of the eighteenth century readily identified the English church and government with corruption—the Church with its pampered hierarchy and impoverished parish priests, and the government with its rotten boroughs and members of Parliament whose votes were bought by the monarch with sinecures" (Clarence B. Carson, *The Rebirth of Liberty* [New York: Arlington House, 1973], 23).

⁴⁶Max Farrand, ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, 3 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927), 2:641–42.

⁴⁷*Writings of Benjamin Franklin* 9:569.

⁴⁸*The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745–1799*, ed. John C. Fitzpatrick, 30 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Washington Bicentennial Commission, 1931–44), 29:479.

⁴⁹*The Washington Papers*, ed. Saul K. Padover (New York: Harper, 1955), 244.

⁵⁰Jonathan Elliot, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution*, 2d ed., 5 vols. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1876), 2:175.

⁵¹*The Writings of James Madison* 5:223.

⁵²William V. Wells, *The Life and Public Services of Samuel Adams*, 3 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1865), 1:22, 23.

⁵³*Ibid.* 3:175.

⁵⁴James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 62–63.

⁵⁵James Madison, no. 51 of *The Federalist*, 351, 352–53 (emphasis added).

⁵⁶James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 64.

⁵⁷Alexander Hamilton, no. 76 of *The Federalist*, 514.

⁵⁸James Madison, no. 55 of *The Federalist*, 378.

⁵⁹*The Writings of James Madison* 1:459–60.

⁶⁰James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 62. In *The Authority of Publius* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1984), Albert Furtwangler contends that *The Federalist* should be read first and foremost as political propaganda and not necessarily as a clear expression of political ideology. While this view may have some merit, we believe *The Federalist* makes a statement that both explains the basic philosophy of the writers and masterfully elicits the acceptance of the readers essentially on the basis of that philosophy.

⁶¹James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 62–63.

⁶²John Jay, no. 3 of *The Federalist*, 15.

⁶³James Madison, no. 57 of *The Federalist*, 384 (emphasis added).

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 385–86.

⁶⁵James Madison, no. 49 of *The Federalist*, 339.

⁶⁶*Letters and Other Writings of James Madison*, 4 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1865), 3:223.

⁶⁷James Madison, no. 51 of *The Federalist*, 349.

⁶⁸James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 60.

⁶⁹Willmoore Kendall and George Cary, *The Basic Symbols of the American Political Tradition* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1970). See also David F. Epstein, *The Political Theory of The Federalist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

⁷⁰James Madison, no. 51 of *The Federalist*, 349.

⁷¹James Madison, no. 10 of *The Federalist*, 64.