

FRANKLIN, GALLOWAY, AND THOMSON:
CHANGING RELATIONSHIPS

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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This paper is a study of the relationship of three men who played leading roles in Pennsylvania and American colonial politics during the twenty year period preceeding the American Revolutionary War. These three men were Benjamin Franklin, Joseph Galloway, and Charles Thomson.

The fascinating element in this research is a triangular relationship that underwent considerable evolution. Franklin's admiration for young Joseph Galloway was manifested in his correspondence and their mutual endeavors from 1756 to 1765. As the recognized leader of the then dominant Quaker party, Franklin was given the task of securing taxation of the proprietary properties in Pennsylvania. From 1757 to 1762 he lived in England working toward this goal. Galloway was elected to the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1756, and it was he on whom Franklin relied to assess colonial thought. He replaced Franklin on several Assembly committees, and might very well be considered Franklin's "lieutenant."¹ In the fall of 1765 a cleavage

¹Ernest H. Baldwin, "Joseph Galloway, The Loyalist Politician," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, XXVI (1902), p. 171. Further reference to this article will be abbreviated to read: Baldwin, Joseph Galloway.

was begun in the relationship of these two men, and it culminated ten years later with Galloway a Loyalist and Franklin a Patriot.

Charles Thomson, like Galloway, was given the opportunity to become active in Pennsylvania politics through his acquaintance with Franklin during the period under study here. While not a politically eminent figure from 1756 to 1765, Thomson emerged in the next decade to become a forceful personality in determining Pennsylvania's posture in the struggle with England. Franklin returned to London in 1764 in an attempt to persuade the Crown to make Pennsylvania a Royal colony. Ensuing events kept him in England until the spring of 1775. It is apparent, in studying his correspondence and newspaper writing, that Benjamin was relying more upon Thomson to measure colonial thought during this ten year period.

Thomson and Galloway were apparently cordial toward each other at the outset of the period covered by this study. Both were anti-proprietary. Both were close friends and followers of Franklin. They served together at the Indian conferences at Easton in 1757, Thomson as secretary to Teedyuscung and Galloway as Indian Commissioner. The suggestion that Teedyuscung demand a secretary was probably Galloway's doing, and it is likely that he would have encouraged the

selection of Thomson.² Thomson was a successful teacher and shared Galloway's friendship toward Franklin. After the Stamp Act crisis of 1765 their views became increasingly opposite. Galloway became the conservative spokesman and a bitter enemy of Thomson's radical leadership.

It is to the analysis of this fluctuating triangle that this paper is directed.

²Ibid., pp. 172-173.



FIGURE 1
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

CHAPTER II

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

The three principals in this study are introduced at this time in separate biographical sketches in order to afford the reader a condensed look at their most engaging activities. The condensation has not been easy to achieve in view of the fact that Thomson lived ninety-five years, Franklin eighty-four, and Galloway seventy-two. However, it is hoped that an analysis of a segment of their lives is made more intelligible when supplemented by general biographical information.

I. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706-1790)

All the experiences that accompany being the fifteenth child in the family helped form the basis for the rapid maturity of Benjamin Franklin. He spent several apprentice years in his brother's printing shop. Unhappy, Franklin fled his Boston home and located in Philadelphia. An untrustworthy business partner lured him into a trip to England that proved to be a business failure, but an otherwise priceless experience. Thus, by 1726 this young man of twenty had gained quite a liberal education.

Not long after his return from London, Franklin renewed his interest in a Philadelphia girl, Deborah Read. They were married September 1, 1730. Their son William has been the subject of controversy. It has never been resolved whether Deborah was William's mother. Nevertheless, he was cherished by the Franklins. In 1736 smallpox took their four year old son Francis. A daughter Sarah (1744-1808), was later born to them.

In the same year as his marriage, Benjamin became sole owner of The Pennsylvania Gazette. It was not the newspaper medium that kept the common folk informed in homely matters, however. The almanac served this function, and Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac served it delightfully well.

The problems of newspaper distribution stimulated the Philadelphia printer to probe for a more rapid and efficient intercolonial communications. In 1737 he was appointed local postmaster of Philadelphia. Later, in August 1753, he was appointed a deputy colonial postmaster-general. In this capacity he developed through his reforms and improvements a steady, solid, eastern line of communications.

Through various extensions of his printing and newspaper business, Franklin had by 1748 assured himself a continuing income. At the same time he had managed to shift much of the actual work to the shoulders of his partners.

He seemed, however, to remove one burden in order to impose a dozen others upon himself. Almost the first act after his "retirement" in 1748 was to establish the academy which was to become the University of Pennsylvania. His scientific activities continued to be enormous and valuable. However, after 1754 his vocation was predominantly politics and diplomacy.

At about the same time that he took over the post office, Franklin began work as clerk of the Pennsylvania Assembly. On October 15, 1736 the Assembly determined not to reappoint Joseph Grawdon as clerk, and chose Benjamin Franklin instead. He at once began his duties, and kept the record of provincial legislation for the next fifteen years. In addition to holding this seat close to the political arena, he enjoyed the financial remuneration of its printing needs.

On August 13, 1751 Franklin was elected to a seat in the Assembly of Pennsylvania. Carl Van Doren says that Franklin may himself have entered in the minutes that day: "Benjamin Franklin being returned a representative to serve in Assembly for the city of Philadelphia, he was qualified and took his seat accordingly." Within a year he had served on committees varying widely in importance.

The three great issues that consumed the majority of Franklin's time and talents were: (1) relations with

the Indians, (2) paper currency, and (3) the taxation of the proprietary lands. These were all tied in with the problem of frontier defense.

While the French were entrenched in the Mississippi Valley from 1745-1748, little agreement was reached on defense provisions. Philadelphia merchants would not contribute unless the Quakers would pay shilling for shilling. Apparently the tidewater people believed that the threat was only to the frontier and that backwoodsmen should defend that. The frontier folk seemed to think danger was more imminent to the coast and should be forestalled by action of the Philadelphians. Aware of the impending chaos, Franklin wrote a pamphlet entitled Plain Truth. Its effect was immediate and overwhelming. By 1748 some 10,000 men were under arms in the Province. Many of the Quakers had become convinced that defensive action was not immoral, and they would not oppose Franklin's measures even at the risk of excommunication.

The peace between England and France, sealed by the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in October, 1748, was an uneasy one. There were no guarantees against Indian attacks inspired by the French on the colonial frontiers. Although the mother countries were officially at peace, these attacks never ceased. In the early 1750's clashes caused by rival claims in the Ohio Valley again brought the conflict close

to the frontier communities of western Pennsylvania. In 1754 Franklin used the meeting of the Albany Congress to agitate for a united colonial defense, but his Plan of Union was not adopted.

The clashes in Pennsylvania politics at this time were nearly as deadly as the war being waged on its frontier. The representative of the Penns fought to exempt the Penn estates in Pennsylvania from taxation, while the Assembly wanted either to tax the proprietors or to have the Province transferred to the Crown. In the deadlock, money was lacking for defense. Franklin was instrumental in providing what equipment and finances General Braddock's expedition received from the Pennsylvania area. When the forces of Braddock were defeated July 9, 1755 in the Battle of the Monongahela, the frontier situation took on a greater tenseness. Refugees were daily streaming into Philadelphia and demanding protection for their farms and communities. As the news came to Franklin, followed by an angry mob of backwoods German settlers whom he addressed and sent home appeased, he knew that the stalemate must be broken and immediate action taken. He skillfully maneuvered a militia bill and an appropriation of £60,000 through the Assembly.¹

¹See John J. Zimmerman, "Ben Franklin and the Quaker Party, 1755-56," The William & Mary Quarterly, XVII (July, 1960), pp. 291-313, for a complete account of Franklin's efforts in securing this legislation.

In so doing, he brought revolution within the Quaker party and became the recognized leader of this political segment which dominated Pennsylvania government at this time.

The major opposition to Franklin and his party was the Governor and those who supported the proprietors. Things had changed since the days of William Penn. His sons John, Thomas, and Richard had changed his Whig and Quaker policies to their own Tory and Anglican principles. They alienated the Indians by cheating, the Quakers by joining the Anglican Church, and the Assembly by refusing taxation of their estates. No agreement could be reached over the controversial secret proprietary instructions, nor over the appointment of commissioners to supervise the funds voted for defense.

When Isaac Norris declined the assignment, Benjamin Franklin was sent to London to present the Assembly's argument for taxation of proprietary property. He spent the years 1757 to 1762 in this successful endeavor.

The Indian uprising of 1763 again created a military crisis. Debate over royal government reached angry heights. Franklin's opponents conducted a successful mud-slinging campaign during the fall of 1764, and dealt him his only defeat for Assembly office during the period from 1751 to 1764. He had even been honored by election to the Assembly while in Europe for five years. Although Franklin's party lost Philadelphia, they retained a majority in the Assembly.

In addition, they promptly resolved to present their royalist petition to the king, and Franklin was dispatched to London to manage the affair. This business kept Benjamin in England from 1764 to 1775.

Chapter IV of this writing undertakes to discuss in detail Franklin's activities while he was in Europe from 1764-1775. This was the critical period in the imperial relationship of the colonies to Britain. It opens with the Stamp Act and culminates in the deaths at Lexington and Concord.

On May 6, 1775, the day following his return to Philadelphia, Franklin was chosen a member of the Second Continental Congress. Among his efforts in this year of momentous events the following should be noted: he sketched a plan of union for the colonies; organized the post office, of which he was the first postmaster general; served on the commissions sent to induce the Canadians to join the colonies, to advise Washington on defense, and to listen to Howe's peace proposals; served on the committee to draft the Declaration of Independence; served on the committee appointed November 29, 1775 to correspond "with friends in Great Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the world"; prepared the instructions for Silas Deane, whom the committee sent to France in 1776. Franklin himself was sent to France to help negotiate a treaty with that country. His last act

before departing December 4, 1776, was to lend the Congress some three to four thousand pounds.

On June 8, 1781, Benjamin was named one of the commissioners to negotiate peace with Great Britain. Not until 1785 did Congress permit him to return home from his ambassadorial work. Shortly after his arrival he was chosen president of the executive council of Pennsylvania. After serving in this capacity for three years, he was selected a member of the Constitutional Convention which met in May, 1787. His presence at this Convention lent inspiration and an air of moderation to the proceedings.

The long and momentous life of this printer, author, philanthropist, inventor, statesman, diplomat, and scientist came to a close in Philadelphia on April 17, 1790.²

²Biographical information on Franklin was taken from: Carl Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin (New York: The Viking Press, 1938); Nelson B. Keyes, Ben Franklin (Garden City, New York: Hanover House, 1956); Roger Burlingame, Ben Franklin, The First Mr. American (The New York American Library, A Signet Key Book, 1955); Allen Johnson & Dumas Malone (eds.), Dictionary of American Biography, VI (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), pp. 585-598. Further reference to any of the above works will be abbreviated to read: Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, Keyes, Ben Franklin, etc.



FIGURE 2
JOSEPH GALLOWAY

II. JOSEPH GALLOWAY (1731-1803)

Joseph Galloway was the personification of youthful brilliance and potential. Power and success were logical predictions for this young man. His father, Peter Bines Galloway, was prominent in trade and possessed large estates in Maryland and Pennsylvania. Joseph was born at West River, Anne Arundel County, Maryland. His father died while he was still very young, and shortly thereafter he moved to Philadelphia where he studied law. Early in his career he rose to eminence at the bar. A mere eighteen years old, he was permitted to practice before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania in 1749. Suits for the recovery of debts, knotty questions connected with the execution of wills, and admiralty cases also occupied his attention. Thus, he was largely concerned with matters relating to property rights. This fact should not be overlooked in seeking an explanation of his conduct following the Stamp Act riots. Not only was Galloway a large landowner himself, but he was thrown into the closest relations with property holders, and learned to regard them and their interests as paramount and the protection of property as one of the most essential duties of government.

Already related to the Shippens and the Pembertons, he added to his profitable connections when he married

Grace Growdon, the daughter of former Assembly Speaker and councillor, Lawrence Growdon. The ceremony took place in Christ Church, Philadelphia, on October 18, 1753.

Though of considerable wealth and interested in a number of Philadelphia mercantile houses and in land promotions in the West, Galloway seems to have been driven by vanity to seek political office as a road to power and influence. The withdrawal of the Quakers from official positions in the government opened the way for his election as assemblyman in 1756.³ He was referred to as a "young Quaker lawyer," although he was no longer a member of any Friends' meeting. He held a post in the Assembly continuously until 1776 with the single exception of the 1764-1765 term. His somewhat cold and austere nature did not win him the votes of the electors, and he was kept in office primarily by the effective functioning of the Quaker political machine.

In the Assembly Galloway took a principal part in the legislative work arising out of the war with France and at once assumed a position of party leadership. He was

³Leonard W. Labaree (ed.), The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. VII (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 10. Further reference to this text will be abbreviated to read: Labaree, Papers of Benjamin Franklin.

actively promoting the cause against France from 1754-1763. He allied with Benjamin Franklin in the campaign to tax the Penn's properties. This affiliation with the renowned Franklin gave an added impetus to the Galloway political career. When Franklin was sent to England in 1757, the management of the anti-proprietary party in the Assembly was left in the hands of Galloway. Evidence of this appears in the minutes of the Assembly. Galloway was immediately assigned to the places on several committees left vacant by Franklin.⁴ The two most important were those of Grievances and Correspondence.⁵

Galloway was appointed as Indian Commissioner by the Assembly April 9, 1757. The occasion of this appointment was the attempt to bring about peace with the Delaware and Shawanese Indians.

Both Franklin and Galloway lost their Assembly seat in the election held in October 1764. The Quaker party remained in control of the Assembly, however, and Franklin and his "lieutenant" remained the power behind the scenes. They worked together in the petition for royal government. While Franklin spent the next decade in England, Galloway,

⁴See the Votes of Assembly, April 1st and April 9, 1757. They are contained in Charles F. Hoban (ed.), Pennsylvania Archives, Eighth Series, Vol. VI (1935), p. 4557 and 4562.

⁵Baldwin, Joseph Galloway, p. 171.

from 1766 to 1774, was elected annually to the speakership of the Assembly.

Great Britain moved to strengthen her controls over the colonies following the French and Indian War. Galloway was desirous of a closer union. From the time of the Stamp Act on, he admitted British errors in handling the colonies. At the same time, he prevailed on the colonists to show obedient respect to the Ministry so that solutions could be achieved through the machinery of government.

He was selected to be a delegate to the First Continental Congress, and accepted on the condition that he could draft the instructions of the Pennsylvania delegation. At the Congress he presented a plan for an imperial legislature which would provide the empire with a written constitution. Early favorable comments apparently indicated success, but when the measure was voted upon, it failed 6-5. It was then voted to expunge all reference to it from the minutes.

Again elected to the Second Continental Congress, Galloway declined the appointment. He had abandoned hope for conservative action by the Congress. In that same year he severely criticized the First Congress in his, A Candid Examination of the Mutual Claims of Great Britain and the Colonies. He seems to have held a much more firm belief than most that all grievances would ultimately be redressed upon orderly petition to the Crown. He had only contempt

for the radical elements. The Second Continental Congress granted his request that he be dismissed. A Connecticut delegate wrote that he was "justly despised and contemned by all." This ended the more respectable part of the public career of Joseph Galloway. The man who had saved himself many a political hurdle by attaching himself to Benjamin Franklin and who had married the only available lady in Pennsylvania whose father owned a four-wheeled carriage, was on his own at last. He was to regain his energies and ambitions, but never again his influence.

Fearing for his safety in 1775, a time when emotions were at a fever pitch, he retired to his country home, Trevoze, just outside Philadelphia. He undoubtedly had a strong attachment to his native soil, but his convictions embroiled him in the impending conflict as a Loyalist. He faced many threats upon his life at this time. A colonial victory against the likes of Great Britain was impossible for him to conceive. The only reasonable action for him to take seemed that of helping restore a disorganized America to the British Crown. He thus fled to New York to aid Admiral Richard Howe.

In the Philadelphia campaign conducted by Howe, the services of Galloway were valuable. Upon occupation of the city he became civil administrator during 1777 and 1778. He held the titles of superintendent of police and of the port.

When the Continental forces regained control of Philadelphia in 1778, Galloway sailed to England with his daughter. He became the chief spokesman for the American Loyalist. He testified before the Parliament on the conduct of the war, and published pamphlets attacking Lord Howe and others for their incompetence.

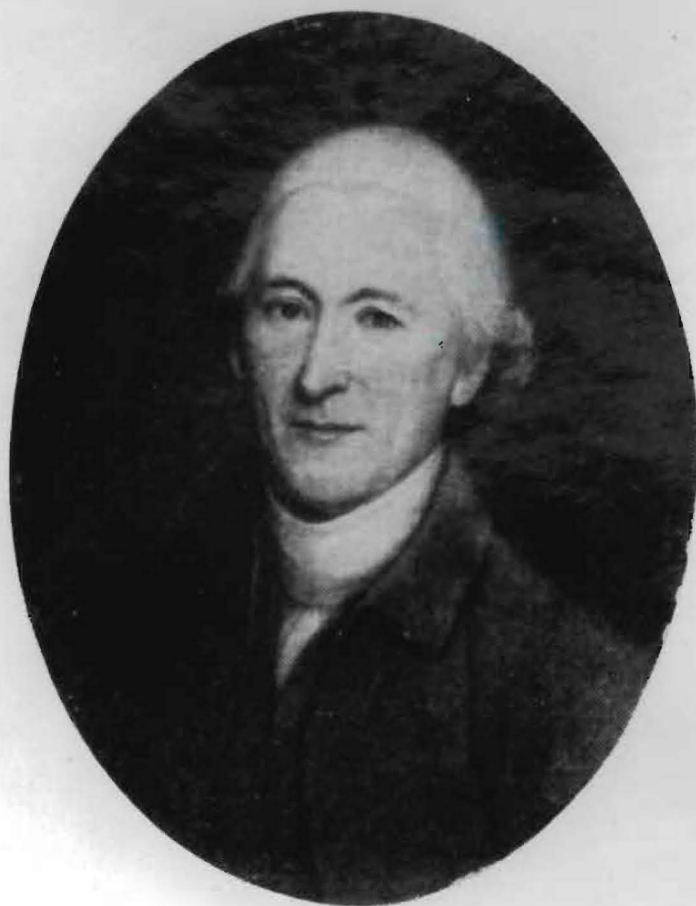
Remaining convinced to the end that a written constitution was the answer to Britain's imperial problems with the colonies, Galloway published two pamphlets on the subject. They are entitled: Historical and Political Reflections on the Rise and Progress of the American Rebellion (1780), and Cool Thoughts on the Consequences to Great Britain of American Independence (1780).

Other writings by Galloway represented the claims of the Loyalists who suffered economic losses as a result of the war. His own estates were confiscated and he became largely dependent upon his British pension. His petition in 1793 to return to Pennsylvania was refused by the authorities of that State.

The last ten years of his life were devoted primarily to his religious studies, to pleading the cause of his fellow Loyalists, and to literature.

Joseph Galloway died after twenty-five years of exile, on August 29, 1803. He was buried in the churchyard of Watford, Hertfordshire.⁶

⁶Biographical information on Galloway was taken from: Oliver C. Kuntzleman, Joseph Galloway, Loyalist (Philadelphia: Temple University, 1941); Allen Johnson & Dumas Malone (eds.), Dictionary of American Biography, VII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931), pp. 116-117; Ernest H. Baldwin, Galloway, pp. 164-187. Further reference to Kuntzleman's work will be abbreviated to read: Kuntzleman, Joseph Galloway.



Charles Thomson.

FIGURE 3

CHARLES THOMSON

III. CHARLES THOMSON (1729-1824)

The controversial Charles Thomson was born in County Derry, Ireland, November 29, 1729. He came to America when he was ten years of age. This young child had already known sorrow and difficulty. He was one of six orphaned children set ashore at New Castle, Delaware. His mother had died in Ireland, and his father, John Thomson, died on shipboard within sight of the American shores. Young Charles witnessed his dying father's last moments.

John Thomson was part of the Protestant emigration from Ulster due to the decline of the wool trade and the enforcement of the Test Act by England. Most of these immigrants sought a home in Pennsylvania, attracted by the reports of its great natural wealth. They were also persuaded by the fact that under the charter of Penn and the laws of the province, they could enjoy civil and religious liberty.

The issue of religion is important to this thesis. It is thus significant to note that before 1726, 6,000 Ulster emigrants had arrived. Failure of the crops of Ulster increased the volume so that they came at the rate of 12,000 per year until 1750. They were nearly all Presbyterians. This great body of immigrants aroused the fears of colonial authorities and in 1729, James Logan wrote:

It looks as if Ireland is to send all her inhabitants hither; for last week not less than six ships arrived, and every day two or three arrive also. The common fear is, that if they continue to come, they will make themselves proprietors of the province.⁷

For a time, Thomson resided with the family of a blacksmith at New Castle who thought of starting him as an apprentice in the trade. Overhearing these plans, he ran away from the home. He was taken in by a woman who placed him in the academy of Dr. Francis Alison at New London, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Alison, who had a considerable influence on Thomson's ideas during these formative years, was born in the north of Ireland in 1705 and was educated at the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He came to America in 1734 and was employed for a time as tutor in the family of John Dickinson. He was installed as pastor of the New London Presbyterian Church in 1736, where he remained for fifteen years. In 1741, he opened a private academy at New London. Among his other pupils was John Dickinson.

Upon leaving the New London Academy, Thomson became a teacher. He made his home for a time in the family of John Chambers, who resided on a large farm on the edge of

⁷Lewis R. Harley, The Life of Charles Thomson (Philadelphia: George W. Jacobs & Co., 1900), pp. 17-18. Further reference to this text will be abbreviated to read: Harley, Charles Thomson.

New Castle County, about 100 yards from the Pennsylvania line. Thomson opened a subscription school in the cooper's shop that stood on the Chambers farm.

In 1750, he was appointed as tutor in the Philadelphia Academy. While a student at the New London Academy he had made the acquaintance of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who was now instrumental in procuring his appointment. He was salaried at £60 per year beginning January 7, 1751 to serve as a tutor in the Latin and Greek School. He remained in this capacity until July, 1755.

Two years later, September 27, 1757, Thomson was employed by what is now the William Penn Charter School, Philadelphia. He was to take charge of the Latin School and was paid a salary of £150 per year. This was increased to £200 per year in 1758. His work here lasted until 1760 when he resigned from the Friends school to engage in mercantile pursuits.

For a while Thomson was an importer, receiving large invoices of dry goods, hats, etc., from various London firms. He was following this business at the time of the passage of the Stamp Act. At the same time, he was also concerned in the Batsto furnace, near the junction of the Batsto and Egg Harbor Rivers, New Jersey.

Thomson's political capabilities had been made manifest in his work on Indian treaties. Arrangements had been made

for a meeting with the Indians at Easton in August, 1757. Teedyuscung, a chief of the Delawares, was appointed to speak for the ten tribes present at the meeting. A Quaker-led group of prominent Pennsylvanians prevailed upon him to request a secretary. The Governor was forced to consent and Charles Thomson served the negotiations in this capacity.

The work of Thomson impressed both the Quakers and the Indians. The minutes taken by Richard Peters, the secretary for the Governor, were later rejected by Teedyuscung as untruthful, but he found Thomson's notes accurate. The Indians were pleased when Thomson made the Governor produce copies of deeds and prevented other intended intrigues in the treaty negotiations.

Two subsequent treaty conferences were held at Easton in 1758. At one of these Thomson was adopted into the tribe of the Delawares and given the name "Wegh-wu-law-mo-end," which means "The man who tells the truth."

Experiences gained as secretary of the treaties at Easton made Thomson enquire deeply into previous Indian treaties, and he became somewhat of an authority on the subject. In 1758 he was commissioned by the provincial authorities to examine the causes of the Indian troubles in the Wyoming Valley. In 1759, Franklin had the Thomson essay, An Enquiry into the Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawenese Indians from the British Interest,

published in London. This work throws considerable light on the "Walking Purchase" of 1737 and the deceitful behavior of the Penns in this dealing with the Indians. It provided Franklin and his Quaker party with effective political ammunition during the campaign for taxation of proprietary lands.

From the time of the Stamp Act to the First Continental Congress Thomson zealously opposed the British attempt at taxing the colonies. John Adams is quoted as having called him, "the Sam Adams of Philadelphia, the life and cause of liberty, they say." This phase of Thomson's life is discussed in detail in Chapter IV of this paper.

Hostility developed between Joseph Galloway and Charles Thomson following the Stamp Act. In 1774, Galloway demanded and was given the authority to write the instructions for the delegates to the First Continental Congress. He was also successful in preventing Thomson from being chosen a delegate. Galloway was surprised as well as chagrined when this Charles Thomson, whom he characterized as "one of the most violent of the Sons of Liberty (so called) in America," was chosen by Congress to be its secretary.

Perhaps it is as secretary of the Continental Congress that Thomson is best known. Chosen to this position again in May 1775 as the Second Continental Congress met, Thomson remained in this capacity through the life of the Congress.

For nearly fifteen years he sat at the secretarial table, minuting the birth-records of a nation. As year succeeded year, delegates came and went, but Charles Thomson, the "perpetual secretary," remained. He beheld the drama of the American Revolution as did no other man.

As the chief surviving link between the old government and the new, Thomson was chosen to notify George Washington of his election to the Presidency. A quorum being present in the United States Senate for the first time on April 6, 1789, that body formally issued the appointment. He set out on April 7th, and reached Mount Vernon April 14th, where he communicated the message to Washington.

To Thomson's great mortification, he was given no part in the inaugural ceremonies. He actively sought some kind of important political office, but his efforts were in vain. Accordingly, on July 23, 1789, he transmitted to President Washington his resignation of the office of secretary of the Continental Congress and of the custodianship of its records. Retiring to his estate at "Harriton," near Philadelphia, he devoted the next twenty years to making translations of the Septuagint and the New Testament.

Thomson was twice married. In approximately the year 1758, he wed Ruth, a daughter of John Mather of Chester, Pennsylvania. John Mather was prominent in church affairs, and in 1727 was elected warden in St. Paul's Episcopal Church,

Chester. His name appears on the list of vestrymen as late as 1760. He died in 1768 and the Pennsylvania Gazette of November 17, 1768 carried the obituary notice of the "passing of Charles Thomson's father-in-law." Ruth Thomson's death probably followed her father's by one month. Thomson also outlived the two children of this marriage.

On September 1, 1774 Charles Thomson married Hannah Harrison. She was the daughter of Richard Harrison, a wealthy Friend of Maryland, who settled on the "Welsh Tract," near Philadelphia early in the eighteenth century. He bought Rowland Ellis' tract of 700 acres near Bryn Mawr in 1719. The house in which the Harrisons made their residence was erected by Ellis in 1704, and is still standing on the old farm. Harrison added many improvements to the estate and gave it the name of "Harriton."

Hannah Thomson was born at Harriton in 1728. After her father's death in 1747, the family moved to Somerville, near Philadelphia. During the Revolution, Thomson and his wife resided in his old home located at the corner of Spruce and Fourth Streets. After resigning his position in Congress, he retired to Harriton. Hannah died on September 6, 1807.

After Hannah's death in 1807, he was cared for by his nephew, John Thomson, and his maiden sister, Mary, who made her home with him. Some time during the year 1816, he had a paralytic stroke which seriously affected his mental powers.

This was soon followed by a second attack, leaving him physically helpless. He remained in this condition until November 1816, when his recovery apparently came as suddenly as the attacks he had received.

Charles Thomson died on August 16, 1824, at the age of ninety-five.⁸

⁸Biographical information on Thomson was taken from: Harley, Charles Thomson; Dumas Malone (ed.), Dictionary of American Biography, XVIII (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 481-482; Pauline Stewart Massey, Who Was Charles Thomson? Appendix, Unpublished Thesis at Kansas State Teachers College, Emporia, Kansas, 1962. John J. Zimmerman, "Charles Thomson, 'The Sam Adams of Philadelphia,'" The Mississippi Valley Historical Review, XLV (December, 1958), pp. 465-480. Further reference to this Zimmerman article will be abbreviated to read: Zimmerman, Charles Thomson.

CHAPTER III

THE MEN AND THE TIMES 1754-1764

For numerous reasons the Pennsylvania frontier was packed with tension in the early 1750's. Indian raids had become so bold that a near complete state of panic prevailed. Some of them were instigated by the French; others were a protest against the westward push of the English colonists. Defense provisions were prevented by an impasse in the Pennsylvania government, as the proprietors refused to allow taxation of their estates. The Assembly asserted that provincial revenue was insufficient to pay the militia and munitions bills. On the other hand, each appropriations act passed by the Assembly was vetoed by the Governor.

Franklin believed with the Quaker party members that the proprietary wealth was tied to the risks and labors of the Pennsylvanians. It followed, then, that the proprietors should contribute to the cost of the government's activities, especially those dealing with the Indians. The proprietors took the position that they were no more obliged to help meet public expenses than any royal governor of any other colony would be.

The impasse was temporarily broken when Franklin succeeded in forming a compromise bill seeking £60,000. He was able to convince the Quakers that the use of arms by

others was all right. In spite of the fact that the November 27, 1755 bill omitted the Penn property from taxation, by the passage of the bill, Franklin succeeded in meeting the military emergency.

The basic issues remained unresolved, however. No agreement had been reached on proprietary instructions, taxing proprietary estates, or the appointment of commissioners to supervise the funds voted. These were among the issues causing the demand for royal government in 1764 when the Indian uprising of 1763 again created military crisis.

On November 23, 1756 the Assembly had appointed Franklin and a freshman Assemblyman, Joseph Galloway, to draft a message to the governor. They were to request copies of such proprietary instructions "as relate to Matters of Legislation" and of the minutes of the recent Easton Indian conference.¹ Governor Denny complied on the 30th. Franklin reported on January 29, 1757 that the minutes were inaccurate in important particulars. Both he and Galloway must have resolved that greater care for accurate reporting would be taken at the next treaty meetings with the Indians.

¹The complete message to the governor can be found in: Labaree, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, pp. 29-30.

The Assembly determined on January 28th, to send commissioners to England to present a request for taxation of proprietary properties. The following day they selected Speaker Isaac Norris and Benjamin Franklin. Norris declined for reasons of ill health.

Franklin left for the packet at New York on April 4, 1757. His son William resigned from the clerkship of the Assembly in order to accompany his father to England. The battle with the landlord was thus shifted to the latter's home grounds. Franklin called upon the brilliant young Joseph Galloway to hold his popular party together. The latter filled Franklin's place on several committees.

To establish a climate of understanding in London, Franklin relied heavily on that medium which he knew so thoroughly, the press. He had William write a letter to the Citizen answering an article abusive to Pennsylvania, which Benjamin suspected was written by the proprietary. He planned, with Richard Jackson, a book entitled: An Historical Review of the Constitution and Government of Pennsylvania. It was completed and published in 1759 and gave the entire background of the quarrel. Benjamin also arranged for the publication in 1759 of Charles Thomson's Enquiry into the Causes of the Alienation of the Delaware and Shawenese Indians from the British Interest. In this writing Thomson

made it clear that the Indians were victims of proprietary deceit in land dealings.

It should be recalled that Galloway was appointed Indian Commissioner by the Assembly April 9, 1757. There was a good chance that the Delaware and Shawanese Indians, who had joined the French in the war, would agree to a peace treaty, provided their grievances were redressed.

A "Friendly Association" had been formed by the leading members of the Quakers with the object of furthering the success of the negotiations by gifts to the Indians. They were seconded in their efforts by the Assembly agents, one of whom was Galloway.

Soon after their appointment as Commissioners, Galloway and William Masters wrote to Governor Denny urging that care be taken to learn the Indian complaints. This was really a warning that the Indians would be supported in their just claims by the Quaker party.

The Governor objected to the plan of the members of the "Friendly Association" to be present at the conferences and forbade their giving gifts to the Indians. He was unable to prevent either because Teedyuscung, the Indian Chief, refused to treat without both the "Friendly Association" and their gifts. As has been mentioned previously, the wily Indian also demanded a clerk of his own, a suggestion which was no doubt of Quaker origin and for which Mr. Galloway

was probably in part responsible.² It is even possible that Galloway and Franklin, in their conversations that past January, discussed not only the necessity of having a reliable clerk for the next Indian negotiations, but Charles Thomson himself. Certainly Thomson qualified. He was a scholar of reputation and had been, like Galloway, a young protege of Franklin's.

Thomson was permitted to serve as clerk for Teedyuscung during July and August of 1757. The Delawares had settled on the Susquehanna River in the Wyoming district, lands claimed by the Penns. Thomson prompted Teedyuscung to ask the Penns to show their deeds. The result was embarrassing to the representatives of the proprietors. Their attempt to deceive and cheat the Indians out of their lands was thus disclosed.

The Assembly sent Thomson's record to Franklin, asking him to consult the ministry. Thomson's Enquiry was published in London. It was valuable to Franklin in hearings that followed, because it created an atmosphere of distrust of the proprietors by the London Ministry. At the hearing before the Board of Trade on May 15, 1759, Franklin asked the proprietors to show their deeds to the Board. They protested, thinking he did not know their contents. To

²Baldwin, Joseph Galloway, pp. 172-173.

their chagrin, Franklin produced copies of the deeds and freely turned them over to Lord Halifax. It was then clear to the Board that the Penns had lied in their land claim both to the Indians and to the Board as well. They then took the case out of the hands of the proprietors and referred it to Sir William Johnson, superintendent of the Six Nations under the Crown, who allowed the Delawares to stay in Wyoming.³

Late in 1758 Galloway was again sent as a Commissioner to Easton, to another conference with the Indians, at which the Governor in vain sought to have Teedyuscung withdraw his charges of fraud against the Proprietors. In the following year (April 21, 1759) Galloway was on a committee ordered "to collect all the treaties held with the several tribes of Indians by this province, from the first settlement thereof, and to see the same printed in a small folio volume, on good strong paper."⁴ Since this is exactly the same type of work that Thomson was so involved in, it is very likely that they shared information and lent aid to each other.

It was five years before Franklin's business was completed. After many hearings in Privy Council and several

³Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, p. 285.

⁴Baldwin, Joseph Galloway, pp. 176-177.

acrimonious exchanges with the proprietors, taxation of the Penn estates in Pennsylvania was allowed by the King on Franklin's guarantee that the assessments would be as honest and as reasonable as the other assessments in the Province. Franklin had won the first round. Thomson and Galloway had performed well in their work with the Indians, and Galloway had kept Franklin's Assembly seat warm.

Soon after Franklin's return to Pennsylvania, his party again was plagued with the problem of frontier defense. The treaty of Paris in February 1763 made peace between England and France, but not between the colonists and the Indians. The Indians were desperate as they found their gifts from the white man were no longer forthcoming at the war's end. They were further enraged that more and more settlers were taking up their lands. By the summer of 1763 Pontiac's Rebellion was under full sway, as the Indians attacked the English on the long front extending from Detroit to Fort Pitt.

To provide a defense, some frontier communities formed volunteer companies. In Lancaster County, certain Scotch-Irish settlers of Paxton and Donegal townships, Presbyterian fanatics who called themselves the Paxton Boys, turned their fury against the friendly Indians living at peace within the Province. The Indians under the protection of the Moravians near Bethlehem were safely moved to Philadelphia. But in

December, fifty or more of the Paxton Boys fell upon the quiet village of the Conestoga Indians near Lancaster and murdered the six Indians they found at home. The remaining fourteen, who had been away selling their baskets, brooms, and bowls among the neighbouring whites, were collected by the sheriff and lodged in the workhouse at Lancaster. Two days after Christmas the rioters broke open the workhouse and put old and young to the hatchet.

John Penn, Governor since November 1763, issued two proclamations ordering the arrest of the criminals and offering a reward. Nothing came of it. The mob grew into an army of several hundred men that moved on Philadelphia. Three companies of regular troops, the Royal Americans, were called from Cumberland to Philadelphia to guard the Indian refugees. This provoked the westerners to argue that the government was doing more for the Indians than for its own people on the border. Franklin labeled the behavior of the Paxton boys riotous and murderous, and gave expression to his thoughts in a pamphlet written in January 1764, and entitled, Narrative of the Late Massacres in Lancaster County.

As the rioters approached Philadelphia, panic sent John Penn in haste to beg Franklin's assistance in defending the city. "Much as he hated me," recalled Franklin, "the governor did me the honour, in an alarm, to run to my house

at midnight, with his councillors at his heels, for advice, and made it his headquarters."⁵ Franklin met the rioters at Germantown and was successful in restoring peace to Philadelphia. By February 11, 1764 the mob had been dispersed.

The Governor had been unable to maintain order; he had shown fright when courage was demanded of his office. He had discharged the entire incident without reprimand, and he answered the arguments of the rioters privately. His conduct convinced Franklin that Pennsylvania should seek royal government.

The Assembly passed a resolution of adjournment on March 24, 1764. It stated that the members would consult their constituents on the advisability of a petition for royal government. Franklin presented his argument in the pamphlet, Cool Thoughts on the Present Situation of Our Public Affairs, which he distributed throughout Philadelphia that April. In it he reasoned that proprietary rulers were not necessarily worse than other rulers; the problem was interwoven in the very nature of proprietary government.

Galloway seems to have believed with Franklin that George III, "who has no views but for the good of his people, will thenceforth appoint the governor, who, unshackled by

⁵Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, p. 310.

proprietary instructions, will be at liberty to join with the Assembly in enacting wholesome laws."⁶

The friends of the Governor viewed the proposal as revolutionary. The Presbyterians were afraid a royal government might bring an established church, a bishop, and tithes. The Quakers and the Moravians favored the change, while the Anglicans and the Germans were divided.

John Dickinson led the opposition to royal government. He admitted the evils of the proprietary rule, but saw no good reason to expect that the Ministry would send better governors. Besides, a new imperial policy was imminent. With it threatening, Pennsylvania could not afford to give up the constitution which had long protected it.

Although there is ample evidence that Charles Thomson was opposed to the proprietors, no indication of his thoughts on the possible alternative of royal government was discovered in this research. It is possible that he formed no definite opinion at this time. Certainly he shared the feelings of his good friend, Benjamin Franklin, in denouncing the competency of the Penns. It is equally possible, in view of his later reaction to the Stamp Act, that he shared the views of his relative and former school mate, John

⁶Albert Henry Smyth (ed.), The Writings of Benjamin Franklin, IV (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1905), p. 240. Further reference to this series will be abbreviated to read: Smyth, Writings.

Dickinson, who feared for the loss of hard-won freedoms. When Parliament passed the Stamp Act in March 1765, Thomson was one of the most zealous in fighting what he considered an invasion of hard-won colonial rights.

When the Assembly met again in May, 1764, debate reached angry heights. Isaac Norris, whose daughter had married John Dickinson, resigned as Speaker, an office he had held for fourteen years. Franklin was immediately and unanimously elected to succeed him. It was Franklin who, on May 26th, as Speaker of the Assembly, signed the petition for royal government, which he had drafted.

Franklin presided as Speaker for the few days left in May and then again during the short session in September. The members went to their constituents, and the campaign before the election of October 1, 1764 reflected the malice generated in the May debates. Mud-slinging became standard procedure. Franklin was accused of every kind of villany. The private scandal of his son's birth was brought up. The Germans were not allowed to forget that he had called them "Palatine boors," nor the Scotch-Irish of Paxton and Donegal townships that he had called them "Christian white savages." He was the target of cartoons, squibs in the newspapers, malicious tongues, none of which he took the trouble to answer.

Franklin and Galloway, both candidates for seats from the city of Philadelphia, managed the campaign for their party, which was called the Old Ticket. When the polls closed at 3:00 p.m. October 1st, the vote showed Franklin and Galloway beaten by twenty-five votes of 4,000 cast. The Old Party had lost Philadelphia, but they retained a majority in the Assembly. They not only resolved to present the petition to the King, but they chose Franklin, on October 26th, to go as agent to manage the affair. He was to assist Richard Jackson, who had been agent for the Province since Franklin's return from England.

On November 7, 1764, Franklin set out for his ship at Chester, sixteen miles away, with three hundred friends on horseback. Galloway and two others stayed on board with him as far as New Castle. On December 9, 1764 Franklin was once again in England.

In summary, this ten year period, 1754-1764, was focused primarily on local issues. Chief among these were the taxation of proprietary estates and later the abolition of proprietary government. Since Franklin, Galloway, and Thomson actively sought to denounce the proprietors, they might be described as radicals. Certainly, this is suggested by the efforts of Franklin and Galloway in their attempt to replace the proprietors with a royal government. Thomson's information on proprietary dealings with the Indians helped

Franklin cast doubt upon the honesty and integrity of the Penns, and this contributed significantly to the Ministry's decision to allow taxation of the proprietary lands. While Franklin was busy in England on this assignment, Galloway replaced him on committees, kept him abreast of events in Pennsylvania through the mails, and held the Quaker party intact.

Galloway also was one of the Indian Commissioners at the same time that Charles Thomson was serving as secretary to Teedyuscung. In fact, it is probable that Galloway not only persuaded Teedyuscung to demand a secretary, but he could also have suggested Franklin's scholarly friend, Thomson.

Benjamin Franklin, Joseph Galloway, and Charles Thomson were in agreement on the major issues of the day during this decade. When the focus shifted to the international level during 1765-1775, the same accord is not found.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEN AND THE TIMES 1764-1774

The period covered in this chapter begins significantly with Grenville's suggestion of a stamp tax for the colonies. The stamp bill was introduced into Parliament on February 13th, and passed on March 22, 1765. It was to go into effect on November 1st. The great issues in the American colonies were soon to be international rather than local, and the three men under discussion here no longer championed the same causes.

For the next decade Galloway represented the Pennsylvania conservative opinion, while Thomson was the energetic radical. Franklin reacted initially as a conservative, but soon began a shift that saw him testify before Parliament on behalf of American demands. By 1775 Galloway was a loyalist, Franklin and Thomson were patriots.

This thesis contends that Galloway's intense suspicion of the Presbyterians, as well as his deep respect for law and property rights, were key reasons for the enduring hostility that developed between him and Charles Thomson following the passage of the Stamp Act. This is not to imply that Thomson lacked principle or respect for law. His motivation was a desire to preserve basic liberties that the Stamp Law seemed to jeopardize.

Franklin spent this decade in Europe. He acquiesced in the Stamp Act and apparently held much the same position as Galloway until the fall of 1765. Riots and property destruction in the colonies had made Galloway an arch-conservative. Franklin was shocked by the colonial behavior, but evidence indicates that he inclined to think as Thomson did on the subject. Eventually he came to sympathize completely with the views of Thomson and was thus opposed to Galloway's politics. It was a Thomson letter that Franklin published in the London press as an illustration of the American point of view regarding the Stamp Act. Again it was a Thomson letter that Franklin circulated at the height of his campaign for repeal of the Townshend Acts.

This chapter offers an explanation of the changing attitudes of these three gentlemen.

Although the passage of the Stamp Act was announced and discussed in the newspapers, no great alarm was apparent in the Philadelphia newspapers until August, 1765. While the Pennsylvania Journal issues for June, 1765, carried a series of articles showing that the colonies were not represented in Parliament,¹ the August issues featured more heated comments on taxation without representation and on the question of treason. The Pennsylvania Gazette for May 30th

¹Pennsylvania Journal, June 13, 20, and 27, 1765.

announced the passage of the Stamp Act and the rumor that John Hughes would be the Stamp agent for Pennsylvania, but again the subject received little attention in the Gazette until August.

A letter from Joseph Galloway to Benjamin Franklin, dated February 27, 1765, clearly showed the primary goals of both men at this time. Galloway was anxious for the success of the petition for royal government, and he pleaded this cause at great length. All of his Majesty's constituents, he wrote, "the proprietary dependents and Presbyterians excepted," are determined that the change be effected.²

Franklin's assignment in London became increasingly complex. The Penns were doing their best to get him dismissed from his place in the post office. The Assembly instructed him to resist the passage of the Stamp Act. His task was one of furthering the petition for royal government, resisting the passage of the Stamp Act, refusing to make concessions on either, and yet not incurring the disfavor of the ministers. The royal government matter was soon lost, however, in the larger issues of the Stamp Act and the need for revising the Empire.

²John Bigelow, (ed.), The Works of Benjamin Franklin, IV (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), pp. 162-164. Further reference to this series will be abbreviated to read: Bigelow, Works.

Unable to prevent the passage of the Stamp Act, Franklin wrote to Thomson on July 11, 1765 explaining his position:

Depend upon it, my good neighbour, I took every step in my power to prevent the passing of the Stamp Act. Nobody could be more concerned and interested than myself, to oppose it sincerely and heartily. But the tide was too strong against us. The nation was provoked by American claims to independence, and all parties joined in resolving by this act to settle the point. We might as well have hindered the sun's setting. That we could not do. But since it is down, my friend, and it may be long before it rises again, let us make as good a night of it as we can. We may still light candles. Frugality and industry will go a great way towards indemnifying us. Idleness and pride tax with a heavier hand than kings and parliaments. If we can get rid of the former, we may easily bear the latter.³

Perhaps this acquiescence by Franklin was the result of his being totally absorbed in the cause of royal government for Pennsylvania. Perhaps he was confident that legislation injurious to America would be found equally injurious to England. Obviously, he did not anticipate the riots and property destruction that occurred in the colonies during the summer and fall of 1765.⁴ Expecting to "make as good a night of it as we can," he appointed his good friend, John Hughes, to be stamp agent for

³Smyth, Writings, pp. 389-300; Bigelow, Works, pp. 162-164.

⁴An excellent account of the riots that accompanied the Stamp Act in America can be found in: Edmund S. & Helen M. Morgan, The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1953). Further reference to this work will be abbreviated to read: Morgan, Stamp Act Crisis.

Pennsylvania. Franklin had fallen out of step with colonial opinion on the more significant issues of the emerging new imperial policy. His equivocal conduct soon proved embarrassing, and gave his enemies in Pennsylvania excellent political ammunition. They later launched a bitter attack upon his character in an attempt to discredit the entire Quaker party during the fall election of 1766.

Actually, Franklin was simply prepared to abide by the decision of Parliament. For him, it was only a single setback in a general campaign for imperial unity. The mistake had been made in London. American resistance meant British resentment, and was sure to delay progress towards the real solution. Commenting on the passage of the Virginia Resolves, he wrote to John Hughes on August 9, 1765:

The rashness of the Assembly in Virginia is amazing. I hope, however, that ours will keep within the bounds of prudence and moderation; for that is the only way to lighten or get clear of our burdens. As to the Stamp Act, though we propose doing our endeavour to get it repealed, yet the success is uncertain. . . . A firm loyalty to the Crown and faithful adherence to the government of this nation, which it is the safety as well as the honour of the colonies to be connected with, will always be the wisest course for you and I to take, whatever may be the madness of the populace or their blind leaders, who can only bring themselves and country into trouble and draw on greater burthens by acts of rebellious tendency.⁵

⁵Smyth, Writings, p. 392; Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, p. 327.

When Charles Thomson had received Benjamin Franklin's letter of July 11th, he found himself in disagreement with his sage senior. His reply, dated September 24, 1765 was replete with sentiments of fervid patriotism and clear statements of British wrong done to the colonies:

YES, my friend, I grant that 'Idleness and Pride tax with a heavier hand than Kings and Parliaments,' 'and that frugality and industry will go a great way towards indemnifying us.' But the misfortune is, the very thing that renders industry necessary cuts the sinews of it. With industry and frugality the subjects of eastern tyrants might be wealthier than those of England or Holland. But who will labour or save who has not a security in his property? When people are taxed by their own representatives, though the tax is high they pay it cheerfully, from a confidence that no more than enough is required, and that a due regard is had to the ability of the giver. But when taxes are laid merely to 'settle the point of independence,' and when the quantity of the tax depends on the caprice of those who have the superiority, and who will doubtless lay it heavier in order to bring down the spirits or weaken the power of those who claim independence, what encouragement is there to labour or save? . . . There never was any mention of the colonies aiming at independence, till the ministry began to abridge them of their liberties . . .

The Sun of Liberty is indeed fast setting, if not down already, in the American colonies: But I much fear instead of the candles you mention being lighted, you will hear of the work of darkness. They are in general alarmed to the last degree. The colonies expect, and with reason expect, that some regard shall be had to their liberties and privileges, as well as trade. They cannot bring themselves to believe, nor can they see how England with reason or justice could expect, that they should have encountered the horrors or a desert, borne the attacks of barbarous savages, and, at the expence of their blood and treasure, settled this country to the great emolument of England, and after all quietly submit to be deprived of everything an Englishman has been taught to hold dear. It is not property only we contend for. Our Liberty and most

essential privileges are struck at: Arbitrary courts are set over us, and trials by juries taken away: The Press is so restricted that we cannot complain: An army of mercenaries threatened to be billeted on us: The sources of our trade stopped; and, to complete our ruin, the little property we had acquired, taken from us, without even allowing us the merit of giving it; I really dread the consequence. The Parliament insist on a power over all the liberties and privileges claimed by the colonies, and hence require a blind obedience and acquiescence in whatever they do: Should the behaviour of the colonies happen not to square with these sovereign notions, (as I much fear it will not) what remains but by violence to compel them to obedience. Violence will beget resentment, and provoke to acts never dreamt of: But I will not anticipate evil; I pray God avert it. . . .⁶

Thomson's thoughts made a marked impression on Franklin. He had the above letter printed in the London Chronicle of November 16, 1765 as an illustration of the colonial point of view.⁷

Although their assemblies tended to be generally temperate in their protests, the colonists grew more and more outspoken during the fall of 1765. While the General Court of Massachusetts was calling an intercolonial congress to meet in New York in October, groups of unofficial men in various colonies were being organized as Sons of Liberty. The extra-legal threat posed by this group, and their

⁶Verner W. Crane (ed.), Benjamin Franklin's Letters to the Press, 1758-1775 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1950), pp. 36-38. Further reference to this work will be abbreviated to read: Crane, Franklin's Letters to the Press.

⁷Pennsylvania Gazette, March 6, 1766.

intimidation of officials in Boston and Rhode Island were shocking to Joseph Galloway.

Writing over the pseudonym "Americanus," Galloway had a lengthy letter printed in the August 29th Pennsylvania Journal. He criticized the "impropriety and rashness" of the methods by which the Stamp Act was being opposed. He pointed out that Britain had run up a great debt in defending America from the French and Indian menace, while the Americans had been the chief beneficiaries of the peace settlement. He thought it reasonable to expect the colonies to contribute part of the cost of their own defence. As matters stood, this might be done by the voluntary action of the separate colonial legislatures, or by paying taxes levied by Parliament. The miserable failure of the former method during the Seven Years War had, Galloway thought, prompted the imperial government to attempt direct taxation of the colonies. He then suggested two other ways the colonies might share in the cost of imperial defence. First, they might ask for representation in Parliament. If granted, this would give Parliament the right to tax America, and give America a voice in the management of the Empire. Secondly, they might form an American union with a common legislature which could then, with Parliament's concurrence, provide for American defense. Otherwise, the "law of necessity" would justify British taxation of the colonies. The last paragraph of

Galloway's "Americanus" essay is comparable to ideas expressed by Franklin in his letter to John Hughes, dated August 9, 1765, and quoted above. "Americanus" said:

While this wise and prudent measure is undertaken, [Galloway refers here to the calling of the Stamp Act Congress] it is hoped that those indecent reflections which have already been too often repeated in our public papers, will be no longer continued, as they only tend to create in the minds of the weak and ignorant, a spirit of disloyalty against the crown, and hatred against the people of England; and to excite to resentment of our superiors against the Americans, and thereby involve them in difficulties more burthensome and inconvenient, than those we now so loudly complain of.⁸

Galloway's views were, in part, a reflection of Franklin's earlier influence on him. While still in his twenties, Galloway had become Franklin's deputy in the Pennsylvania Assembly. He was convinced, with Franklin, of the advisability of a closer relationship with Britain. Now, with the Stamp Act, the need was urgent. This would create a legal channel through which complaints could receive a hearing.

That which he feared most was soon to happen. Stamp Act riots were threatened by the radicals in Philadelphia. On September 12th there was a growing clamor and threats were made to pull down John Hughes's house.⁹ On September 16th

⁸Pennsylvania Journal, August 29, 1765, letter signed "AMERICANUS."

⁹Pennsylvania Journal SUPPLEMENT, September 4, 1766.

violence was averted when Galloway called out the White Oakes and the Hearts of Oak. These clubs of tradesmen posted themselves throughout the city and broke up the demonstrations of the Sons of Liberty.¹⁰

On September 20, 1765 Galloway wrote to Benjamin Franklin:

The public papers will inform you of the present distracted state of the Colonies, and the many outrages and riots that have been occasioned by a dislike to the stamp act: all which have been incited by the principal men of the colonies where they have been committed. Measures have not been wanting to create the same temper in the people here, in which some have been very active. In hopes to prevent their ill effects, I wrote a moderate piece, signed Americanus, published here and at New-York, and since in Virginia; wherein you will see my sentiments on the subject. I am told it had a good effect in those places, as well as here, being much approved by the moderate part of the people. Yet we should not have been free from riots here, if another method had not been taken to prevent them, VIZ. By assembling quietly, at the instance of Mr. Hughes's friends (and not by an order from the government of the city) near 800 of the sober inhabitants, posted in different parts, ready to prevent any mischief that should be attempted by the mob, which effectually intimidated them, and kept all tolerably quiet, only they burnt a figure they called a Stamp Man, and about midnight dispersed. Great pains have been taken to persuade and frighten Mr. Hughes into a Resignation of his office, but he continues firm, and will not resign in any manner that shall do dishonour to his appointment; and I think will be able to put his commission into execution notwithstanding the example set by other colonies.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

Perhaps the most significant factor determining Galloway's position at this time was his attitude toward the Presbyterians. The anti-Proprietary party which he led in the Assembly represented chiefly the conservative mercantile class of Philadelphia and the conservative farmers of the old counties around Philadelphia. These people lived in growing apprehension of the Scotch-Irish and New England settlers who were filling the western counties, and who seemed to the Philadelphians to be a lawless breed. Galloway shared their fear of this dominantly Presbyterian western population. The following evidence will perhaps facilitate an understanding of his fears.

Charles Thomson's biographer, Lewis R. Harley, borrowed this quote to describe eighteenth century Protestant emigration from Ireland:

The resentment which they carried with them continued to burn in their new homes; and, in the war of Independence, England had no fiercer enemies than the grandsons and great-grandsons of the Presbyterians who had held Ulster against Tyrconnel.¹²

To substantiate the above, and to establish that the Presbyterians made the first serious effort toward a union of interests in the colonies, Harley offers the following:

In 1764, at the very time that a spirit of discontent began to prevail, the convention of ministers and elders at Philadelphia inclosed a circular letter to all the

¹²Harley, Charles Thomson, p. 61.

Presbyterian congregations in Pennsylvania, recommending a general union. As a result of the letter, a union of those congregations immediately took place, while a like course was pursued in all the southern provinces. Within a year, the annual Synod at Philadelphia was established, composed of delegates from all the Presbyterian congregations in the colonies. The Congregational churches in New England soon united with the Presbyterian interest, and permanent committees of correspondence were appointed, with power to consult on political and religious affairs. By this union, a party was prepared to display their power by resistance, and the stamp law presented itself as a favorable object of hostility. Yet, sensible of their own incompetency to act effectually without assistance, and apprehensive of counteraction from the members of the Church of England, and those dissenters who were opposed to violence, they strove with the utmost assiduity to make friends and converts among the disaffected of every denomination. A 'Society of Dissenters' was formed in New York to oppose the Church of England by entering into correspondence with all dissenters in America, Great Britain, and Ireland.¹³

The Congregational and Presbyterian clergy told their congregations that, "the only form of government to which true Christians could submit was a government by consent in which the people, ceaselessly vigilant against oppression, retained the right to overthrow unjust rulers."¹⁴

"The most violent in denouncing the Proprietary government," says Charles J. Stille, "were the Scotch-Irish settlers

¹³Ibid., pp. 61-62.

¹⁴John C. Miller, Origins of the American Revolution (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1959), p. 187. Further reference to this work will be abbreviated to read: Miller, Origins.

to the west of the Susquehanna."¹⁵ The Presbyterian clergy were, however, apprehensive of the danger to their church should a royal government be substituted for that of the Proprietary. They apparently were unhappy with their present station, but unlike Galloway, they were not convinced that royal government was the solution. Stille summarized the position taken by the Presbyterians, or Scotch-Irish, with the following conclusion:

They seem to have held at all times a distinct position. In 1764 they had preferred to retain the Proprietary government rather than submit to the direct authority of the Crown; in 1776 they were the strongest opponents of the Proprietary government and charter, and earnestly advocated national independence and the abolition of the Provincial charter.¹⁶

Whatever the ultimate motives of the Presbyterians might have been, Galloway was not alone in his deep suspicions and contempt. John Hughes believed that the revolution was a Presbyterian-Congregationalist plot. "The bigoted Calvinists," he asserted, "were ripe for open Rebellion, when they poisoned the Minds of the people enough and had gathered together Forty Thousand Out-throats to fall upon the Episcopalians." They were as averse to kings as they were in the days of Cromwell, and as early as 1766 some had

¹⁵Charles J. Stille, The Life and Times of John Dickinson (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1891), p. 57. Further reference to this work will be abbreviated to read: Stille, John Dickinson.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 174.

begun to cry out, "no King but King Jesus." Their true purpose, Hughes argued, was to form "a Republican Empire, in America, being Lords and Masters themselves."¹⁷

Pennsylvania appeared to Galloway and his friends to be drifting into a state of anarchy, a danger which the Paxton riots of 1764 had dramatized. Now again in 1765 with the passage of the Stamp tax, mobs were forcing decisions upon colonial officials of government. Reform was imperative, but democratic reform was not the answer. The obvious solution, concluded Galloway, was some form of closer constitutional union with Britain. This would provide political machinery that would obviate public display. In addition, Philadelphia would then have effective British support against the Presbyterians. The "Americanus" essay is a worthy summation of his stand in 1765.

While Franklin and Galloway accepted the Stamp Act, Thomson took an active part in preventing its enforcement in Philadelphia. He was an elder in the First Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, when the steps toward the union of all Presbyterians were in progress.¹⁸ Yet, until the Stamp Act he evidently was not one of the radical Presbyterians. On

¹⁷See the letter from Joseph Galloway to Benjamin Franklin dated November 14, 1765 quoted in part in Miller, Origins, p. 196 and Harley, Charles Thomson, pp. 65-66.

¹⁸Harley, Charles Thomson, p. 63.

intimate terms with the Quaker party leaders, especially Franklin and Galloway, he had been given minor jobs by the party, including the appointment as secretary in the negotiations with the Indians at Easton in November 1756 and again in July 1757. Also, in six of the seven money bills enacted between 1756 and 1760 he had been one of the persons selected to countersign the paper currency.¹⁹ He had written in favor of the Indians at a time when the Presbyterian hatred for them had permitted the extreme behavior of the Paxton rioters. With the onset of the Stamp Act, however, he made it clear that he would resist Parliamentary taxation vigorously. His letter to Benjamin Franklin dated September 24, 1765 represented his stand in that year.

The October 10, 1765 Pennsylvania Journal carried the story of the arrival of stamps from New Castle. On Saturday, October 5th, the Royal Charlotte had come up to the city attended by HMS Sardine. Other ships lowered their flags to half mast. Bells were rung. At 4 o'clock p.m. several thousand citizens met at the State House to consider ways and means of preventing the Stamp Act from being carried into execution.

¹⁹Zimmerman, Charles Thomson, p. 467; Also, see the Pennsylvania Gazette or the Pennsylvania Journal issues for July 19th and 26th, 1764. They carry an ad. warning of counterfeit twenty shilling bills containing several signatures, one of which was Charles Thomson's.

John Hughes wrote:

On Saturday the 5th of October, . . . I received information that the ship with the stamps was to come up to town that day . . . At 2 o'clock the post arrived with the mail and packet, and among other things my Commission, this the party ventured to alledge, because there was a large packet for me: accordingly the mob collected, chiefly Presbyterians and proprietary emissaries, with the Chief Justice, Mr. William Allen's son at their head, animating and encouraging the lower class. . . .²⁰

Charles Thomson was one of the emissaries. He was appointed on a committee with James Tilgham, Robert Morris, Archibald McCall, John Cox, William Richards, and William Bradford to go to John Hughes' home and demand his resignation as stamp distributor.

It should be noted that of this group only Thomson had been affiliated with the Quaker party. The others were all proprietary party men. Thomson was Presbyterian, however, as Hughes had noted. It seems that party lines were thus broken by the Stamp Act. Galloway verified this in his letter to Benjamin Franklin of November 15, 1765 wherein he complained that "too many of our friends were inclined to unite with those wretches," [the Proprietarians] "against the Stamp Act."²¹

Hughes was in doubt as to what action he should take in view of riots and confusion in provinces to the east.

²⁰Pennsylvania Journal SUPPLEMENT, September 4, 1766.

²¹Miller, Origins, p. 137.

Franklin told him to hold fast and to execute his duties regardless of what rash behavior others might be guilty of. Now, on October 5th the mob was demanding his resignation. Unable to stall them successfully, Hughes reluctantly agreed not to carry the law into execution until it was generally complied with in the other colonies. The deputation then withdrew, but upon consulting their associates the demand was raised for a signed statement of resignation. Receiving this, Hughes sent for his former political ally, Charles Thomson. He asked Thomson if they had been serious the day before, or if they had gained what they could from discussion. Thomson said that he was sincere, but that he could only speak for himself. "I replied," wrote Hughes, "well gentlemen, you must look to yourselves, for this is a high affair:" Thomson answered, "I do not know, but I hope it will not be deemed rebellion." Hughes replied, "Indeed, Sir, I know no other name for it." "Well," said Thomson, "I know not how it may end for we have not yet determined whether we will ever suffer the act to take place here or not."²² The whole committee called again on Monday and received Hughes' qualified resignation in writing.²³

²²Pennsylvania Journal SUPPLEMENT, September 4, 1766. This issue contains the formal statement of resignation as well as other documents in a lengthy account written by John Hughes.

²³Ibid.

The October 10, 1765 issue of the Pennsylvania Gazette carried the election results. Galloway was returned to the Assembly, and soon thereafter was named its Speaker. The same Joseph Galloway who had been the radical seeking overthrow of the proprietary government, now represented the strictest conservative views. E. H. Baldwin, Galloway's biographer, concluded that "he feared the tyranny of the mob rule more than the tyranny of the Parliament."²⁴

The same issue of the Gazette reported that Charles Thomson was elected a city warden for Philadelphia. He emerged from this altercation to become a very significant leader of the Pennsylvania radical element.

It was at this time that Franklin was beginning his press campaign for repeal of the Stamp Act. He furnished his friend and owner of the London Chronicle, William Strahan, with an extract of his well-known ambiguous letter of July 11, 1765 to Thomson, and the forthright Thomson reply dated September 24, 1765.²⁵ Although Franklin was aware that Galloway had written the "Americanus" essay, and even informed him that he knew, he wisely did not use it in his journalistic endeavors. Thus, although his

²⁴Baldwin, Joseph Galloway, p. 289.

²⁵See the March 6, 1766 issue of the Pennsylvania Gazette which reprints the entire article from the London Chronicle.

friendship for Galloway remained strong, Franklin began to turn to Charles Thomson when imperial matters were at issue.

In the February 6-8, 1766 editions of Strahan's Chronicle, Franklin published his letters to Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts, written over a decade before. These very pointed writings were designed to both clarify the American position and to restore Franklin's reputation in the colonies. The letter from Franklin to Shirley dated December 18, 1754 was undoubtedly a reasonably accurate representation of Franklin's position by early 1766. It does not, however, seem to reflect his 1765 thought. Perhaps it is simply a matter of Franklin's allowing his views to remain dormant until shocked into reasserting them. It can be seen in the following excerpt that he shared more closely the views of Thomson than those of Galloway:

I mentioned it yesterday to your Excellency as my opinion, that excluding the people of the colonies from all share in the choice of the grand council (of a Colonial Union), would probably give extreme dissatisfaction, as well as taxing them by act of Parliament, where they have no representative. In matters of general concern to the people, and especially where burthens are to be laid upon them, it is of use to consider, as well what they will be apt to think and say, as what they ought to think. . . . That it is supposed an undoubted right of Englishmen, not to be taxed but by their own consent given through their representatives. . . . That compelling the colonies to pay money without their consent, would be rather

like raising contributions in an enemy's country, than taxing Englishmen for their own public benefit.²⁶

Franklin laid the plans for the time when he might be allowed to speak to the House personally. He encouraged others to write on American affairs. On February 13, in a lengthy examination before the House, he gave the American arguments against the tax. Of the 174 questions asked, some were put by opponents, some by friends of the act.²⁷ The replies were brief, lucid, and to the point. They aimed at showing that the tax was contrary to custom, and administratively impractical. The full text of the examination was published and widely read in both England and America. Franklin wrote to Thomson February 27, 1766, "I have reprinted everything from America that I thought might help our Common Cause."²⁸

His reputation having suffered greatly in America, a campaign was under way in the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal to restore his image. Extracts of letters from London, verifying that he had been a tireless worker for repeal, were printed in the above newspapers.

²⁶ Smyth, Writings, III, pp. 232-239; see the May 15, 1766 issue of the Pennsylvania Gazette.

²⁷ Full text of Franklin's Examination can be found in Smyth, Writings, IV, pp. 413-448.

²⁸ Smyth, Writings, IV, p. 411; Crane, Franklin's Letters to the Press, p. 35.

Ten such extracts made their appearance during the period of February 27, 1766 through May 8, 1766. Seven of them were printed by the Gazette, and they are spaced so that they make an effective argument.

In the battle for repeal of the Stamp Act, the boycott of British goods was significant. The unhappy British merchants petitioned Parliament for relief and on March 18, 1766 the repeal bill was passed. Brash headlines in supplementary issues of the Pennsylvania Gazette and the Pennsylvania Journal for May 19th carried the announcement to the people of that province. Great rejoicing ensued. In the festivities, Franklin, among many others, was toasted for his efforts.²⁹

Writing to Charles Thomson on September 27th, Franklin said, "There are claimers enough of merits in obtaining the repeal. But, if I live to see you, I will let you know what an escape we had in the beginning of the affair, and how much we were obliged to what the profane would call luck, and the pious, Providence."³⁰ In this same letter, he informed Thomson that he had the letter of September 24th published in the Chronicle. From Franklin's conversation it is clear that he was greatly relieved that this conflict had been resolved at last.

²⁹Pennsylvania Gazette, June 12, 1766.

³⁰Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 240-241; Smyth, Writings, IV, pp. 462-463.

Edmund S. Morgan draws an interesting conclusion regarding the events of 1765-66:

The men who would have counted most in the struggle that seemed to be approaching must have made up their minds as to which side they would take. But because it was repealed many of them did not have to reveal their decisions and probably most of them thought that the choice they had made could now be forgotten and the whole episode pushed back into oblivion.³¹

Unfortunately, the Declaratory Act and the Townshend Duties soon made their decisions relevant again. In the meantime, the fall election of 1766 sparked several newspaper articles that severely criticized both Galloway and Franklin.

An unsigned "Essay Towards discovering the Authors and Promoters of the Memorable STAMP ACT," appeared in the Journal. Claiming to have made "very diligent enquiry," the author concluded that "your own agent, Dr. B-----n F---kl---n is generally believed to have had a principal hand in promoting the Stamp Act." Franklin was accused of bargaining with Lord Bute and the Ministry in hopes of affecting a change of government in Pennsylvania and getting the assignment as governor. "Both J--n Hu-----s and J---n Ga-----ay give him reason to hope that they shall be able to put the Act into execution." When the Ministry later knew that it could get enough votes for repeal, "it

³¹Morgan, Stamp Act Crisis, p. 257.

was then that Dr. F-----n was called to the bar of the House to be examined. Knowing that his integrity was being suspected and that his friends Bute and Grenville were expiring, the Doctor had no choice. He did the only thing left, disclaimed the Stamp Act to retrieve his character with his constituents and the new ministry."³²

This bitter criticism was followed by the writing entitled "CONTRADICTIONS," which appeared in the newspapers the following week. Its sole purpose was to portray Galloway as hostile to the basic American arguments against the Stamp Act. The "Americanus" essay was compared to Franklin's "Examination." Perhaps the end result anticipated was that of further splitting the anti-propietary party. Inescapable was the conclusion that Franklin and Galloway were no longer in accord on imperial issues. The following excerpts from that article serve the purposes of this paper by illustrating that lack of accord. In regard to the use of troops, "Americanus" said:

The protection of America has in no small degree, contributed to this burthen of the mother country. If then it be incontestibly just, that America should contribute towards the means of her own safety . . . The power of making war, of protecting and defending British subjects, in every part of the world, & of forming, directing, and executing that protection, is constitutionally vested in the crown alone . . . America consisting of a number of colonies in their

³²Pennsylvania Journal, SUPPLEMENT, September 18, 1766.

infant state, and independent of each other, is in a particular manner dependent on this power, and has a right to demand an exertion of it, to insure its safety . . .³³

By contrast, the "Examination" stressed that:

They (Americans) are very able to defend themselves. I know the last war is commonly spoke of here as entered into for the defense, or for the sake of the people of America. . . . The war, as it commenced for the defence of territories of the Crown, the property of no American, and for the defense of a trade purely British, was really a British war--and yet the people of America made no scruple of contributing their utmost toward carrying it on, and bringing it to a happy conclusion.³⁴

Answering the inquiry as to how contributions are to be procured, "Americanus" stated:

In their present state, this can be done, but by one of two modes; either by the Parliament, or by the several legislatures of America. . . . It can be of little moment to the general welfare, and of course to the king and people of England, whether these aids are granted by a British Parliament, or the several American legislatures; Provided they be really granted.³⁵

Franklin's "Examination" answered the question by saying:

Their opinion is, that when aids to the crown are wanted, they are to be asked of the several assemblies, according to the old established usage, who will, as they always have done, grant them freely. . . . The granting aids to the crown, is the only means they have

³³Pennsylvania Journal or Pennsylvania Gazette,
September 25, 1766.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

of recommending themselves to their sovereign, . . . as it is the security of all their other rights.³⁶

Galloway had been shaken by the property destruction and mob intimidation of public officials. He looked to England for the solution. His answer to his critics was that,

I never shall deny any truth I am charged with, and therefore acknowledge I wrote the piece signed Americanus. I also confess I am, and ever shall be, an enemy to riots. I have ever esteemed them, destructive of both public and private safety and utterly subversive to the very end of society. And therefore it was with real concern, I saw the flame spreading with dangerous precipitation thro' the colonies. . . . I was then, as I am still, clearly of opinion, that the repeal of the Act would have been more easily obtained, by dutiful remonstrances against it, showing our rights, our poverty, and by proposing some plan in which the crown might confide, that the colonies would in future unite in granting the aids necessary for their general safety, than by the measures which were then pursued. . . .³⁷

The controversy diminished as the October elections passed. The calm established by the repeal of the Stamp Act was short-lived, however. New York and Georgia soon reacted in defiance against the Quartering Act. Franklin wrote to Galloway, June 13, 1767, expressing concern over this behavior:

It is said the bill to suspend the legislatures of New York and Georgia, till they comply with the act of Parliament for quartering soldiers, will pass

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

this session. I fear that imprudencies on both sides may, step by step, bring on the most mischievous consequences. It is imagined here, that this act will enforce immediate compliance; and, if the people should be quiet, content themselves with the laws they have, and let the matter rest, till in some future war the King, wanting aids from them, and finding himself restrained in his legislation by the act as much as the people, shall think fit by his ministers to propose the repeal, the Parliament will be greatly disappointed; and perhaps it will take this turn. I wish nothing worse may happen. . . .³⁸

It should be noted that this is essentially the same position taken by Franklin regarding the passage of the Stamp Act. Perhaps the battle for repeal had momentarily exhausted his opposition to Parliament. His most serious concern appeared to be that of proving to those friends of America the gratitude and discipline in the colonies. He was apprehensive that rash behavior might bring even more trying legislation rather than sympathy from Britain, and he seemed to sense the unpopularity that the American cause could reach should the tension continue.

The illness of Lord Chatham and the persistence of George Grenville again brought the American issue to the fore in mid-1767 with the passage of the Townshend Acts. The most controversial of these acts was the Duty or Revenue Act, passed June 29th to become effective the following November 20th. Its intent, stated in the preamble, was to

³⁸Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 289-295; Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 25-30.

raise a revenue to pay salaries of civil government officials and judges as well as to keep troops for defense in America.

Charles Townshend, in sponsoring the above legislation, was exploiting the unpopularity of the American cause. To counter this image of undisciplined American colonists, Franklin had long extracts of his "Examination" printed in the London Chronicle for July 7th and 9th. "Some of our friends," he wrote Galloway, "have thought that a publication of my 'Examination' here, might answer some of the above purposes, by removing prejudices, refuting falsehoods, and demonstrating our merits with regard to this country. It is accordingly printed and has a great run."³⁹

Although he continued his efforts to heal the wounds between America and Britain, Franklin evidenced a steadily declining respect for Parliament. This drew him progressively closer to Thomson. By contrast, because Galloway refused to be persuaded by his letters, the gap was widened between Franklin and Galloway.

Franklin described British politics in this letter to Galloway dated February 17, 1768:

Mr. Beckford has brought in a bill for preventing bribery and corruption in elections, wherein was a clause to oblige every member to swear, on his admission into the House, that he had not directly or indirectly

³⁹Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 304-308; Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 40-44.

given any bribe to any elector; but this was so universally exclaimed against, as answering no end but perjuring the members, that he has been obliged to withdraw that clause. It was indeed a cruel contrivance of his, worse than the gunpowder plot; for that was only to blow the Parliament up to heaven, this to sink them all down to ----. Mr. Thurlow opposed his bill by a long speech. Beckford, in reply, gave a dry hit to the House, that is repeated everywhere. 'The honorable gentleman,' says he, 'in his learned discourse, gave us first one definition of corruption, then he gave us another definition of corruption, and I think he was about to give us a third. Pray does that gentleman imagine there is any member of this House that does not KNOW what corruption is?' which occasioned only a roar of laughter, for they are so hardened in the practice, that they are very little ashamed of it. This between ourselves.⁴⁰

Galloway must have simply shrugged upon reading this letter. He had recently (March 10th) written to Benjamin describing the deplorable state of affairs in the Pennsylvania government. Part of that letter follows. Note that he continues to find royal government to be the answer to the problem.

The affairs of this province are at length reduced to the most desperate circumstances. All the mischiefs we have long expected, if not come to pass, are now in full prospect. We have long seen that the powers of government, united in the same hands, with immense property, would necessarily be attended with many inconveniences both to the crown and the subject; and that those powers, vested in the feeble hands of private subjects, would prove too weak to support his Majesty's authority, or to give safety to his people. . . . We have the name of a government, but no safety or protection under it. We have laws without being executed, or even feared or respected. We have offenders, but

⁴⁰Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 394-398; Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 97-100.

no punishment. We have a magistracy, but no justice; and a governor, but no government. And, you well know, we possess the warmest allegiance to our sovereign and our mother country; and yet our persons and estates are every hour liable to the ravages of the licentious and lawless, without any hope of defence against them.⁴¹

Previous to the Stamp Act, Franklin had concurred heartily with Galloway on the benefits of royal government. This had, in fact, been his mission when he sailed to England in 1764. Now, however, he had been close to British politics for a long enough period to witness serious weaknesses in its personnel. In his letter to Galloway, written March 13, 1768, he explained:

The old Parliament is gone, and its enemies now find themselves at liberty to abuse it. I enclose you a pamphlet published the very hour of its prorogation. All the members are now in their counties and boroughs among their drunken electors; much confusion and disorder in many places, and such profusion of money as never was known before on any similar occasion. The first instance of bribery to be chosen a member, taken notice of on the journals, is no longer ago than Queen Elizabeth's time, when the being sent to Parliament was looked upon as a troublesome service, and therefore not sought after. It is said that such a one, "being a simple man and conceiving it might be of some advantage to him, had given four pounds to the mayor and corporation that they might choose him to serve them in Parliament."

The price is monstrously risen since that time, for it is now no less than four thousand pounds! It is thought that near two millions will be spent this election; but those who understand figures and act by computation say the crown has two millions a year in places and pensions to dispose of, and it is well

⁴¹Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 406-408.

worth while to engage in such a seven years' lottery, though all that have tickets should not get prizes.⁴²

In addition to his contempt for Parliamentary corruption, Franklin was becoming convinced that the colonists should make their own laws. Although he had John Dickinson's "Farmer's Letters" published in England, he apparently did not agree with the "half-way house" doctrine. The extent of his pessimism is seen in this letter written March 13, 1768 to his son William:

The more I have thought and read on the subject, the more I find myself confirmed in opinion, that no middle doctrine can be well maintained, I mean not clearly with intelligible arguments. Something might be made of either of the extremes; that Parliament has a power to make all laws for us, or that it has a power to make no laws for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty, than those for the former. Supposing that doctrine established, the colonies would then be so many separate states, only subject to the same king as England & Scotland were before the union. And then the question would be, whether a union like that with Scotland would or would not be advantageous to the whole. I shall have no doubt of the affirmative, being fully persuaded that it would be best for the whole, and that though particular parts might find particular disadvantages in it, they would find greater advantages in the security arising to every part from the increased strength of the whole. But such a union is not likely to take place, while the nature of our present relation is so little understood on both sides of the water, and sentiments concerning it remain so widely different. . . .⁴³

⁴²Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 425-427; Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 111-112.

⁴³Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 113-118; Jared Sparks, The Works of Benjamin Franklin, VII (Boston: Whittemore, Niles, and Hall, 1856), pp. 391-392.

The Declaratory Act had been made an intimate part of the bill repealing the Stamp Act. It was designed to make clear to the colonists that "Parliament had the right to tax in all cases whatsoever." It was not until the Townshend Acts that the colonists came to realize its full significance. Radicals were again given a cause for which to crusade and a movement was begun to renew the boycott of British goods.

News reached London that the people in Boston were lawlessly resisting the customs officials there, and that troops had been called for. Franklin was less troubled by these excesses than he had been during the Stamp Act agitation. London was rioting too, over John Wilkes whom the king was determined to keep out of Parliament. Franklin wrote to John Ross on May 14, 1768:

Even this capital, the residence of the king, is now a daily scene of lawless riot and confusion. Mobs patrolling the streets at noonday, some knocking all down that will not roar for Wilkes and liberty. . . . This weakens our argument that a royal government would be better managed, and safer to live under, than that of a proprietary.⁴⁴

So that Galloway might know his feelings on this matter, Franklin wrote to him on this same day:

DEAR SIR:--I received your favor of March 31st. It is now, with the messages, in the hands of the minister, so that I cannot be more particular at

⁴⁴Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 132-134; Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 442-444.

present in answering it than to say I should have a melancholy prospect in going home to such public confusion, if I did not leave greater confusion behind me. The newspapers, and my letter of this day to Mr. Ross, will inform you of the miserable situation this country is in. While I am writing, a great mob of coal porters fills the street, carrying a wretch of their business upon poles, to be ducked and otherwise punished at their pleasure for working at the old wages. All respect to law and government seems to be lost among the common people, who are moreover continually inflamed by seditious scribblers, to trample on authority and every thing that used to keep them in order.⁴⁵

It could not have been pleasant for Galloway to read such a despairing commentary on Britain, for he was still very intent upon promoting a closer tie with England. Both he and Franklin could see the need for a revision in the governmental structure by which the colonies were presently being mismanaged. Franklin was too close to Parliament to believe deeply that this solution was obtainable, although he continued to work with that goal in mind. By contrast, Galloway was adamant in his own conclusion that royal government was both the answer and obtainable. He reminded Franklin that the instructions to the Pennsylvania agents made a request for change of government for the sixth time. Writing on October 17, 1768, he complained to Franklin:

It is truly discouraging to a people, who wish well to the mother country, and by their dutiful behaviour during these times of American confusion have recommended themselves to the crown, to have an application so

⁴⁵Bigelow, Works, IV, pp. 444-446; Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 134-136.

honorable and beneficial to the latter so much neglected. Would the ministry coolly attend to the matter, it would certainly be otherwise. However, I am convinced, should the people once despair of the change, either the greatest confusion, or the consequence you have pointed out, will assuredly ensue.⁴⁶

Franklin had said that should the petition for royal government be rejected or neglected again, the crown would never again have a like request made by the people.

Thomson was not interested in more parliamentary control. Recent legislation had shown him that Parliament was oblivious to basic liberties, and his energies were directed toward removing this ominous hand of taxation. Previously, he had been instrumental in bringing the merchants of Pennsylvania to concur with other colonies in a boycott of English goods during the Stamp Act crisis. The British merchants had felt the economic pinch and had petitioned successfully to the Parliament for repeal. In the crisis over the Townshend Duties, however, the movement for co-operation in nonintercourse with Boston and New York was devoid of any real vitality in Philadelphia until December 1767. Thomson and John Dickinson formed the leadership of the movement to arouse the passive merchants to opposition.

On December 2, 1767 a newspaper agitation was begun in a rather unpretentious manner, but which had far-reaching

⁴⁶Bigelow, Works, V, pp. 42-44.

effects. It was on that day that the first Letter from a Pennsylvania Farmer appeared. The letters appeared weekly until the twelfth and last, which was published in February, 1768.⁴⁷

Dickinson's aim was to show the danger of allowing any precedent of Parliamentary taxation to be established, for it was impossible to tell how far the precedent would be pushed.

Late in October, 1767, Boston voted to discontinue the use of British products and to encourage the use of American manufactures. The popular party of Philadelphia agreed with Boston, called a meeting, but was able only to return an expression of sympathy.⁴⁸ Early in 1768, the Pennsylvania Assembly instructed its agents to join with those from the other colonies to urge repeal of the obnoxious acts. Boston pled with Pennsylvania to fall in line on non-importation, by agreeing to suspend all trade with Britain for a year from December 31, 1768.

⁴⁷See the Pennsylvania Chronicle, December 2, 1767-February 17, 1768, and the Pennsylvania Gazette, December 3, 1767-February 18, 1768.

⁴⁸R. L. Brunhouse, "The Effect of the Townshend Acts in Pennsylvania," The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography, LIV (1930), p. 359; Paul L. Ford, The Writings of John Dickinson (Philadelphia: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, 1895), p. 409. Further reference to the Brunhouse article will be abbreviated to read: Brunhouse, Effect of Townshend Acts. Ford's book will be abbreviated to read: Ford, Writings of John Dickinson.

The Philadelphia merchants met at London Coffee House on March 26th. They debated heatedly, and came to no definite action. They merely urged that non-importation should extend only to the articles taxed, for they suspected that Boston would smuggle goods while other ports suffered by adhering to the agreement.

The Pennsylvania Gazette on March 31, 1768 printed the Circular Letter from Massachusetts. On May 10 it was laid before the Assembly. The next day the House adjourned until September 12th. On September 13th a letter from Virginia recommending a union of the colonies to combat the revenue acts was laid before the House. The House practically ignored it, "due to the influence of the Speaker, the powerful Quaker, Galloway."⁴⁹

The Gazette for March 31st also carried one of the speeches made at the merchant's meeting at London Coffee House. It was probably delivered by Thomson. In it he attacked those who opposed nonintercourse because of the discomfort it supposed:

If we do not exert ourselves now, when TAXED by Parliament under the exploded notion of VIRTUAL REPRESENTATION when shall we exert ourselves? Is there anything in the Name of the Stamp Act, that ought to make it more reasonable to oppose that, than to oppose this?

⁴⁹Brunhouse, Effect of Townshend Acts, p. 361.

I am clearly of the opinion, that the Fate of the late Act wholly depends on the Conduct of the Merchants in this City at this Crisis. . . .

Benjamin Franklin had parts of this speech reprinted in the London Gazetteer for May 18, 1768.⁵⁰

Late in April a meeting of merchants was again called to consider non-importation. Dickinson was solicited to use his influence to sway the merchants to agree not to import any goods after October 1, 1768. The only significant result of this meeting was a debate in the press between Galloway on the one hand, and Dickinson and Thomson on the other. This continued throughout the spring and summer of 1768.

Thomson renewed his attack against self-interest in the Gazette for May 12th. Under the pseudonym, "A Freeborn American," Thomson quoted the words of the "Pennsylvania Farmer" in saying, "a people is traveling fast to destruction when individuals consider their interests as distinct from those of the public." In the same article he urged the Philadelphia merchants to unite with Boston and New York as they had in 1765:

It is frequently urged and proved that we are NOW in a situation as bad as in the time of the Stamp Act. . . . If these things are evident . . . what contemptuous sentiments must we form of those who are calm spectators of their country's ruin? . . . Shall

⁵⁰Zimmerman, Charles Thomson, p. 472.

one immortal assembly stand alone, unbefriended, unseconded in the glorious cause of liberty? . . . Shall the unhappy divisions of one province obstruct the welfare of thousands? Shall the Farmer shine as almost the only monument of Philadelphia's public spirit? . . .

We urge you, we most ardently beseech you, join with New-York and Boston.

Galloway answered in an essay signed "A Chester County Farmer" and printed in the June 16th Gazette. He wrote that "A Freeborn American" must have been written by "some Boston Factor in your City." Galloway observed that the Philadelphia merchants "must have discovered some secret Intention in the New-England Scheme, that would be very disadvantageous to the Trade of this Province." He argued that, "When we discontinued our own manufactures upon repeal of the Stamp Act, many were thrown out of work and American made goods were left in surplus for lack of a buyer. I ask 'A Freeborn American' what guarantee we have that this will not happen again."

Thomson took up the challenge and replied with an essay signed "Martinus Scriblerus," and printed in the Gazette for July 21st. Charles wondered if "A Chester County Farmer" really believed that the late acts of Parliament had "a special design to encourage the trade of this province, and to defend us from the schemes of New England." He criticized the logic of his adversary who believed that "'our merchants must have discovered

some intentions of the New-England Scheme,' which the 'never executed,' would be disadvantageous to our trade, 'and tho' 'discovered,' are still 'secret.'"

"A. B." claimed to represent the merchants point of view in a set of queries in the Pennsylvania Chronicle, July 25th. The anonymous author, probably Joseph Galloway,⁵¹ questioned the wisdom of severing commercial connections with England except in dire necessity. He declared that all the wool in North America would not supply the colonists with hats and stockings alone. Had the merchants in their letters to England done all they could to induce the mercantile houses there to agitate for repeal? Was it consistent with the rights of mankind for one province to insist that another should adopt its measures, more especially for a people who call themselves "Sons of Liberty?"

In this same article, the following quote probably is most representative of Galloway's fears:

The Committee of Philadelphia Merchants now sitting should ask themselves: whenever any Contention or Controversy arises between Governors and Governed, whether the Legislature is not the proper Tribunal for the Determination of them; being a Body of men duly authorized, in a legal Capacity, to address, redress, hear and determine the Rights of the Subject and the Prerogative of the Crown; and whether Anarchy and Confusion will not ensue from the Adoption of other Measures?

⁵¹Kuntzleman, Joseph Galloway, pp. 74-75.

Another meeting was called for July 30th at the State House. Charles Thomson and John Dickinson were the principal speakers. The speeches are carried in the Pennsylvania Chronicle for August 1st. The result of the meeting was a recommendation to the Assembly to send petitions to the King and Parliament. Thus, Thomson and Dickinson had not yet been successful in getting Pennsylvania to join the colonial non-importation Agreement which Boston began in August, 1768.⁵²

It was not until November 1, 1768 that the merchants met and drew up a memorial to their London friends, pledging to adopt a non-importation agreement in the spring if Parliament had not acted to redress their complaints. Pressure from the mechanics and artificers forced the merchants to meet on February 6, 1769. They agreed to cancel all orders for fall goods unless they were shipped before March 1st. They agreed further to order no more goods unless they could be shipped before March 10th, by which time they expected to know definitely the answer to their memorial.⁵³

At long last, on March 10, 1769, the Philadelphia merchants agreed to suspend trade with England after April 1st,

⁵²Zimmerman, Charles Thomson, p. 473.

⁵³Ibid, p. 474.

on all goods except twenty-two very necessary articles. The merchants were driven to suspension of trade by boycotts and threats of mob violence.⁵⁴ Any violator of the agreement was to be stigmatized, "an enemy of the Liberties of America," and his name was to be published.⁵⁵

While Thomson was laboring for non-importation, Franklin was still campaigning for repeal of the Townshend Acts. A letter from Thomson, dated November 26, 1769, made clear his contempt for any taxation by England upon the colonies. He warned Franklin that England was forcing the colonies to resent the crown:

How much farther they may proceed is uncertain, but from what they have already done, the colonies see that their property is precarious and their liberty insecure. It is true the impositions already laid are not very grievous; but if the principle is established, and the authority by which they are laid admitted, there is no security for what remains. The very nature of freedom supposes that no tax can be levied upon a people without their consent given personally or by their representatives. It was not on account of the largeness of the sum demanded by Charles I that ship money was so odious to the commons of England. But because the principle upon which it was demanded left them nothing they could call their own. The continuation of this claim of the Parliament will certainly be productive of ill consequences, as it will tend to alienate the affections of the colonies from the mother country--already it has awakened a spirit of enquiry. The people by examining have gained a fuller knowledge of their rights and are become more attentive and watchful against encroachments

⁵⁴Ford, Writings of John Dickinson, pp. 435-436.

⁵⁵Brunhouse, Effect of Townshend Acts, p. 366.

of power, at the same time they are become more sensible to the resources they have among them for supplying their real wants. Resentment as well as necessity will drive them to improve them to the utmost, and from the genius of the people and the fertility of the soil, it is easy to foresee that in the course of a few years they will find at home an ample supply of all their wants. In the meantime their strength, power, and numbers are daily increasing, and as the property of land is parcelled out among the inhabitants and almost every farmer is a freeholder, the spirit of liberty will be kept awake and the love of freedom deeply rooted; and when strength and liberty combine it is easy to foresee that a people will not long submit to arbitrary sway.⁵⁶

Franklin circulated this letter among members of Parliament along with the accompanying Philadelphia merchants' letter. Both were printed at length in the London Chronicle March 3, 1770. The Thomson letter was reprinted in the Pennsylvania Gazette May 10, 1770.

The use of Thomson's letter in London, like all other efforts of Franklin and his colleagues, had failed to secure total repeal. The tax on tea remained. But even partial repeal in March precipitated a contest in the colonies over relaxing the non-importation agreement. Should trade be resumed in all articles except tea, or should the colonies maintain their austerity until all duties be removed?

Franklin's anonymous reply to Thomson, entitled "To an Unknown Correspondent in America," London March 18,

⁵⁶Harley, Charles Thomson, pp. 67-68 (Harley quoted it from Collections of the New York Historical Society for the Year 1878, p. 24).

1770,⁵⁷ was significant in answering this question. The month of May was filled with meetings of traders desiring some modification of the agreement, and an extract from this notable letter, omitting only the first two sentences and the final one, was widely circulated in America in that month. In it Franklin voiced a vigorous plea for holding fast to non-importation. He reasoned that,

In short, it appears to me, that if we do not now persist in this measure till it has had its full effect, it can never again be used on any future occasion with the least prospect of success, and that, if we do persist another year, we shall never afterwards have occasion to use it.⁵⁸

Another letter by Franklin, dated March 21, 1770, was sent to Joseph Galloway. It apparently said much the same thing. On May 15th Galloway laid the letter before the Assembly. The Philadelphia merchants notified the provinces to the east that letters and advice from London "have convinced the people of this city of the Necessity of adhering to their Non-Importation Agreement." On June 5th the general meeting in Philadelphia agreed to retain their policy of nonintercourse.

Galloway and Thomson both were willing to exhibit their correspondence with Franklin. In addition, Thomson

⁵⁷Smyth, Writings, V, pp. 251-254; Jared Sparks, A Collection of the Familiar Letters and Miscellaneous Papers of Benjamin Franklin (Boston, 1833), pp. 124-127.

⁵⁸Crane, Franklin's Letters to the Press, p. 210.

worked diligently to prepare the merchants for acceptance of the Franklin advices. When they declined support, he began rallying other forces. He aroused the new organization of tradesmen and mechanics, and stirred popular sentiment, two forces to which Franklin's prestige made a powerful appeal. Franklin now respectfully disagreed.

During 1770-1771, Franklin was corresponding with the tradesmen's committee of Philadelphia to whom Thomson had turned for support. Thomson had fought English taxation on two occasions in the colonies. Franklin had done the same in England. But Galloway refused to battle Parliament. He feared that disobedience or disrespect would bring menacing results. There is little doubt that by this time Galloway and Thomson were at odds with each other. The following note printed in the October 1-8, 1770 Pennsylvania Chronicle by its editor, William Goddard, is indicative of this:

On Saturday last a virulent Libel, signed IH against Joseph Parker, Esq; a Representative of this County, Mr. Charles Thomson, and myself was thrown into my House, by a person unknown. The author is mad because his friend, Mr. Galloway has lost his seat in the Assembly as a representative of this county. He says that Thomson laughs at the melancholy fall of "Americanus." . . .

Upon hearing that Thomas Gage had sent the Ministry a copy of Franklin's letter to Thomson, Galloway warned,

"Pray be careful in future what you write to that man, who is void of Principle of Value . . ."59

Galloway's warning to Franklin, regarding Thomson, only served to show Franklin how far apart they were becoming on international issues. Although he respected Galloway's ideas, Franklin now respectfully disagreed with them, and continued to rely on Charles Thomson for news assessing colonial thought. He wrote an essay which was published in the London Chronicle for November 8, 1770 and reprinted in the Pennsylvania Gazette for January 24, 1771. The emphasis in this piece upon continued support of non-importation by "the generality of the people in America" is an interesting reflection of Franklin's new accord with Thomson and the Philadelphia tradesmen's committee:

To the Printer of the London Chronicle.

SIR,
MUCH abuse has lately been thrown out against the Colonies. . . . The Fact is, that there is not, nor has been any Rebellion in America. If the rescue of a Seizure by Smugglers, or the Drubbing an Informer or low Custom-House Officer, were Rebellion, England, Scotland, and Ireland, might be said to be in Rebellion almost every Week in the Year, and Instances of that Kind are much fewer in America than here. . . .

The Americans love and honour the Name of Englishmen. . . . They think, however, and have always thought, that they themselves have alone the Right of granting their own Money, by their own Representatives in

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 211.

Assembly met, and that the Parliament of Britain hath no Right to raise a Revenue from them without their Consent.

The Parliament hath, nevertheless, of late made several attempts to raise such a Revenue among them.

Heretofore, whenever the Colonies thought themselves aggrieved by British Government, they applied for redress by humble Petition; and it was usual to receive and consider their Petitions, and give them a reasonable Answer.

They proceeded in the same Manner on the late Occasions. . . . Finding the Petitions of separate colonies were not attended to, they thought to give them more weight by petitioning jointly. The Petition of the Stamp Act congress was rejected on the Pretense that it was an illegal assembly with no right to protest. On the Occasion of the Duty Act the Assemblies corresponded with each other in order to send suitable Petitions. This time they were called a FLAGITIOUS Attempt,

It was then thought that to withhold our Commerce until our Grievances are redressed, would afford a Foundation for petitioning. Then our petition would be attended to, as they were on former Occasion, and meet with Success.

Writers against the colonists are doing great harm. They will be read in the Colonies where resentment will then grow. . . . Lenient measures by Britain will most likely heal the Wound effectually. For harsh Treatment may increase the Inflammation, make the Cure less practicable, and in Time bring on the Necessity of an Amputation; Death indeed to the fevered Limb, Weakness and Lemeness to the mutilated Body.

N.N.

Crane suggests that Franklin's new reputation might have had something to do with his appointment in October as agent in London for the Massachusetts House.⁶⁰ In any

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 211.

case, Lord Hillsborough aroused his ire by refusing to recognize his appointment until finally approved by Governor Hutchinson.

Unhappiness with the austerity program continued, however, until Thomson was finally pressured into calling the Committee of Merchants together on September 17, 1770. They met at Davenport's Tavern. Three carefully worded questions, all calling for no alteration in policy except in concert with the other provinces, were to be voted upon. The gathering presented a counter-list. These questions would restrict non-importation to tea and other dutied articles. They voted to consider the latter list first and approved it. The trial vote on the committee's question was an adverse 89-45. Unable to reconcile his views with the vast majority, Thomson announced that the agreement was broken and trade would be resumed as voted. He and ten others then announced their resignations.⁶¹

In summarizing the effects of the Townshend Acts, Franklin wrote despairingly:

I think one may clearly see in the system of customs to be exacted in America by act of Parliament, the seeds sown of a total disunion of the two countries. . . . The more the people are dissatisfied, the more rigor will be thought necessary; severe

⁶¹Pennsylvania Chronicle, September 24, 1770; Brunhouse, Effect of Townshend Acts, p. 373.

punishments will be inflicted to terrify; rights and privileges will be abolished; greater force will then be required to secure execution and submission; the expense will become enormous; it will then be thought proper, by fresh exactions, to make the people defray it; thence the British nation and government will become odious . . . war ensues, and the bloody struggle will end in absolute slavery to America, or ruin to Britain by the loss of her colonies; the latter most probable, from America's growing strength and magnitude.⁶²

With the resumption of trade a relative calm prevailed. Radicals busied themselves with the establishment of the important committees of correspondence, but they found it difficult to keep their flames of liberty burning, as the ports regained their activity. What they were unable to do, Lord North did for them with the Tea Act in May, 1773.

Galloway, in expressing his opinion on the Tea Act, found it both reasonable and beneficial because:

The consumer of tea in America was obliged to pay only one profit to the Company, another to the shop-keeper. But before the act, they usually paid a profit to the Company, to the London merchant, who bought it of the Company and sold it to the American merchant, and also to the American merchant, besides the profit to the retailer. So that, by this act, the consumer of this necessary and common article of subsistence was enabled to purchase it at one-half of its usual price.⁶³

There were those who disagreed with this argument. When news reached the colonies that the tea shipments had

⁶²Burlingame, Benjamin Franklin, p. 108.

⁶³Arthur M. Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution 1763-1776 (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1957), pp. 263-4. Further reference to this work will be abbreviated to read: Schlesinger, The Colonial Merchants.

started across the Atlantic, merchants grew excited with the prospect. They believed that their business was greatly jeopardized, whether they sold tea or not, by the awarding of a monopoly by the Parliament. Their chief object was to form combinations to prevent the landing of the tea. Though resolute opposition was in the air, Boston was guilty of violence beyond what most responsible leaders could condone. The destruction of property during the "Tea Party" in December, 1773, was irresponsible behavior. Franklin called it "an Act of violent Injustice on our part." He wrote at length to the Massachusetts Committee of Correspondence:

I am truly concern'd as I believe all considerate Men are with you, that there should seem to any a Necessity for carrying Matters to such Extremity, as in a Dispute about Publick Rights, to destroy private Property. . . . I cannot but wish & hope that before any compulsive Measures are thought of here, our General Court will have shewn a Disposition to repair the Damage and make Compensation to the Company.⁶⁴

The merchant class split over the violence of the Tea Party. They had been the primary opponent of Parliament and trade restrictions. Many now took their stand with the forces of government and were emphatic in their demands for law and order. However, the split was mended to a great extent by the severe punitive acts of Parliament that followed. Whereas mob destruction had antagonized many

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 300.

people, the enactment of these "Coercive Acts" tended to rebuild the forces that opposed Parliament. Franklin had written in February, 1774, denouncing the Boston Tea Party as an unjustifiable act of violence. He now wrote to his son William:

I do not so much as you wonder that the Massachusetts Assembly have not offered Payment for the Tea. . . . Parliament and the Ministry have extorted many Thousand Pounds from America unconstitutionally, under Colour of Acts of Parliament, and with an armed Force. Of this Money they ought to make Restitution. They might first have taken out Payment for the Tea, &c and returned the rest.⁶⁵

Charles Thomson must have shared those same sentiments.

In 1774 he was one of the most zealous Sons of Liberty in Philadelphia. Paul Revere arrived in the city on May 19, 1774 with a copy of the Boston resolutions. He also carried with him private letters addressed to Joseph Reed, Thomas Mifflin, and Charles Thomson. These letters were read at the Coffee House that same day. Thomson then maneuvered for a general meeting of the merchants to be held in the long room of the City Tavern on the next evening, May 20. Planned speeches were discussed by Thomson, Mifflin, and Reed. They successfully sought the aid of John Dickinson, who was popular with both conservative and liberal elements in the city.

⁶⁵Ibid., p. 310.

In the tense meeting that evening the letter from Boston was read. Reed then addressed the group with "temper, moderation, but in pathetic terms." Mifflin then spoke with more "fire and warmth." Thomson then "pressed for an immediate declaration in favor of Boston, and making common cause with her." So vehement and zealous in making his point was this "son of liberty" that he fainted and had to be carried into another room. After he had recovered he moved for a committee to be appointed to answer the Boston letter. A committee of nineteen was selected; it was dominated by the moderates. Their letter to Boston, dated May 21, 1774, reflected the cautious spirit of Philadelphia.⁶⁶

Other colonies began to make manifest their sympathy with Boston. Finally, in May 1774, Virginia invited all the colonies to meet at a congress to be held in Philadelphia in September with delegates from every colony. There the colonies could mutually act upon a problem they were becoming convinced was not solely Boston's concern.

Thomson then made a tour through the country, under the appearance of a summer trip with his wife, but in reality to better enlist the feelings of the back country people.

In July the Assembly of Pennsylvania resolved that "in consequence of the differences which have long sustained

⁶⁶There are many accounts of this meeting. See Harley, Charles Thomson, pp. 69-74; Stille, John Dickinson, pp. 340-351.

with Britain, and have greatly increased by late acts, it is absolutely necessary to hold a congress of deputies from all the colonies, and that a committee open correspondence to effect that object."⁶⁷

All the colonies but Georgia accepted the Virginia proposal. Franklin put off his return to America. "I have been advised by our friends," he wrote to Cushing on September 3, "to stay until the result of your congress should arrive . . ."⁶⁸

Galloway was not happy with Britain's policy toward the colonies. He continued to hold, however, that alleviation could and should come only through the traditional and legal channel of legislative memorials to Parliament. Efforts at popular control through extra-legal action were to him a species of anarchy. He had held himself aloof from popular movements, whatever their purpose, from the time of the Stamp Act until this time. Now, however, he was confronted with a popular movement of continental proportions. He was alarmed by the vigorous and unusual measures of Parliament against Boston. Thus, he was now willing to favor an inter-provincial congress if it should be composed of delegates

⁶⁷John F. Watson, Annals of Philadelphia, and Pennsylvania in the Olden Time, II (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Edwin S. Stuart, 1905), p. 326.

⁶⁸Van Doren, Benjamin Franklin, p. 485.

chosen by the members composing the popular branches of the several provincial legislatures. Galloway demanded and was given the privilege of drawing up the instructions for the Pennsylvania delegation and influencing the selection of its delegates. He successfully prevented Charles Thomson from being chosen to serve with this group. He was therefore both surprised and humiliated when the Congress voted Thomson to be its Secretary.

By participating in the congress, Galloway hoped to discourage radical behavior. The congress might be persuaded to formulate a plan of political union between the two countries. It could operate in such a manner that American rights and privileges could be secured by the mutual action of both the colonists and Britain.

John Adams' notes recorded at the September 28, 1774 session of the Congress quote Galloway as making the following statement while presenting his Plan of Union:

I am as much a friend of liberty as exists; and no man shall go further in point of fortune, or in point of blood, than the man who now addresses you. We want the aid and assistance and protection of the arm of the mother country. Protection and allegiance are reciprocal duties. Can we lay claim to the money and protection of Great Britain upon any principles of honor or conscience? Can we wish to become aliens to the mother state? We must come to terms with Great Britain. Some gentlemen are not for negotiation. I wish I could hear some reason against it. In every government, patriarchial, monarchial, aristocratical,

or democratical, there must be a supreme legislature. I know of no American constitution.⁶⁹

The defeat of his Plan erased Galloway's hopes for a peaceful reconciliation of differences with Britain. He concluded that the American colonists, by rejecting the idea of an international legislature and a written constitution, had invited disaster. Early in 1775 he wrote extensively showing that separation from Britain would be fateful. Independence could only mean ruin. "If England refuses it, she will ruin us. If she grants it, we shall ruin ourselves," argued Galloway.

When Franklin received a copy of the Galloway Plan he showed it to Chatham and Camden, but he put no trust in it. England and America were too far apart. Franklin wrote to Galloway on February 25, 1775:

I have not heard what objections were made to the plan in the Congress, nor would I make more than this one, that, when I consider the extreme corruption prevalent among all orders of men in this old, rotten state, and the glorious public virtues so predominant in our rising country, I cannot but apprehend more mischief than benefit from a closer union. I fear they will drag us after them in all the plundering wars which their desperate circumstances, injustice, and rapacity may prompt them to undertake; and their wide-wasting prodigality and profusion is a gulf that will swallow up every aid we may distress ourselves to afford them.⁷⁰

⁶⁹Moses C. Tyler, The Literary History of the American Revolution 1763-1783 (New York: The Knickerbocker Press, 1905), p. 372.

⁷⁰Bigelow, Works, VI, pp. 430-434; Smyth, Writings, VI, pp. 311-314.

Efforts at conciliation appeared fruitless to Franklin. He sailed for America on March 20, 1775. When he arrived at Philadelphia he heard of the bloody outbreaks at Lexington and Concord that had occurred while he was on the Atlantic. The next morning he was chosen by the Assembly to be one of its deputies to the Second Continental Congress, which was to meet in Philadelphia in four days. To pacify the moderates he supported the Petition to the King, giving Britain one opportunity more of recovering the friendship of the colonies. He remarked of the Petition, "I think she has not sense enough to embrace it, and so I conclude she has lost them forever."

Franklin did not visit with Galloway for five or six weeks. He tried to persuade his son to give up his post as governor, and Galloway to sit in the Continental Congress to which he had been nominated by the Pennsylvania Assembly. Finally, when the three had met one evening and talked and drunk till late, Franklin announced that he was for independence. His son and Galloway could not be persuaded by his arguments. William Franklin remained faithful to his office, and after a term in prison was president of the Associated Loyalists in New York. Galloway, after three complicated years in Pennsylvania, became the exiled spokesman of the American Loyalists in London. Although their political connections had been severed, Franklin remained a close enough friend

to Joseph Galloway that he deposited all his papers in Galloway's Bucks County house, Trevese, in October 1776 before sailing for France.⁷¹

Galloway wanted to protect both his political and economic interests with strong British support. He thus labored for an international legislature. Thomson regarded British royalty as a corrupting influence. Perhaps this letter to John Dickinson reveals his philosophy as it could not have been disclosed earlier:

Summerville, August 16, 1776

Dear Sir,-- . . . You and I have differed in sentiment with regard to the propriety of certain public measures, -- not so much about the measures themselves as the time, which you thought was not yet come. But from the prejudices that I find prevail, and the notions of honor, rank, and other courtly ideas so eagerly embraced, I am fully persuaded, had time been given for them to strike deep or root, it would have been extremely difficult to have prepared men's minds for the good seed of liberty . . .⁷²

In essence, this ten year period, 1764-1774, was focused primarily on international issues. Chief among these were taxation, representation, and reorganization of the British Empire. Galloway was the leader of Pennsylvania conservatism throughout the decade, and he was a loyalist during the American Revolutionary War. Since Franklin and

⁷¹Labaree, Papers of Benjamin Franklin, VII, p. 29.

⁷²Stille, John Dickinson, p. 210.

Thomson were patriots at the end of this period, they might be described as radicals. However, Franklin's position had fluctuated somewhat during this time.

The force inducing incompatibility into the Franklin-Galloway-Thomson relationship was the Stamp Act. In response to it, Thomson wrote with bitter contempt in a letter to Franklin dated July 11, 1765, and he worked continuously for repeal of the Act. Galloway called for acquiescence in the legislation, defining his position in his "Americanus" essay dated August 29, 1765. Franklin seemed to agree with Galloway. However, when he came to know the attitude of the colonists toward the measure, he worked diligently for repeal. His respect for the Ministry began a steady decline, and his ideas became increasingly homologous with those of Thomson. He relied upon Thomson letters in his newspaper campaigns for repeal of the Stamp Act, and later for repeal of the Townshend Duties.

Following the Stamp Act, Galloway and Thomson were bitter enemies. On the other hand, Franklin maintained a friendship toward Galloway, even though he was a patriot by 1774 and Galloway a loyalist.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

During the decade preceeding the Stamp Act, Franklin, Galloway, and Thomson found themselves in agreement on the basic issues of the day. In this period Galloway moved into politics and immediately became the protege of Franklin. Thomson, also as a result of his friendship with Franklin, gained his introduction into politics at about this same time. The three men successfully sought taxation of the proprietary lands. While Franklin was busy in England on this assignment, Galloway was holding his seat in the Assembly, replacing him on committees, and keeping him abreast of events in Pennsylvania through the mails.

Galloway was one of the Indian Commissioners at the same time that Charles Thomson was serving as secretary to Teedyuscung. In fact, it is probable that Galloway not only persuaded Teedyuscung to demand a secretary, but he could also have suggested Franklin's scholarly friend, Thomson. Thomson's information on proprietary dealings with the Indians helped Franklin cast doubt upon the honesty and integrity of the Penns. This was significant in the Ministry's decision to allow taxation of the Penn lands.

The Stamp Act was probably the dominant factor contributing to the dissipation of the Franklin-Galloway-Thomson harmony. Galloway was shaken by the riots and the mob successes in intimidating public officials. Also, he was certain that the Presbyterians were plotting for a separate American state. Being no friend of republicanism, he endeavored for the next decade to bring about an international legislature, and his final plan was much like Franklin's Albany Plan of 1754. Wanting also to insure the protection of private property, Galloway became the spokesman for Pennsylvania conservatism in the decade following the Stamp Act. No amount of evidence by Franklin could convince him that his plan was either impractical or unobtainable. Unable to compromise once the First Continental Congress had rejected his Plan of Union, Galloway refused to participate in the Second Congress.

Thomson considered the Stamp Act a precedent for taxation that was contrary to the rights of Englishmen. Colonial petitions had gone unheeded. He believed mass demonstrations and economic boycott to be the most effective methods of communicating colonial feelings to the Ministry. His energies were great enough to win him the nickname, "The Sam Adams of Philadelphia."

Franklin first accepted the Stamp Act as an inevitable, momentary discomfort. He was surprised at the reaction in the

colonies, and his reputation suffered greatly as a result of his acquiescence in the Act. He found that Thomson's letter of September 24, 1765 was an accurate measurement of colonial determination against the Stamp Act, and he preferred its logic to that of "Americanus."

When the Townshend Duties reopened hostilities, Franklin sought to avert a cataclysm. He called for colonial humility and tactful response. His own optimism diminished rapidly, however. Becoming thoroughly discouraged with Parliament, he conveyed his despair to both his son William and to Joseph Galloway in letters dated March 13, 1768. It was easy for him to share the views expressed in Thomson's letter of November 26, 1769, a letter which he circulated in London at the height of his campaign for repeal of the Townshend Duties.

Although Franklin had implanted the Galloway hope for an international legislature, in his March 13, 1768 letter to his son, he reasoned that, "such a union is not likely to take place." Galloway and Benjamin Franklin continued to remain friends, but no longer agreed on their political polemics after 1765. The break was begun when the Stamp Act shifted the focus from local to international problems.

A mutual contempt was developed between Galloway and Thomson, so that they were in bitter opposition following

the Stamp Act. This was climaxed by Galloway's success in excluding Thomson from the Pennsylvania delegation to the First Continental Congress. The Congress both shocked and humiliated Galloway by electing Thomson to serve as its Secretary.

When Franklin returned to Pennsylvania in 1775, he was unable to persuade either his son William or his friend Joseph Galloway from joining the British cause.

Thomson became the "perpetual Secretary" of the Continental Congress. Franklin traveled to Paris to seek foreign aid for the Americans. Galloway fled to England where he criticized the conduct of the war, and became the spokesman for the displaced loyalists.

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