

Adam Ferguson and the American Revolution*

Yasuo Amoh

I. Introduction

In 1763, the Treaty of Paris put an end to the Seven Years' War which greatly affected many nations and colonies all over the world. However, the end of the war did not bring about lasting peace and harmonious order in the world. Britain, the victorious nation, suffered from an enormous expenditure caused by the war and then forced her colonies in North America to contribute to the supply of the British empire. But they firmly opposed the new taxes and the conflict between America and the mother country caused the War of Independence. France and other nations in Europe were also involved in the war. The peace of 1763 was a prelude to another war, and this caused an epoch-making event in modern history, the independence of America.

The American problem had a great impact on the literati of Scotland in the latter half of the eighteenth century; Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, Alexander Carlyle, Hugh Blair and so on. It delayed the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*. In April 1773, Adam Smith nearly finished it in Kirkcaldy and left for London to publish it. However, when he arrived in London, he found much information about America, which he had to

* This article was originally published in T.Tanaka ed. *Scotland Keimō to Keizaigaku no Keisei* (The Scottish Enlightenment and Economic Thought in the Making: Studies of Classical Political Economy 1), Tokyo, 1989. In translating it into English I have made many amendments and added an appendix.

examine further, and it took him another three years to complete the *Wealth of Nations*.¹ 1776, the year it was published, was also the year of the 'Declaration of Independence of America.' We can see an interesting and important coincidence between two epoch-making events in modern history, the independence of America and the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*. America declared her independence from Britain a few months after the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*, at the end of which Smith had written that Britain should abandon the American colonies as follows:

'If any of the provinces of the British empire cannot be made to contribute towards the support of the whole empire, it is surely time that Great Britain should free herself from the expense of defending those provinces in time of war, and of supporting any part of their civil or military establishments in time of peace, and endeavour to accommodate her future views and designs to the real mediocrity of her circumstances.'²

Smith's attitude towards the American problem,³ however, was an exceptional one among the Scottish Enlightenment. The other members were against the American cause. They rejected the American claims, and some of them resorted to coercive measures in order to chastise the disobedient colonies. It is curious enough that the anti-enlightenment clergy sympathized with American rights. For example, John Wither-

1. David Stevens, 'Adam Smith and the Colonial Disturbances,' in A.S.Skinner and T.Wilson eds. *Essays on Adam Smith*, Oxford, 1975, pp.202-4.

2. Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Natures and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, 1776, The Glasgow Edition, 1976, vol.2, p.947.

3. For Smith's attitude towards the problem see D.Stevens, op.cit.; D. Winch, *Classical Political Economy and Colonies*, G.Bell and Sons Ltd., 1965, chap.2.; and Do., *Adam Smith's Politics*, Cambridge, 1978, chap.7. For the comparison between Smith and Ferguson on the American problem see IV below.

spoon, who criticized the enlightened clergy, John Home, A. Carlyle and H. Blair in the Douglas cause, supported the independence of America and signed the 'Declaration of the Independence.' As for the American cause, Witherspoon's stance approached that of Smith, and the enlightened literati of Edinburgh were against Smith.⁴

Why couldn't the enlightened literati, who criticized the rigourism of the obscurant Presbyterian clergy, acknowledge the American claims? In this paper I will examine Adam Ferguson's attitudes towards the American problem. The reason why I am concerned with Ferguson is that he was one of the leaders of the Edinburgh literati who supported John Home in the Douglas cause, criticized the obscurant clergy, and opposed American independence. Furthermore, Ferguson committed himself more deeply to the American problem than the other members of the Scottish Enlightenment. He was concerned with the problem not only as a man of letters but also as a man of action.

II. Ferguson and Price

It seems that Ferguson took a great interest in the American problem as early as 1765, the year the Stamp Act passed the British parliament and caused the American revolt. In his letter to John Macpherson, which was probably written about that time, he wrote as follows:

'I think Greenvilles [sic] Stamp Act a very unlucky affair for this Country.

4. Cf. Richard Sher, *Church and University in the Scottish Enlightenment*, Edinburgh University Press, 1985, chap. 7; Dalphy I. Fagerstrom, 'Scottish Opinion and the American Revolution,' *William and Mary Quarterly*, series 3, vol. 11, 1954; and Hiroshi Mizuta, 'Scotland Keimō to Shimin Kakumei' (The Scottish Enlightenment and the American and French Revolutions), in S. Tanaka ed., *Scotland Keimō Shisō Kenkyū* (Studies on the Scottish Enlightenment), Tokyo, 1988.

It has brought on a dispute in which this Mother Country as it is very properly called has made a very shabby figure, and I am afraid cannot mend the matter. We are at once Tradesmen & Soldiers to America. When we bully them as Soldiers they threaten not to employ us as Tradesmen. And the Question has now become complicated in the highest degree. I cannot fully satisfy myself about it . . . I have often wished to be on the spot that I might shoot at the flying follies of the times: but I am sensible of the disadvantage of being at a distance & not knowing of a Subject untill it is too late. I find that People of Letters think there is a dignity in keeping aloof from present affairs & writing only for Posterity. I am of a Contrary opinion. I believe what is done for today has more Effect than books that look big on the shelv[es].⁵

The opportunity 'to shoot the flying follies of the time,' which he had so desired in this letter, was offered later when he was assigned to the post of secretary to the Carlisle peace commission. One of the reasons why he was appointed as the secretary was that he wrote a pamphlet against Richard Price's *Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty*⁶ which had a great impact on both sides of the Atlantic much the same as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*. The title of Ferguson's pamphlet is *Remarks on a Pamphlet lately published by Dr. Price, Intituled, Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, . . . In a Letter from a Gentleman in the Country to a Member of Parliament*.⁷ The *Remarks* was published about one

5. [Ferguson], Letters (72) of, to Sir John Macpherson, 1773-1808, Edinburgh University Library, Mc. Dc. 1.77., No.1.

6. Hereafter cited as *Civil Liberty*. References to this book are from R.Price, *Two Tracts on Civil Liberty*, Reprint of the 1778 ed. Da Capo Press, 1972.

7. Hereafter cited as *Remarks*. I referred to microfilm of the book in the British Library. For Ferguson's *Remarks* see D.Kettler, *The Social and Political Thought of Adam Ferguson*, Ohio State University Press, 1965, pp. 85-6; J.B.Fagg, 'Adam Ferguson: Scottish Cato,' Diss. University of North Carolina, 1968, pp.144ff.; H.Tanaka, 'Ferguson no America Ron to Bunmei Shyakai Ron,' (Ferguson's Criticism on R.Price, *Observations on Civil Liberty* and its relation to his Idea of Civil Society) *Kōnan Keizaigaku*

month later than the publication of the *Civil Liberty*.⁸

Ferguson and Price were opposed to each other on their fundamental ideas of liberty. Price defined 'physical liberty' as 'principle of Spontaneity', 'moral liberty' as 'the power of following, in all circumstances, our sense of right and wrong,' 'religious liberty' as 'the power of exercising, without molestation, that mode of religion which we think best' and 'civil liberty' as 'the power of a Civil Society or State to govern itself by its own discretion.'⁹ From these definitions he put 'liberty' in opposition to 'restraint'. In short, according to Price, liberty is 'Self-direction or Self-government'¹⁰ and then 'in every free state every man is his own Legislator. —All taxes are free-gifts for public services.'¹¹ Therefore, 'as far as, in any instance, the operation of any cause comes in to restrain the power of Self-government, so far Slavery is introduced.'¹²

Ferguson criticized Price's view bitterly. According to Ferguson, civil liberty is not the right of autonomy but 'the security of our right.'¹³ Although 'it is of great moment to extend the participation of power and government, as far as the circumstances and character of a people will permit,' it is 'extremely dangerous to confound this advantage with Civil or Political Liberty; for it may often happen, that to extend the participation of power is to destroy Liberty.'¹⁴ Therefore, 'it is less material who

Ronshū, (Kōnan Economic Papers) vol.25, no.4, 1985; and R.Sher, op. cit., pp. 264 ff.

8. Cf. Thomas Adams, *The American Controversy*, Brown University Press, 1980, p.386.

9. Price, *Civil Liberty*, p.3. Cf. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.2.

10. Price, *ibid.*, p.3.

11. Price, *ibid.*, p.6. Cf. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.8.

12. Price, *ibid.*, p.5. Cf. Ferguson, *ibid.*, p.2.

13. Ferguson, *ibid.*, p.7.

14. *Ibid.*, p.14.

elects, than it is who may be elected.’¹⁵ Furthermore, Ferguson learned from Roman history ‘that the power of the people is not the good of the people. Their liberty sunk as their power increased, and perished at last by the very hands that were employed in support of the popular cause.’¹⁶ Thus Ferguson rejected such liberty as the right of autonomy, and he saw ‘the seeds of anarchy, of civil wars, and at last of a military government’¹⁷ in Price’s civil liberty.¹⁸

From these oppositions on liberty arose contrary views on the existing state of Britain. Price pointed out the defects of the representation and he ‘recommends a fair and adequate representation’.¹⁹ But according to Ferguson, ‘under all the defects of the British Legislation, the subject enjoys more security than was ever before enjoyed by any people.’²⁰ Furthermore, he appreciated British policy towards her American colonies, and wrote ‘that the Colonies arrived at this happy state under the influence of British policy.’²¹ On the contrary, Price accused it bitterly.²² He recognized American right and called for the reformation of Britain, while Ferguson defended the existing system of the British empire.

15. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.13.

16. *Ibid.*, p.52.

17. *Ibid.*, p.59.

18. Ten years earlier Ferguson wrote that ‘popular governments would, of all others, be the most subject to errors in administration, and to weakness in the execution of public measures.’ (A.Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, Edinburgh, 1767, pp.249-250.) Furthermore, Ferguson opposed Wyvill’s reform movement. Cf. D.Kettler, *op.cit.*, pp.86ff.

19. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.11. Cf. Price, *Civil Liberty*, pp.9-11.

20. Ferguson, *ibid.*, p.13.

21. *Ibid.*, p.44.

22. Cf. R.Price, *Civil Liberty*, pt.2, sect.3. Of the Policy of the War with America.

The danger caused by augmentation of paper-currency and public debt, in which Price saw serious difficulties, did not bother Ferguson at all. Ferguson recognized Price's ability in this subject. 'Few persons are qualified to enter the lists with Dr. Price, on the subject of accounts and calculations.'²³ This compliment to Price, however, does not imply that Ferguson agreed with his opinion. Ferguson said that 'this [subject of accounts and calculations] alone will not enable us . . . to decide the great questions of national right.'²⁴ Furthermore, Ferguson rejected Price from the socioeconomic point of view. According to Ferguson, paper-currency and public debt are rather advantageous. 'Paper-currency and public debt are the consequences of a fortunate constitution, and of an unlimited credit both public and private. They have given us the advantage in many a contest to forces superior to our own; and the evil, though great, by our Author's [Price's] account, is susceptible of a cure.'²⁵

Their contrasting views on the existing state of affairs were naturally reflected in the opposition of their prospects concerning America's future. Price was optimistic about its future. 'Our American Colonies, particularly the Northern ones, have been for some time in the happiest state of society; or, in the middle state of civilization, between its first rude and its last refined and corrupt state'²⁶ and he thought it possible for them to remain in this state without becoming corrupt. On the other hand, Ferguson was pessimistic about America's future. 'It is the fashion . . . to give high expectations of the great perfection to which human nature is tending, especially in America; for I think Old England, by their account, is degenerating. But a republic extending 1200 miles in one

23. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.47.

24. *Ibid.*, p.47.

25. *Ibid.*, 47-8.

26. Price, *op.cit.*, p.70.

direction, and without any known bounds in the other, is still an experiment to be made in the history of mankind. Our ancestors made the experiment in vain, within narrow limits.²⁷ Furthermore, Ferguson criticized their optimistic prospects; 'they too had high expectations of what mankind were about to exhibit; they thought the millennium and the kingdom of Christ were at hand, but they found, in their stead, the iron reign of an usurper, supported by military force . . . The officer, perhaps, has not yet appeared, who, on that emergency, is to dismiss the Congress as Cromwell did the Parliament. But what title have they to hope for an exemption from the too common fate of mankind; the fate that has ever attended Democracies attempted on too large a scale; that of plunging at once into military government?'²⁸

How did they consider the urgent issue regarding Britain's right to tax America? Price, who defined civil liberty as the right of autonomy, strongly supported the colonists' claim, 'No taxation without representation', and he said 'that no one community can have any power over the property or legislation of another community, which is not incorporated with it by a just and adequate representation.'²⁹ On the other hand, Ferguson raised two questions. First, 'whether the present constitution of Great Britain respecting her Colonies; has committed a power of Taxation over America, to the legislature of Great Britain.'³⁰ He replied to this in the affirmative. Ferguson justified Britain's right to tax her colonies on the basis of her constitution. But secondly, 'Has the situation of affairs undergone any change that require a change of policy and of

27. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.22-3.

28. *Ibid.*, pp.23-4.

29. Price, *Civil Liberty*, p.19. Cf. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.17.

30. Ferguson, *ibid.*, p.29.

measures . . . ?³¹ Ferguson perceived some changes, namely, the increasing of resources and population in America, the augmentation of Britain's expenditure for maintaining the American colonies, and their being obliged to share in the expense of the British empire. Nevertheless, new circumstances never justified the American claim. It was his strong conviction 'that the Americans ought to contribute to the supplies of the empire.'³² Ferguson stated that 'they [Americans] may be assured, that no Minister in the councils of the King will surrender the undoubted right of this country, to require from America some share in the supplies which are necessary to support the Imperial Crown and the Empire of Great Britain.'³³ He was not doubtful at all about Britain's right to impose taxes on her American colonies.

However, Ferguson's attitude was more moderate than the other members of the moderate literati of Edinburgh; Carlyle, Blair and Robertson. Ferguson did not appeal immediately to military force in order to defeat the American revolt, nor did he claim Britain's unlimited power. As for the methods of taxation, there was some room for negotiations between the Americans and the mother country, and he thought the Americans could choose by themselves the method that was most convenient for them. He proposed 'a candid and fair discussion of this subject. Commissioners are soon to be appointed by the King, who are to accompany his fleets and armies across the Atlantic, doubtless with the humane and merciful intention to spare, by pacific means, if that is yet possible, the effusion of blood.'³⁴ Ferguson hoped that 'both . . . will return from their errors, and exchange the sword for a more rational mode of

31. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.29.

32. *Ibid.*, p.31.

33. *Ibid.*, p.32.

34. *Ibid.*, p.32.

arbitration.³⁵ This gentle proposal seems to have been one of the reasons why Ferguson was chosen as secretary of the Carlisle peace commission two years later.

However, it is hasty to conclude that Ferguson's gentle attitude means his acknowledgment of American claims. As we have observed, he had no doubt about Britain's right to tax her colonies. Therefore, if they are intoxicated with the idea of separation and independence, and if they refuse to pay tax, Ferguson asserted, 'the sword must strike as well as be raised; and till they exculpate themselves from the design of withdrawing their allegiance, and every reasonable mode of supply from the Crown of Great Britain, the wounds they receive will appear to come from the hand of Justice.'³⁶ Although Ferguson proposed some mild measures, he did not recognize American rights, let alone the independence of America. He considered the sword necessary as the last resort.

III. Ferguson as secretary of the Carlisle peace commission

Thirteen colonies of North America proclaimed the 'Declaration of Independence' a few months after the publications of Price's *Civil liberty* and Ferguson's *Remarks*. They resolutely took a step towards independence. They did not require independence when they rejected the Sugar Act (1764) and the Stamp Act (1765). The word 'independence' was not found in the 'Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances' of the First Continental Congress in 1774. Of course, they denied the right of the British Parliament to impose taxes on her colonies and bitterly opposed the Coercive Acts. However, the authority of the King was not denied in the 'Declaration of Colonial Rights and Grievances.' The King's authority

35. Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.34. Cf. *ibid.*, pp.59-60.

36. *Ibid.*, p.33.

was rather resorted to in order to redress the abuses of Parliament. Even after the battles of Lexington and Concord in April 1775, 'the members [of the Congress] addressed a last petition to George III—the Olive Branch Petition, it was called—urging him to prevent the efforts of Parliament under a corrupt ministry to enslave them.'³⁷ In 1776, more than ten years after the Sugar Act, the American colonies decisively denied the authority of the King, and accused him of being an absolute tyrant.

How did Ferguson consider the transition of affairs in America? He wrote the following letter to Macpherson on October 27, 1777.

'We are certainly under a necessity at least for our own Credit of giving that people if we can join them a sound drubbing; but I protest that if we had news tomorrow that Howe had beat Washington & Burgoyne Arnold the use I woud make of it woud be to leave America with contempt. For it looks as if no Calamity woud force them to Submission & if it did their submission is not worth haveing. Their whole resources for any visible time to come will not pay the Army that Keep them in submission. So I am partial enough to Great Britain to wish them in the bottom of the Sea.'³⁸

Ferguson took the progress of affairs in America more seriously and more pessimistically than before. He observed that it was difficult for Britain to force America into submission and that their submission was not worth having. However, he never thought that Britain ought to abandon America, let alone recognize its independence. He hoped to give the American colonies 'a sound drubbing' and he wished 'them in the bottom of the sea.' On February 12, 1778, Ferguson wrote again to the same correspondent that 'I earnestly wish that they [Master and Man in the Present Government] woud hoist a Certain sail, which perhaps . . .

37. E.S.Morgan, *The Birth of the Republic 1763-1789*, Chicago U.P., p.71.

38. [Ferguson], Letters (72) of, to Sir John Macpherson, 1773-1808, op. cit., No. 7.

may land us some where. The sail I mean would be to America the very signal which I think we should make to them of an Intention not to Invade their Liberties but of a Resolution to support the Authority of the state by their destruction and at any hazard of our own.’³⁹

About the time when Ferguson wrote the first letter, the critical event which decided the course of the War of Independence occurred. Of course it was the surrender of the British army at Saratoga on October 17, 1777. Britain was shocked by the defeat. On the other hand, America was encouraged by the victory and gained self-confidence. Furthermore, France, which had waited for an opportunity to join America, took part in the war against Britain. The British government began to look for a way to put an end to the war. The Conciliatory Acts were proposed by North and they passed the parliament in the spring of 1778. It was decided that a peace commission would be sent to America. Frederick Earl of Carlisle, William Eden, later Lord Auckland, and George Johnston, former governor of West Florida, were chosen as members. The Howe brothers, Richard and William, also joined with the commission in America. The commissioners sailed for Philadelphia from Portsmouth on April 17, 1778.⁴⁰

One of the commissioners, Johnston, being a long time acquaintance of Ferguson, invited him to accompany the commission. Ferguson, who, as we observed in the preceding chapter, suggested ‘a candid and fair discussion’ between Britain and America and ‘a peace commission’ in his pamphlet against Price, accepted Johnston’s invitation. This invitation

39. [Ferguson], *Letters*, op. cit., No.9.

40. But the winds were unfavourable and they were forced to put in at St. Helen’s on the Isle of Wight. A few days later they again left for Philadelphia and arrived there on June 6. Cf. J.B.Fagg, op.cit., p.162.

had originally been unofficial, but on June 6, Ferguson was officially appointed as secretary of the Carlisle peace commission.⁴¹ What did Ferguson, secretary of the commission, think about the state of affairs in America and how did he act in it?⁴² We can learn his thoughts and activities in America from unpublished proceedings held by the Edinburgh University Library. It is entitled 'Proceedings of His Majestys Commissioners appointed in Pursuance of an Act of Parliament, of the Eighteenth Year of His Majesty's Reign, to treat consult and agree upon the means of quieting the disorders subsisting in certain of the Colonies Plantations and Provinces of North America.'⁴³ It contains many documents, some of which were probably drawn up by Ferguson himself.

I will begin by examining the mission of the commissioners. According to the 'Orders and Instructions' contained in the 'Proceedings', their mission was to end the war by British concessions to some of the American claims. Britain made great concessions to the American colonies on some important points regarding the mother country's rights to her colonies. The British Parliament repealed the Tea Tax Act of

41. For the details of appointing the secretary see Fagg, *op.cit.*, pp. 159-160.

42. For the history of the Carlisle peace commission see C.R.Ritcheson, *British Politics and the American Revolution*, University of Oklahoma Press, 1954, reprinted by Greenwood Press, 1981, pp.258ff.

43. Edinburgh University Library, Ms. Dc.1.6. Hereafter cited as 'Proceedings'. According to *Catalogue of the extensive & valuable Collection of Manuscripts . . . of the late Rev. John Lee, D.D. . . . which will be sold by auction by Mr. T.Nisbet, . . . on Thursday, April 4, 1861, . . .* Lee had 'Dr Adam Ferguson. Collection of Papers in his handwriting', in which the following item was contained; 'Very important and Valuable Series of Papers relative to the American War, comprising many documents in the handwriting of Dr Ferguson as Secretary of the Commission for quieting the Disorders in America'. Unfortunately, its location is unknown by now.

1773 and the Massachusetts Government Act of 1774 both of which the Americans had been resisting bitterly since their enactments. Furthermore, the commissioners could suspend all acts passed since 1763, if they thought it necessary in order to end the war. The commissioners were also empowered and authorized to offer 'a full Pardon, without any Exception, . . . to all that have been in Rebellion.'⁴⁴ As for the American government after reconciliation between America and Britain, it was said that 'a General Assembly in nature of the present Congress . . . should be constituted or established by Authority to meet in Congress for the better management of the general Concerns and Interests of the said Colonies.'⁴⁵ Britain acknowledged self-government in America. The colonists were allowed to elect governors in their colonies. Furthermore, the Americans' representation in the House of Commons might be admitted under some conditions.

From these it seems that the authority and power of the mother country was largely denied. But although Britain made great concessions, the authority and power of the King and the parliament were never fundamentally infringed.⁴⁶ First, the colonial self-government had not been fully realized. As for the election of governors in America, we can find the following words in the 'Orders and Instructions.' 'It must always be provided that the Election shall be approved, and the Commission to such Governors issued under Our Authority. And the same Instruction may be understood to extend to the Appointment of all or any judicial and Civil

44. 'Proceedings', p.34.

45. Ibid., pp.32-3.

46. On this point we can not find any fundamental difference between Ferguson, author of anti-Price pamphlet, and the 'Orders and Instructions,' under which Ferguson, secretary of the Carlisle commission, had to act.

Magistrates.⁴⁷ Regarding American representation in the House of Commons, the commissioners were not authorized to grant it by themselves. They were prescribed to refer the matter to the consideration of the two houses of the British Parliament. Furthermore, the 'Orders and Instructions' says that 'the Mode of Representation, the Number of the Representatives which ought to be very small, and the Considerations offered on their part in return for so great a distinction and benefit should be precisely and distinctly stated.'⁴⁸ In short, the colonial election of governors was under the authority of the mother country and colonial representation in the House of Commons was greatly restricted.

Secondly, 'a general assembly of America' proposed in the 'Orders and Instruction' was also under the authority of the mother country. The 'Orders and Instructions' stated that 'the greatest attention should be given that in ascertaining the Powers and functions of that Assembly, the Sovereignty of the Mother Country should not be infringed, nor any Powers given or ascribed to it that should be capable of being construed into an Impeachment of the Sovereign Rights of His Majesty and the Constitutional Controll of this Country.'⁴⁹ The general assembly of America should be under the constitutional control of Britain. Furthermore, we find the following statement: 'As to the Declaration of Independence dated July 4th 1776, and all Notes, Resolutions, and Orders passed since the Rupture began, it is not necessary to insist on a formal Revocation of them, as such Declaration, Notes, Orders and Resolutions not being Legal Acts will be in effect rescinded by the Conclusion of the Treaty.'⁵⁰ Although a formal revocation of the 'Declaration of Independ-

47. 'Proceedings', pp.29-30.

48. *Ibid.*, pp.33-4.

49. *Ibid.*, p.33.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-7.

ence' was not required, it was not acknowledged at all. It had been illegal since its promulgation, and therefore, it was not necessary even to insist on its formal revocation.

We can infer the intention of the Carlisle commission from what we have observed. They intended to allay American grievances by any means and then to stop their independence. Morgan says that 'a commission under the Earl of Carlisle was directed to offer them everything they had asked for short of independence.'⁵¹ However, why did Britain not acknowledge American independence in spite of abandoning her right to tax America and repealing all contentious acts since 1763? It may be said that it was because Britain coveted her position as the mother country and wished to maintain it at any cost. This answer is not incorrect. However, it is somewhat superficial. We can find the following statement in the 'Orders and Instructions': 'Upon the subjects of Commercial Regulations the prevailing Principle has always been to secure a monopoly of American Commerce./ The Fetters of Custom house Regulations are but a weak Security for this monopoly in Practice, and it should seem that the most effectual way, to insure its Continuance, would be to lay upon Articles of foreign Produce, not imported from Great Britain, the Amount of the Provincial Duties whether collected for general or local Purposes. This is a point to be watched in the course of the Treaty; and if there is on the one hand a Relaxation from antient Restraints that new Stipulation may reasonably be required on the other.'⁵² The American colonies were considered part of the British empire and trade regulation was insisted upon from the mercantilistic point of view. 'To secure a monopoly of American commerce' was one of the reasons why the Carlisle

51. E.S.Morgan, *The Birth of the Republic 1763-1789*, op.cit., p. 84.

52. 'Proceedings', p.31.

commission did not recognize independence of America.

Furthermore, the commissioners rejected the independence from the colonial point of view. They saw the British empire as favourable not only to Britain but also to America. 'The Congress, the Assemblies, and the people of America will Judge for themselves, whether that union of force which we on our part deem of so much advantage to Great Britain may not be of equal advantage to them, and whether the internal Peace of their own System, will not be more secure under the title and majesty of the King of Great Britain, whose Prerogatives are exercised within strict limitations, and whose authority will ensure the regular execution of every law that may be provided by the representatives of the people for their peace and Security, than it ever could be if left to be agitated by the storms of faction, and the jarring interests of so many parties as are likely to divide this Continent, after they have laid aside the respect that is due to the ancient Constitution, under which they have so long prospered.'⁵³ The commissioners thought that peace and order in America would not be able to continue to be without the power and authority of the King of Great Britain.⁵⁴

53. 'Proceedings', pp.91-2.

54. It must be recalled here that Ferguson pessimistically viewed America's future after her independence in the *Remarks*. See pp.7-8 above. Smith also regarded 'the coercive power of the mother country' as advantageous to America from the same point of view. 'Even they [the colonies], however, would, in point of happiness and tranquility, gain considerably by a union with Great Britain. It would, at least, deliver them from those rancorous and virulent factions which are inseperable from small democracies, . . . In the case of a total separation from Great Britain, which, unless prevented by a union of this kind, seems very likely to take place, those factions would be ten times more virulent than ever. Before the commencement of the present disturbance, the coercive power of the mother-country had always been able to restrain those factions form breaking out into any thing worse

How did the American colonies reply to the reconciliatory proposals of the Carlisle commission? Henry Lawrence, President of the Congress, wrote the following letter to the commissioners on June 17, 1778.

'The Acts of the British Parliament, the Commission from your Sovereign and your Letter, suppose the People of these States to be subjects of the Crown of Great Britain, and are founded on the Idea of dependence which is utterly inadmissible.

I am further directed to inform your Excellencies that Congress are inclined to Peace, notwithstanding the unjust Claims from which this War originated and the Savage manner in which it hath been conducted; they will therefore be ready to enter upon the consideration of a Treaty of Peace and Commerce, not inconsistent with Treaties already subsisting, when the King of Great Britain shall demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose.

The only solid proof of this disposition will be an explicit acknowledgement of the Independence of these States or the withdrawing his Fleets and Armies.⁵⁵

The Congress, having gained self-confidence by the victory at Saratoga, and having allied themselves with France, resolved not to enter into negotiations with Britain without 'an explicit acknowledgement of the independence' or 'the withdrawing his fleets and armies.'

Ferguson, secretary of the commission, was busy from the beginning. It was Ferguson who was ordered in the first place to try to meet the members of the Congress in his own person and to inform them of the commissioners' proposal for peace. But he could not fulfill his duty because he could not get a passport from George Washington. It was also

than gross brutality and insult. If that coercive power was entirely taken away, they would probably soon break out into open violence and bloodshed.'(A.Smith, op.cit., pp.944-5.) It is curious enough that Smith saw difficulties in 'small democracies', while Ferguson saw the seed of military government in 'democracies attempted on too large a scale'(Ferguson, *Remarks*, p.23.)

55. 'Proceedings', pp. 85-6.

Ferguson who was commanded to draw up a 'Manifesto and Proclamation'⁵⁶ as the last effort to break the deadlock. In the 'Manifesto', the commissioners made it public that they had the intention of entering into negotiations individually with any of the colonies that were prepared to comply with their proposals. However, their strategy to divide the American colonies into many camps had no effect, and the commissioners could not enter into negotiations with America after all. They vainly returned to Britain without accomplishment in December 1778. Their failure was described bitterly but a little ironically by E. Burke.

'They enter the capital of America only to abandon it; and these assertors and representatives of the dignity of England, at the tail of a flying army, let fly their Parthian shafts of memorials and remonstrances at random behind them. Their promises and their offers, their flatteries and their menaces, were all despised; and we were saved from the disgrace of their formal reception, only because the congress scorned to receive them; whilst the state-house of independent Philadelphia opened her doors to the public entry of the ambassador of France. From war and blood we went to submission; and from submission plunged back again to war and blood; to desolate and be desolated, without measure, hope, or end.'⁵⁷

It seems hasty to infer Ferguson's ideas from the opinions and proposals of the Carlisle commission. For example, the strategy to divide the American colonies which Ferguson suggested in the 'Manifesto' had been stated in the 'Orders and Instructions' to the Carlisle commission. Therefore, we may suppose that it was not Ferguson's idea but a proposal that Ferguson, secretary of the commission, made in accordance with the 'Orders and Instructions.' However, there may be a certain degree of truth in the supposition that the commissioners and their secretary had some-

56. 'Proceedings', pp.170-178.

57. E.Burke, 'Speech at Bristol previous to the Election in that City, 1780', *The Works of the Right Honourable Edmund Burke*, vol.3, OUP, 1935, p.418.

what similar views. Furthermore, we find among the collection of Ferguson's unpublished essays⁵⁸ in the Edinburgh University Library a memorial, in which Ferguson saw the American problem in the same manner as the Carlisle commission did. This collection has been considered to consist of thirty-two essays.⁵⁹ However, beside them, it contains several peaces on various subjects, one of which concerns the American problem. Its title is 'Memorial respecting the measures to be pursued on the present immediate prospect of a final separation of the American Colonys from Great Britain.'⁶⁰ It was presumably written after the Carlisle Commission because it referred to the pressure not only of the French war but also of the Spanish war.⁶¹

In the 'Memorial' Ferguson rejected the independence of America and he examined the disadvantages caused by it as follows: 'the final separation of North America from Great Britain and the Consequent opposition of their Interests, will render the Navigation of the Atlantic, The Fisherys of Newfoundland, The Possession of the West India Island[s] & even the Commerce of India at first Precarious & in the end untenable to Great Britain without an Enormous expence which even these objects cannot Repay.'⁶² 'On the contrary,' Ferguson continued, 'any Political Connection however slight between Great Britain and Her Colonys aided by the

58. A.Ferguson, 'Collection of Essays', Edinburgh University Library, Mc.Dc. 1.42.

59. For the titles of thirty-two essays see W.M.Philip ed. *Adam Ferguson's Unpublished Essays*, 3vols. Argyll, 1986-7. Unfortunately, this edition is far from satisfactory.

60. A.Ferguson, 'Collection of Essays,' op.cit., pp.417-421. Hereafter cited as 'Memorial.' For full text see the appendix below. Philip did not refer to the 'Memorial' in her edition.

61. Spain entered the war on the side of France in April 1779, although not as an ally of America.

62. 'Memorial', p.418.

dispositions which arise from a common Extraction, from near consanguinity, from speaking the same language, having the same manners & Customs, . . . may at least for a Considerable period prevent the separation of North America from Great Britain, maintain the Idea of a Common Interest between them, Involve these Colonys in the same Friendships & Enmitys with Great Britain & consequently in the Case of Every War afford to her shipping friendly Ports from Labrador to Florida, render the Navigation of the Atlantic, The Fisherys, The Possession of the West India Islands, the Trade to India Secure, furnish an ample supply of Naval Stores, . . . '63 As we can easily see from these statements, Ferguson saw the independence of America as a detriment to the British empire from the mercantilistic point of view.⁶⁴ On this point the 'Memorial' and the Carlisle commission shared the same stance.

Furthermore, the 'Memorial' and the commission had almost the same attitudes towards American government. Ferguson says in the 'Memorial' that 'the People of America in their several states or Colonies be invited to chuse representatives, form their assemblys & meet in Congress for their Common safety, to restore the freedom of Trade and in every other respect devise for themselves.'⁶⁵ However, this assembly should be under the authority of the mother country just as stated in the 'Orders and Instructions' to the Carlisle commission. The American people, Ferguson continues, 'enjoy the advantages of Civil Government exercised in Name of & under the Authority of The King.'⁶⁶

63. 'Memorial', p.418.

64. Ferguson's conservatism has frequently been referred to. See D.Kettler, *op.cit.*, chapter 4 and R.Sher, *op.cit.*, chapter 7. However, his mercantilistic stance behind the conservatism has hardly been noticed.

65. 'Memorial', p.419.

66. *Ibid.*, p.419.

From these we can conclude that the 'Memorial' and the Carlisle commission had almost the same views on the American problem. However, it seems that Ferguson took the state of affairs in America more seriously and more pessimistically than when he was secretary of the Carlisle commission. He wrote at the beginning of the 'Memorial' that 'the Danger and the consequences of this separation are so great as to justify every tryal that can be made to prevent it.'⁶⁷ On the other hand, Ferguson began to think about British policy after her defeat. 'If it should be thought that this plan⁶⁸ cannot be adopted or that it cannot be executed under The Pressure of a French and Spanish War, It is submitted whether all thoughts of Coercion in America should not be laid aside. It has been found from experience in the mode of war hitherto practiced that the progress of the army where they have gone has been attended with a growing disaffection of the Country without any one advantage whatever./A War of Devastation would be invidious & if not successful throw America for ever into the arms of France./It is submitted therefore whether . . . the wisest course would not be to Evacuate America intirely upon the following simple Conditions.'⁶⁹ The progress of affairs forced Ferguson to think about Britain's evacuation from America.

However, we cannot consider the entire evacuation from America as Ferguson's real intention. He asserted at the end of the 'Memorial' that

67. 'Memorial', p.417.

68. Six measures proposed in the 'Memorial.' See 'Memorial,' pp.418-420.

69. Ibid., p.421. Ferguson stated the following conditions. '1st That those who have appeared on the side of union with Great Britain should be safe in their Persons & Property. 2 That the trade of both countrys should be free, and all their ports mutually open to each other.' And he writes in deleted note that 'It merits consideration whether Canada Novascotia & the Froidas should not be abandoned.'(Ibid., p.421.)

Britain had to stand on her present ground. 'It is however highly probable in the present situation of affairs that Great Britain, cannot relax her operations, give way to any Claim of Her Ennemys nor abandon a single Possession in America without confirming the People of this Continent in their alliance with France and without provoking farther demands & Insults & giving to the world a general impression of her Weakness which may in the consequences be fatal to her affairs./If she is to withstand the dangers that now press her, she must stand on her present ground, or fall, she will grow weaker in her step. She retracts & weakest of all in her last Retreat & within her own Isle.'⁷⁰

IV. Ferguson and Smith

What did Smith, who had published the *Wealth of Nations*, think about the progress of affairs in America when Ferguson went to America as secretary of the Carlisle commission and then wrote the 'Memorial'? We can learn Smith's views about that time from 'Smiths Thoughts on the State of the Contest with America, February 1778.'⁷¹ It is said that Wedderburn consulted Smith about American matters early in 1778, and that this memorandum was Smith's reply.⁷² Smith's views differed largely from Ferguson's.

Smith examined four possible cases in the memorandum. First, 'the complete submission of America; all the different colonies, not only acknowledging, as formerly, the supremacy of the mother country; but

70. 'Memorial', pp.420-421.

71. 'Smiths thoughts on the State of the Contest with America, February 1778,' ed. by D.Stevens, in *The Correspondence of Adam Smith*, ed. by Mossner and Ross, Oxford, 1977. Hereafter cited as 'Smiths Thoughts.'

72. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

contributing their proper proportion towards defraying the expence of the general Government and defence of the Empire.⁷³ Smith thought that it was impossible to acquire the complete submission of America either by conquest or by treaty. Ferguson asserted such a submission in his *Remarks* of 1776, but in 1778 Ferguson as well as Smith no longer thought it possible. On this point Smith and Ferguson seemed to have almost the same opinion.

Secondly, 'the complete emancipation of America; not a single acre of land, from the entrance into Hudson's Straits to the mouth of the Mississipi, acknowledging the supremacy of Great Britain.'⁷⁴ Ferguson hinted at the evacuation from America in the 'Memorial,' but he never proposed the complete emancipation of America. However, according to Smith, the emancipation was most favourable to Britain. It would deliver Britain from the great expence. Smith stated that 'the complete emancipation of America . . . would at once deliver this country from the great ordinary expence of the military establishment necessary for maintaining her authority in the colonies, and of the naval establishment necessary for defending her monopoly of their trade. It would at once deliver her likewise from the still greater extraordinary expence of defending them in time of war.'⁷⁵ Furthermore, Smith proposed to restore Canada to France and the two Floridas to Spain. 'If, with the complete emancipation of America, we should restore Canada to France and the two Floridas to Spain; we should render our colonies the natural enemies of those two monarchies and consequently the natural allies of Great Britain. Those splendid, but unprofitable acquisitions of the late war, left our colonies no

73. 'Smiths Thoughts', p. 380.

74. *Ibid.*, p.380.

75. *Ibid.*, p.382.

other enemies to quarrel with but their mother country. By restoring those acquisitions to their antient masters, we should certainly revive old enmities, and probably old friendships.⁷⁶ Thus, in sharp contrast to Ferguson, Smith considered the complete emancipation of America and the restoration of the two colonies to their ancient masters as the best choice to Britain.

Thirdly, 'the restoration, or something near to the restoration, of the old system; the colonies acknowledging the supremacy of the mother country, allowing the Crown to appoint the Governors, the Lieutenant-Governors, . . . and submitting to certain regulations of trade; but contributing little or nothing towards defraying the expence of the general Government and defence of the empire.'⁷⁷ As we can easily see, this restoration of the old system is almost the same view we find in the Carlisle commission and Ferguson's 'Memorial'. According to Smith, it was also the event that Britain seemed to desire ardently. However, Smith wrote that 'after having, not only felt their own strength, but made us feel it, . . . This event, however, does not at present seem very probable.'⁷⁸ Smith took Ferguson's view as impossible. Even if possible, 'they [the Americans] would be ten times more ungovernable than ever; factious, mutinous and discontented subjects in time of peace; at all times, upon the slightest disobligation, disposed to rebel; . . .'⁷⁹

Fourthly, 'the submission of a part, but of a part only, of America; Great Britain, after a long, expensive and ruinous war, being obliged to

76. 'Smiths Thoughts', pp. 382-3. For Ferguson's view of Canada and Florida see a long but deleted note at the end of his 'Memorial,' p.33 below.

77. 'Smiths Thoughts,' p.380.

78. Ibid., p.383.

79. Ibid., p.383.

acknowledge the independency of the rest.'⁸⁰ This was a proposal suggested in the 'Manifesto' drawn up by Ferguson. What did Smith think of this partial emancipation? He felt it 'by far the most probable.'⁸¹ But, 'the defence of that part, from the attacks of the other colonies, would require a much greater military force than all the taxes which could be raised upon it could maintain. The neighbourhood of that part would keep alive the jealousy and animosity of all the other provinces, and would necessarily throw them into the alliance of the enemies of Great Britain.'⁸² Here Smith referred to the history of the emancipation of the Netherlands from the dominion of Spain, and he concluded that 'it [the declension of the Spanish Monarchy] was owing, more to the recovery of the ten, than to the loss of the seven united provinces.'⁸³ Therefore the partial emancipation which was proposed by Ferguson in the 'Manifesto' was 'the termination which is likely to prove most destructive to Great Britain.'⁸⁴ Thus two Adams of the Scottish enlightenment, Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson, differed widely on the American problem as well as on the division of labour and the national defense.⁸⁵

80. Ibid., p.380.

81. 'Smiths thoughts,' p.384.

82. Ibid., p.384.

83. Ibid., p.385.

84. Ibid., p.384.

85. For the comparison between Smith and Ferguson see A.Oncken, 'Adam Smith und Adam Ferguson', *Zeitschrift für Sozialwissenschaft*, Jg.12, H.3-4, 1909; R.Hamowy, 'Adam Smith, Adam Ferguson, and the Division of Labour', *Economica*, No.35, 1968; H.Mizuta, 'Two Adams in the Scottish Enlightenment: Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson on Progress', *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, No.191, 1981; Y.Amoh, 'Adam Ferguson and the division of labour', *Kochi University Review*, No.29, 1987; R. B.Sher, 'Adam Ferguson, Adam Smith, and the Problem of National Defense,' *Journal of Modern History*, No. 61, 1989.

Appendix

417 | Memorial respecting the measures to be pursued on¹ the present immediate prospect of a final separation of the American colonys from Great Britain.*

The danger and the consequences of this separation are so² {so} great as to justify every tryal that can be made to [obtain it] prevent it.

The party now in possession of the government of America is³ in treaty & alliance with the ennemys of Great Britain in order to effect the⁴ final separation of the British colonys from their mother country & in order to preserve⁵ the sovereignty which this party have assumed to

* This unpublished memorial is contained in Ferguson, 'Collection of Essays,' Edinburgh University Library, Mc. Dc.1.42. (See p.20 above.) I would like to thank the Edinburgh University Library for permitting me to publish this memorial. In this transcribing, Ferguson's spelling has been retained, but not his inconsistent capitalization, and the punctuation has been modified as an aid to modern comprehension. The following symbols have been used to record special features of the manuscript and editorial modifications other than those of capitalization or punctuation. Square brackets, [. . .], denote textual material deleted by the original author. Brazes, { . . . }, denote redundant textual material deleted by the present editor. Angular brackets, < . . . > , denote textual material added by the present editor to restore or complete the author's intended sense. Parentheses, (. . .), denote textual material written in the margin. Number in the margin, for exaple 417, indicates that at the point in the line level with this number where a vertical rule is inserted, p.417 of MS. begins.

1. Replaces 'to avoid'
2. The last ten words replace 'This object is now in so much hazard & the consequence of it is'
3. Replaces 'are'
4. Replaces 'its'
5. Replaces 'maintain'

themselves⁶ & are determined to maintain.

All⁷ persons well affected to the King & to the British nation, all persons averse to the present state of affairs & who wish the reestablishment of their former constitution tho numerous are dissarmed & kept in awe by their enemys.

The efforts made from Great Britain at an enormous expence of men & of money [have failed, not produced the effect expected from them] towards subdueing the revolted party or even protecting the well affected have not produced the desired effects.

418 These efforts | cannot be [longer supported⁸] repeated by successive reinforcements from Europe without insupportable burthen to the state & in the present prospect of a French war without interfering with the [necessary] defence of Great Britain or the necessary operation of the war against her enemys.

At the same time the final separation of North America from Great Britain and the consequent opposition of their interests, will render the navigation of the Atlantic, the fisherys of Newfoundland, the possession of the West India Island(s) & even the commerce of India at first precarious & in the end untenable to Great Britain without an enormous expence which even these objects cannot repay.⁹

On the contrary any political connection however slight between Great Britain and her colonys aided by the dispositions which arise from a common extraction, from near consanguinity, from speaking the same

6. The last six words replace 'they [sic] party has assumed'

7. The sentence of this paragraph replaces another sentence, but almost all of the original sentence is illegible.

8. Reading doubtful. These deleted words replace the other deleted and illegible words.

9. Replaces illegible word

language, having the same manners & customs, from mutual naturalization which will tend to perpetuate these bonds of connection, may at least for a considerable period prevent the separation of North America from Great Britain, maintain the idea of a common interest between them, involve these colonys¹⁰ in the same friendships & enmities with Great Britain & consequently [furnish to Great Britain] in the case of every war afford to her shipping friendly ports from Labrador to Florida, render the navigation of the Atlantic, the fisherys, the possession of the West India Islands, the trade to India secure, furnish an ample supply of naval stores, give willing allies to man her fleets, recruit her armys and increase the number¹¹ of privateers to prey upon her ennemys.

In preserving an object of so much consequence & now exposed to such imminent danger of being lost: it is supposed, that measures however expensive if necessary to attain the end & even of uncertain issue if in this respect equal to any others that may be devised, are still to be adopted. And under this aspect of things the following operations and measures are proposed. (N.B. Measures at the outset appearing to be the most expensive are often least so in the end.)¹²

419 1st That New York | be fortified with the contiguous posts of Brookland & Paulus Hook so as to be in condition if necessary to hold out a siege.

2 That the army (favoured by concurring offensive operations from Canada) penetrate to Albany & in the nearest convenient station fix upon the ground of a fortress to receive a respectable garrison & to

10. The last two words replace 'them'

11. The last three words replace 'by their privateers'

12. Two vertical lines are drawn on this note written in the margin. The original author presumably intended to delete this note.

withstand a siege [untill it is ¹³].

[N.B.] In these fortified places 6 months stores & provisions to be always kept.¹⁴ The object is that New York should command¹⁵ the harbour & the entrance to Hudsons River from the sea.

Albany [to] awe the back settlements [to] & preserve the communication with Canada & the friendly Indians.

(And these fortifications if effected it is supposed would constitute the strongest posture that his Majestys forces could have in America.¹⁶

N.B. Measures taken for perpetuity & calculated to give Great Britain a firm possession of this important station & unite the principal sources of her strength in this quarter of the world, may incline the Americans to end upon equitable terms a war in¹⁷ support of which measures are taken of such permanent effects.)

3 That all the new levys that may be wanted for the war be made in America and upon the same footing without distinction as British levys. With rank half pay &c. Officers from the British regiments to be promoted in these levys and American gentleman desirous to serve on the British establishments received into those or into the old corps. It being understood¹⁸ that all American officers at the end of the war if¹⁹ not otherwise employd or provided for in the states to which they belong are to have

13. Illegible word deleted

14. The words 'new line' are written in the margin at this point. A new paragraph was presumably intended here.

15. The last two words replace 'to command'

16. Two deleted and illegible lines

17. Replaces 'to'

18. [Sic] Presumably 'understood' was intended.

19. The original order of the words from 'if' to '... they belong' is altered according to numbers written by the original author.

half pay on the list of the British army²⁰ and that private men shall be entitled to the benefits of Chelsea Hospital and the out pension on the same terms with the other troops of His Majestys.

4 That the people of America in their several states or colonies be invited to chuse representatives, form their assemblies & meet in congress for their common safety, to restore the freedom of trade and in every other respect devise for themselves and enjoy the advantages of civil government excercised in name of & under the authority of the King, subject only to such peculiar exception as during the necessary stay of an army may be necessary to the safety of the places they occupy.

(5 That if any civil convention²¹ of one or more states or colonys shall be formed under due allegiance to the King, that such state or convention shall be encouraged to ishue paper money on the credit of funds settled to pay an interest for it & supported by the credit²² of Great Britain.)

420 6 That assurances | be given that as soon as any state or colony or the congress of any number of states or colonys shall have established their legal government under the authority of the King and shall declare themselves in condition to defend themselves, that in such case all forces on the establishment of Great Britain shall be withdrawn & no force whatever be kept up within the territory of such colony or congress without their own consent. And that a proclamation setting forth this plan for military levys in America & for the freedom of trade & the restoration of civil government be forthwith made public.

If it shoud be thought that this plan cannot be adopted or that it cannot

20. Replaces 'officers'

21. Replaces 'establishment'

22. The last sixteen words replace illegible words

be executed under the pressure of a French and Spanish war, it is submitted whether all thoughts of coercion in America should not be laid aside. [For] It has been²³ found from experience (in the mode of war hitherto practiced) that the progress of the army where they have gone has been attended with [great expence with loss of men and] a growing disaffection of the country without any one advantage whatever.

A war of devastation would be invidious & if not successful throw America for ever into the arms²⁴ of France.

It is submitted therefore whether (if this important station on the North River is not to be maintained) the wisest course would not be to evacuate America intirely upon the following simple conditions.

1st That those who have appeared on the side of union with Great Britain should be safe in their persons & property.

2 That the trade of both countrys should be free, and all their ports mutually open to each other.

421 (It is however highly probable in the present situation of affairs | that Great Britain, cannot relax her operations, give way to any claim of her enemies nor abandon a single possession in America without confirming the people of this continent in their alliance with France and without provoking farther demands & insults & giving to the world a general impression of her weakness which may in the consequences be fatal to her affairs.

If she is to withstand the dangers that now press her, she must stand on her present ground, or fall, she will grow weaker in her step. She retracts & weakest of all in her last retreat & within her own Isle.)

23. The last two words replace 'is'

24. Replaces 'hands'

421 [N.B.²⁵ It merits consideration | whether Canada Novascotia & the Floridas shoud not be abandoned.

Canada if independent might hasten the devisions likely to arise in America & which may bring some of the partys to a closer union with Great Britain.

Or if returned to its submission to France might occasion jealousy of that power in America.

The Floridas in the same manner if left to be occupied by Spain might have a similar effect.

Any such possessions occupied by²⁶ Great Britain woud keep the jealousy or awaken animosity against us & serve to prolong the union of the colonys, among themselves and their dissaffection to us.]

25. Vertical lines are drawn on this long note. The original author presumably intended to delete this note.

26. The last five words replace 'Either in the hand possession of'