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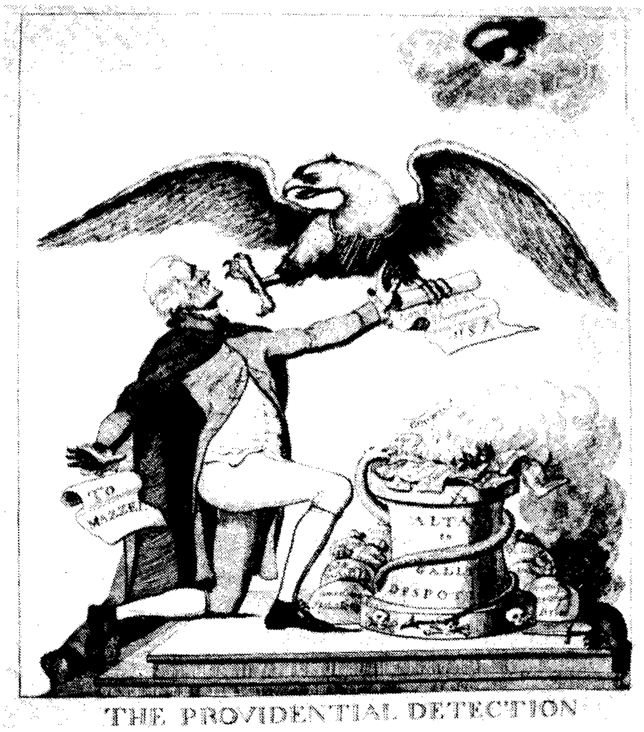

The Providential Detection *ca. 1800. Engraving by an unidentified artist. The exhibition catalogue explains the cartoon: "In the nick of time, the federal eagle prevents Thomas Jefferson from sacrificing the Constitution upon the 'Altar of Gallic Despotism.' The document labeled 'Mazzei' refers to a letter that Jefferson wrote his Italian friend Philip Mazzei, deploring 'men who were Solomons in council, and Samsons in combat, but whose hair has been cut off by the whore England'—which the Federalists trumpeted as a pointed insult to Washington."*

outlook is the cartoon lampooning Jefferson and the French Revolution. Entitled "The Providential Detection" the cartoon depicts the American Eagle saving the Constitution from Jefferson. Using "masonic symbolism," the Federalist cartoon attacks the "Altar to Gallic Despotism" and shows at the base of the altar the building stones for the French Revolution and Jefferson's outlook. On the left of the altar is the stone for Venice, followed by Sardinia, Flanders, the Dutch Republic, and American Separatism–the result of Jefferson's outlook.

All in all, the exhibition is worth seeing. What's more, it is high time that the issue of Hamilton's financial reorganization program be publicly displayed. Only through the work of Lyndon LaRouche and *EIR* has such emphasis been placed on Hamilton's financial and economic applicability to today's crisis. Despite some of its shortcomings, this exhibition will provoke people to think about how the U.S. can get out of the present economic depression. As Alan Fern wrote: "These debates are by no means remote to our own times. As this is being written, the contest for the American presidency is more complex than it has been for more than 75 years and the 'Spirit of Party' is undergoing close scrunity by the public and candidates alike."

A free black family tells its story

by Margaret Sexton

We Were Always Free: The Maddens of Culpeper County, Virginia, A 200-Year Family History
by Thomas O. Madden, Jr. with Ann L. Miller
W.W. Norton & Co. Inc., New York, 1992
218 pages, hardbound, $19.95

Thomas Obed Madden, Jr., has written a powerful history—not only of his family, "free" Negroes from Culpeper County, Virginia—but a history of slavery versus true freedom of mind and spirit. Mr. Madden, now 89 years old, began this book after he found a trunk full of old papers and photographs representing family history, which Mr. Madden augmented by digging into archives, corroborating dates, places, and names with county records, and, most strongly, with quotations from Virginia laws regarding the status of free—not enslaved—Negroes. (Mr. Madden's preferred terminology is Negro.)

The result is much more than a genealogy. It is a slice of life in Virginia from the 1700s to the present day, from the standpoint of a family of Negroes who were never slaves, but who were treated, by law, almost as if they were.

The family's story begins with Mary Madden, a white Irish woman, who bore a child in 1758 named Sarah, whose father was black. Because Mary Madden was white, her children, although mulattos, were free, and could not be sold as slaves. But because Mary was a pauper, she and her children became indentured servants; there was no welfare in the mid-1700s. Mary had to serve her indenture, which could itself be sold, though neither she nor her children could be, until she was 31 years old. Little Sarah's indenture was sold first to George Fraser when she was only two, and then to the Madison family of Orange (the son was our fourth President, James Madison), when she was nine. There, she learned to be a domestic worker.

In turn, Sarah's indenture and those of four of her children were to be sold in 1783 to a man in Pennsylvania. Sarah

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feared they would be wrongly sold into slavery, and was only able to prevent the sale of the indenture of her year-old daughter, Betty. Later, Sarah had several more children, including Willis Madden (1799-1879), Thomas O. Madden, Jr.'s great-grandfather.

Free, but not equal

The story of Willis Madden occupies much of *We Were Always Free*. Free blacks were, in Virginia in the 18th and 19th centuries, forbidden to learn how to read, to marry, except for common-law marriages; and were forbidden to marry outside their race, even though many were already mulattos.

Sarah Madden made a living as a skilled seamstress and laundress for many leading families in the area of Stevensburg, Virginia. Although she could not read or write, her books were kept by an employer. Sarah's condition in life is described this way:

"Sarah was caught between two worlds. She was more than a slave, less than a white woman. Her skills and free status gave her some chance at acceptance in a white world, but there was a price to pay for this. She depended on whites for her livelihood, in a time and place where many whites considered free Negroes immoral, dangerous, and potential subversives. Sarah's life-style had to be quiet; she had to avoid the company of slaves and even that of many free Negroes, so she wouldn't be suspected of involvement in crimes or slave rebellions.

"There was another consideration for Sarah: If she could not support her children, they would be taken away from her and bound out, as she herself had once been."

The Maddens, like other free blacks, were subject to great restrictions, by law, on their freedom. Just as in South Africa today, free blacks in Virginia had to carry on their person "free papers," which included physical descriptions proving they were not slaves.

Laws enacted in Virginia in 1792 (after the American Revolution!) were, says Mr. Madden, enacted in part because of fears by whites that slaves would rebel; enforcement was lax until the 1831 Nat Turner Rebellion.

After that, new laws were passed that imposed severe restrictions on free Negroes: They could not be legally educated; they could not change residence within the state; they could not own any gun, even for hunting; they could not legally hold meetings without whites being present, or conduct any meeting (such as a church service); they were not allowed trial by jury, except for capital crimes, and punishment for conviction was more severe than for whites.

As Mr. Madden writes, besides fear of slave rebellion, whites feared "Negro success." He quotes from an 1831 petition to the Virginia General Assembly, signed by over 100 Culpeper citizens, demanding "a law for the encouragement and protection of the white Mechanick, by Prohibiting any slave, free negro or mulatto, being placed as an apprentice in any manner whatsoever to learn [a] trade or art," referring to skilled trades such as stonemason, miller, carpenter, shoemaker, etc.

Other petitions even demanded free Negroes be driven from the state.

Willis Madden's success

It was in the mid-1800s that Willis Madden became the head of household, as a teenager handling his aging mother's business affairs. The Maddens rented a farm (with barely arable land), and eventually bought it. Willis married in a common-law marriage ("jumping the broomstick," as the author puts it), and had nine children. He learned to be a cobbler, blacksmith, made brandy and whiskey, and became a teamster. Eventually, carefully skirting laws designed to keep free blacks from having businesses, he ran an inn, where teamsters could stop overnight and get food and lodging for themselves and their horses.

Despite the political climate, which worsened as the nation drew nearer to the Civil War in the 1850s, Willis Madden was successful, though not well to do. Ironically, when the Civil War battles, especially Brandy Station were fought nearby, the Madden farmstead suffered more from the Union troops' requisitioning of food, horses, and livestock, than from the Confederates. According to Mr. Madden, Willis's fortunes never recovered, emotionally or financially.

Segregation and education

The final portion of the book deals with Mr. Madden's parents and his own recollections of growing up under segregation. He writes:

"Unless you have actually lived through segregation, unless you have experienced it firsthand, you can never know exactly what it was like. . . . Segregation was someone's assuming that you are different and not quite as good as he was; only it wasn't just someone's opinion, it was the law. . . . Having lived through segregation, I know exactly how Jesus felt when Peter denied him."

The one lesson to be learned above all else, from the Madden family's history: Black people had to be educated. Mr. Madden writes that his parents were both teachers but that in order to teach, their own children had to stay home and do the farm work, rather than attend school. Mr. Madden writes that he sent his children to Catholic schools in the North, rather than have them educated in segregated schools, and adds that "I'm not sure that integration itself meant that much to me. The important thing to me . . . was that segregation had ended."

Reading the history of his family, we can all appreciate the strength of character that was needed to endure living under both slavery and segregation, and yet remain truly free.