

JAMES MADISON

From *The Federalist* 51

In Federalist 10, an earlier selection, one of the Constitution's designers, James Madison, explained his fear of "faction"—any single group that tries to dominate the political process—and why faction cannot be removed from politics. Madison's solution was to accept factions, but control them. Federalist 10 offered a republican (representative) government and a large, diverse nation with many factions as effective controls. In No. 51 he continues, citing the structural features that characterize American government. Power will be separated among different departments, or branches, of government, independent from one another. Then, power will be divided between the national and state levels, a system called federalism. Madison's philosophy for government is here in this essay too: "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition." Don't miss that paragraph, since it contains warnings that resonate across the centuries.

No. 51: Madison

TO WHAT EXPEDIENT, then, shall we finally resort, for maintaining in practice the necessary partition of power among the several departments as laid down in the Constitution? The only answer that can be given is that as all these exterior provisions are found to be inadequate the defect must be supplied, by so contriving the interior structure of the government as that its several constituent parts may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places. Without presuming to undertake a full development of this important idea I will hazard a few general observations which may perhaps place it in a clearer light, and enable us to form a more correct judgment of the principles and structure of the government planned by the convention.

In order to lay a due foundation for that separate and distinct exercise of the different powers of government, which to a certain extent is admitted on all hands to be essential to the preservation of liberty, it is evident that each department should have a will of its own; and consequently should be so constituted that the members of each should have as little agency as possible in the appointment of the members of the others. Were this principle rigorously adhered to, it would require that

