

## Anti-Federalist Book Review Notes

Probably mostly heard Federalist arguments in public school; no surprise there

Anti-Feds were more independent, frequently suppressed in official meetings and in press

However, lots of good arguments and points by the Anti-Feds, some which have borne out in history

Common issues: Dangers of taxing powers, federal judiciary too powerful, the danger of standing armies/militia control by the feds, mixing powers in different branches, representation, Senate judiciary powers over impeachment...

This book covers five “authors:” George Mason, Luther Martin, Elbridge Gerry, The Pennsylvania Minority, Cato

Focus on relatively obscure Luther Martin: 5 of 9 chapters!

Format is narrative, a few sentences by Boldin/Maharrey setting something up, followed by 1-2 sentences from Anti-Fed essay knocking it down

Saves in volume, and easy to read

But risks missing context and also reduces amount of old, excellent style of writing of the Anti-Feds

Also missing clear, followable references

Even some bitlys in the back would have been helpful

But mainly a source of quotables

Chapter by chapter:

- 1) Mason after his refusal to sign, details flaws. Focus on Militia and Martial Law, p. 16, and much about worries of consolidation and independence of the States
- 2) Luther Martin on consolidation and poorly defined powers and limits. Page 26: “Intentional?” talks about factions at the convention
- 3) Elbridge Gerry worries about the blending of powers, small size of representative bodies, p. 36 urges caution, talks about shameful treatment in MA ~p. 40
- 4) Luther Martin defends Gerry from Ellsworth/Landholder
- 5) PA Minority: very compressed, shows convention exceeds mandate: amendments take all States but this is going to start working with only 9... talk about taxation, military, and lack of public participation and transparency
- 6) Cato urges caution, fights with Caesar (probably Hamilton) ~p.80. Want structural guarantees, not trust
- 7) Martin 3 worries about inequalities between States, notes that restraints on fedgov seem to be symbolic only
- 8) Martin 4 talks about the fed judiciary
- 9) Martin 5 on taxation powers

End is kind of abrupt, but intro is good

Good source for “quotables,” a fun, easy read to learn about the fears before the Constitution