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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES
DURING THE XVIII AND XIX CENTURIES

BY

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SPAIN

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES DURING THE XVIII
AND XIX CENTURIES

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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21 March 1990

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES DURING THE XVIII
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The attitude of Spain before the American Revolution and her relationship with the United States in the time close to its independence, is an item that has not been sufficiently studied and analyzed by historians. A piece of work as important as the Encyclopedia Britannica, in the chapter dedicated to the History of the United States in the volume #29 of the macropedia (pg #215), does not mention at all any kind of support from Spain to the American Revolution.

It is difficult to find history works that make any reference to Spain in relation with the American Revolution. As an exception, Isaac Asimov in his work The Birth of the United States 1763-1816, refers to the help of France, Spain and the Netherlands to the American insurrectionists, although he does not make a detailed explanation of it. Perhaps one of the best works about Spain and the United States in its first steps as an independent Republic, is Arthur Whitaker's The Spanish-American Frontier : 1783-1795, but this work, although it mentions the support of Spain, is focused on the problems that both countries had to face

as a result of the common borders and the attitude of Spain of closing the Mississippi to navigation except to her own ships.

While the French support to the independence of the United States had become a myth, the aid of Spain, that had not been so insignificant as supposed, was systematically ignored and underrated. Indeed, the intervention of Spain in favor of the fight of the Anglo American colonies for their independence was conditioned by the complex concerns of the Spanish government, the cautious relationship with the American emissaries and the hesitations before the difficulty of the political problem that set up the insurrection of the colonies and the aid they requested.

It is relatively easy to find a solution to a political problem if we make use of the perspective that the time can provide us, but for the politicians and men of state that lived those happenings and that were immersed in their circumstances of time and space the work was not so simple.

This essay attempts to analyze the help of Spain to the American colonies during the Revolutionary War and those events that will determine in a decisive way the relationship between Spain and the United States during the XIX century and its influence until the present.

CHAPTER II

EUROPE AND AMERICA DURING THE XVIII AND XIX CENTURIES.

At the beginning of the XVIII Century and after the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht that ended the war of Spanish Succession, in which the English captured Gibraltar (1704), the idea of an European equilibrium was consolidated. The purpose of that was to avoid the hegemony of a nation by opposing the rest, that would constitute alliances. However, and despite these efforts, war as a political phenomenon continued being inevitable.

The Treaty of Utrecht determined the turning point for some nations that had played an important role in the previous centuries, and that would occupy a secondary place in the next years. In fact this treaty imposed severe conditions on Spain, which lost her importance in Europe although her colonial empire would be the biggest and most coveted for almost two hundred years.

England, because of her naval and trade power, obtained an hegemonic position among the nations and would claim to be the moderator in the international equilibrium. France maintained her cultural influence and from a political and military point of view might be considered the most significant state.

At that time the colonies played an important role in the economies of the European countries. Therefore the acquisition or loss of them as a result of war represented an important issue. During a period of more than one century, France would confront England, her maritime and colonial competitor. Indeed, in the year 1688 the "Glorious Revolution" placed on the throne William III of Orange, Louis's most implacable enemy.

This began that Anglo-French contest that went on until Waterloo in 1815. It is significant to mention the Seven Years' War, a commercial-imperial conflict (1756-1763), that finished with the Peace of Paris. As a result, England took possession of Canada, all territory east of the Mississippi in North America and some islands in the Caribbean Sea. Spain lost Florida in exchange for Havana and Manila, which had been conquered by England during the war. France was thrown out of North America and she handed over the territory of Louisiana to Spain as compensation for the loss of Florida.

Until early in 1778 the War of Independence, also known as the American Revolution, was a civil war within the British Empire. Afterwards it became an international war as France in 1778, Spain in 1779, and the Netherlands in 1780 joined the colonies against Britain. The entrance of France into the war, followed by

Spain and the Netherlands was an important factor. Their role in keeping British naval forces tied down in Europe was significant.

The treaty of peace recognized American independence and placed the western boundary of the United States at the Mississippi.(Appendix 1)

The French Revolution, one of the greatest upheavals of modern history, affected the United States not only with the ideas of liberty, human rights and brothership, but also in the political aspect, as France claimed that the Franco-American alliance of 1778 bound the United States in the French war against England, Spain and other European nations. After an internal dispute President Washington issued a neutrality proclamation.

Under Napoleon, France continued to have designs on America. The secret Treaty of San Ildefonso, whereby France obtained Spanish Louisiana, was signed in October 1800. This vast Louisiana Territory would be purchased by the United States from France three years later in 1803. After the war of 1812, Florida would be acquired from Spain in 1819.

In 1808 began the independence movements in the Spanish colonies in Central and South America.Colombia obtained her independence in year 1813, Uruguay in 1814, Chile in 1816, Argentina in 1817,

and Mexico in 1823. By 1828 thirteen new states were created in America.

Between 1860 and 1865 took place in North America the War of Secession or Civil War, the greatest war on American soil in history, that ended with the victory of the north states over the confederation that would consolidate the Union.

At the end of the XIX century, from the immense American Spanish Empire, Spain only retained the islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico in America; In the Pacific Ocean some groups of islands and Philippines.

As a result of the Spanish -American War of 1898 Spain lost Cuba, and Puerto Rico. After her navy was defeated in Cuba, the United States forced the Spanish government to sell the Philippines for \$20,000,000 . The great Spanish Empire that began with the discovery of America in 1492 vanished after 400 years of existence.

This brief review of the most significant happenings in which the European powers with interest in North America were involved, brings us to analyze in detail the relationship between Spain and the Anglo-American colonies during the American Revolution in the following chapters.

CHAPTER III

THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND ITS CONCERN ABOUT THE UPRISING OF THE BRITISH COLONIES IN NORTH AMERICA.

Spain's recovery under the Bourbon King Carlos III, coinciding with the territorial and commercial expansion of England, led to numerous wars and incessant contention between the two powers throughout the 18th century. The American Revolution seemed to offer the Bourbon monarchies of France and Spain a providential opportunity to shatter England's power. The colonial war represented for England a continuous exhaustion of her forces and a warlike enterprise more difficult than expected.

In Spain, the uprising of the British colonies was estimated as a serious item as well as a potential menace for the integrity of her colonies in America. It was considered that if England would overcome the colonial war, the vast Spanish territory of Louisiana might be the first objective of her expansion. With regard to the rebellious colonies, no matter the result of the war, it was also estimated that these powers would cause troubles to Spain in the future.

The Spanish ambassador in Paris, Don Pedro Pablo Abarca de Bolea,

Count of Aranda, one of the most clever politicians at that time, was prophetic in his reflections about the uprising of British colonies and their impact on the Spanish ones.(Appendix 2)

In fact, he feared the bad example that such a revolutionary war could represent for the Spanish colonies and regretted that this problem occurred. But, facing the reality, he considered it to be of great interest for Spanish policy to assist the American colonies with money, weapons and ammunition, as well as sending some officers.

For the Count of Aranda it was necessary to take revenge of the extortionist policy that England had been carrying out against Spain. But how could that be done?. Would it be advantageous for Spain to continue with the secret help that had been provided til now?. Secret support did not have the efficiency of political recognition and would be reduced to nothing, as time passed.

The Count of Aranda proposed a pragmatic way whose purpose was to sign a treaty with the colonies in order to support them with all they needed. His objective was to obtain an agreement in the best conditions for the interests of Spain. Such an agreement with the colonies would confront undoubtedly with England. The question was whether it would be a good or bad choice to wage war against England in the political circumstances of the moment.

An analysis of the social, economic, political and military factors gave as a result that France and Spain could defeat England in a hypothetical but probable confrontation.

One of the considerations that might have decided Spain to declare war on England was the elementary precaution of not having two different enemies in the same territory: England and her American colonies. If the colonies got their independence without having agreed to a treaty with Spain, they could threaten Spanish territory in North America sooner or later. In spite of these reflections, the Spanish government presided by its Prime Minister Grimaldi considered that to declare an offensive war on England could be disadvantageous to Spain because of the uncertain result of the war in America. England had enough troops in America to defeat the rebels. On the other hand, there was a possibility that a change in the policy of England toward her colonies would obtain a successful agreement with them. Consequently it was estimated that it could be more advantageous for both, Spain and the American colonies, to continue the support in a secretive way. (Appendix 3)

A final point to consider was that the Spanish King Carlos III would object to sign a formal treaty with people considered rebels. This is the kind of recommendation King Carlos III was

receiving from his advisors at the time: "The rights of the Sovereigns are too sacrosanct in their territories and it is too risky the example of a revolution for his Majesty to support it openly".

The previous considerations can explain why the Spanish policy was so confusing at that time, and why open support never was given to the American colonies. From the perspective of time we can appraise that such a policy was erroneous.

CHAPTER IV

THE AMERICAN EMISSARIES TO SPAIN

The relationship between the American emissaries and the Spanish government took place for the first time in Paris. In fact, by decision of the Congress in June 1776, a committee comprising Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Benjamin Harrison and Robert Morris was given the mission of preparing a plan to deal with European nations. Once approved, Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee sailed to Europe and arrived in Paris in December 1776.

The Spanish ambassador in France, Count of Aranda, had the opportunity of receiving Franklin and talking with him. During these meetings, Franklin expressed the necessity that they had to convince Carlos III to protect the American colonies in their fight against England (Appendices 4,5). In the report sent to the Prime Minister Grimaldi, the Count of Aranda expressed that it would be urgent to sign a treaty with the colonies in order to help them openly and strongly in their fight against England. The Spanish government considered this theme of great importance for the interests of Spain and decided:

- Not to sign a treaty with the colonies
- To continue supporting them secretly

-To make preparations for a possible war against England.

During the meetings held in Paris between the American emissaries and the Spanish ambassador they also expressed the wish of visiting Spain, because there were some particular items that ought to be proposed directly to the Spanish government. For this purpose Lee traveled to Spain. Nevertheless the Spanish government would prevent him from arriving in Madrid, because there was a great fear that the British ambassador would know that American emissaries were establishing contacts with the Spanish government.

The Spanish ex prime Minister Grimaldi received Lee in Burgos, where the latter handed him a memorandum (Appendices 6,7) in which he offered special friendship and trade relations to Spain and asked for financial support. Arthur Lee commented that the help that was being provided in a secretive way by France and Spain, might not produce the same effect if be given openly. For the American colonies it was significant that Spain and France recognize internationally their fight against England. The new Spanish Prime Minister, Count of Floridablanca, promised Arthur Lee that the American colonies would obtain a more important support from Spain in the future. At the same time, the Count of

Aranda, was instructed to facilitate some financial credits from the Netherlands. The American emissaries were warned to not reveal the origin of this support: in other words, the American would not know the origin of the help that was being provided by Spain. (Appendices 8,9).

After the visit of Lee to Spain, Franklin was appointed by the Congress to carry out talks in Spain, but the Spanish government managed to convince him not to come to Spain, adducing the same reasons that had advised the inconvenience of Arthur Lee's visit to Madrid.

Because of the interest that Spain had in the fight between the American colonies and England, the Spanish government sent to that territory, as emissary, Don Juan Miralles, a business man from Havana. He was not an official representative of the Spanish government because of the secrecy that Spain dealt with the affairs in North America. He was only an observer before the Congress. During his stay in North America, General Washington maintained cordial relationship with Miralles and expressed to him the fervent desire that Carlos III would recognize the United States as an independent nation. Miralles died of an illness in Morristown, where General Washington had established his Headquarter. The relationship with the American Congress was

followed by Don Francisco Rendon, who also maintained excellent friendship with George Washington. Indeed, as the General, his wife and children arrived in Philadelphia with other officers to spend sometime and did not find adequate lodging, Don Francisco Rendon had the honor to provide room to Washington and his family in his own house.

The last American emissary to Spain was John Jay, who had been President of the Congress. He arrived in Cadiz on 22 January 1780, to replace Arthur Lee. When Jay and his secretary William Carmichael arrived in Spain, they were received by a Spanish personage named Don Diego de Gardoqui who not only had charge of financial arrangements with them, but also discussed purely diplomatic questions. Don Diego de Gardoqui found his way into diplomacy through the trademan's entrance. The Bilbao firm of which he was a member had traded with American colonies for a full generation before the Revolution. He was actually the screen behind which the Spanish government furnished arms and clothing to the rebellious colonies of England when Spain was still ostensibly a neutral power.(Appendix 10).

The purpose of John Jay was to convince Spain to adhere to the French-American colonies agreement, since France and the colonies had signed a treaty on 6 February 1778 in which there was a

secret article that established that Spain could adhere to it by inserting the variations considered necessary.(Appendices 11,12,13,14,15,16).

John Jay stayed in Spain for almost two years, during which he obtained some financial support but did not succeed in his plans completely. When Jay abruptly departed from Madrid in May 1782, he broke off his negotiations with the Spanish Government.

The Count of Aranda was instructed to renew conversations with Jay in Paris. Actually, the occasion for establishing close and friendly relationship with the United States would be lost for ever.

CHAPTER V

THE SUPPORT OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT TO THE AMERICAN COLONIES

The previous chapters are an attempt to provide us with the framework in which the support of Spain to the American colonies should be accomplished. The Spanish government, as well as the French, were favorable to helping the American insurgents, but there were some obstacles, especially from the Spanish point of view, to carry out openly such help. First it was important not to give a bad example to the Spanish colonies. Secondly, although it was considered that a war against England was inevitable, France and Spain did not want to provoke it, as they wanted to have the advantage of declaring war at the most propitious moment. Doubt, uncertainty and secrecy were the elements that influenced the decisions of Spain in order to help the American colonies.

An evidence of the support of Spain to the Americans was the letter that George Morgan, Cavalry Coronel and Commander of Fort Pitt sent to the Spanish Governor in New Orleans D. Bernardo de Galvez, in which he thanked him for the help in ammunitions and other war materiel that had been delivered to the American commissioner.

It is important to emphasize the secretive way in which this support was made. Few people knew something about this theme. Among them were D.Diego de Gardoqui and Baron de Beaumarchais, the author of the opera " The Barber of Sevilla" and " The marriage of Figaro", who had been introduced to the ambassador of Spain Count of Aranda, by the French Prime Minister Mr. Vergennes, as a man of trust through whom the insurgents could be supplied.

Besides the direct support delivered to the American colonies, there was also an indirect way, perhaps much more important than the first one, of helping them: it was the permanent threat from France and Spain to England that prevented her from employing all her power in the war against the American colonies. This aspect had a decisive influence in the result of the war. But undoubtedly the most important contribution of Spain to the independence of the American colonies was the declaration of war made by Spain against England in 1779. Although Spain did not send an expeditionary Army to fight England in America, the fact of declaring war under the difficult circumstances that England was facing divided her power and prevented her from accumulating it against the insurgents in North America.

After the declaration of war, the Governor of Louisiana, Don

Bernardo de Galvez conquered the English harbors on the Mississippi as well as the city of Pensacola, by which the Gulf of Mexico was free of the English. Together with the American insurgents, Spain carried out some war actions in order to prevent the English from using the communications with the Great Lakes in the interior of North America.

At the end of the year 1776 France and Spain had provided two million pounds (one million each country) to the English colonies (Appendices 17,18,19,20). As first consignment were sent:

- 216 cannon barrels of bronze
- 209 carriages for canons
- 27 mortars
- 29 carriages for mortars
- 12,826 bombs
- 51,134 bullets
- 300 "millares"(1) of powder
- 30,000 shotguns with bayonets
- 4,000 tents
- 30,000 uniforms.

This armament and ammunition was loaded in various harbors and it was allotted among several ships in order to assure the arrival of part of it. The consignments were organized as if they were

(1) Unknown quantity

sent by the American emissaries in Europe and not by France or Spain. This way the secrecy of the origin would be maintained.

The Spanish government supported the American colonies during the years 1777 and 1778 with a total amount of 7,994,906 "reales"(2). As a result of a request made by the American emissaries, there were sent 30,000 blankets (Appendix 21). From the Spanish colonies in Havana and New Orleans were provided some weapons, clothes, quinine and various amounts of currency.

At that time, the Spanish Governor of Louisiana, delivered some amounts of money to Oliver Pollock and Captain Willing, that had been designated by the Congress to receive the help from Spain. The support that Spain provided, although less important than the French one, was also significant. We cannot forget that the policies of the allied powers French and Spain were directed to weaken England, and consequently as a result ought to be congruent. It is an unbelievable historic error and an unjust treatment to ignore or underrate the support of Spain to the American colonies in their war against England.

(2) Real: Spanish currency in XVIII century

CHAPTER VI

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPAIN AND THE UNITED STATES FROM ITS INDEPENDENCE UNTIL THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR.

After the break of the negotiations between the American emissaries and the Spanish government, the Prime Minister Count of Floridablanca endeavored to continue negotiating with the United States as a means to create a buffer between Spain's colonies and the American territories. The results were poor. English diplomacy had signed treaties with both Spain and the United States, but with different tints and secret articles with regard to the lines that the borders would follow and the navigation of the Mississippi.

This created a basis for a possible confrontation between Spain and the United States. The Spanish policy that prohibited the navigation of the Mississippi to all ships except the Spanish also contributed to getting things worse because this condition was difficult for the new North American republic to accept. It is important to realize that the river was the only natural way for trade from the interior of the United States. Spain had allowed the American settlers to use it during the Revolutionary War, but she was obliged to ban the use of the Mississippi

because the contraband trade that had been carried out in the previous years damaged her economy and trade.

Besides the previous considerations it is also necessary to take into account the rapidly growing American settlements in the Ohio Valley that was cause of deep concern to the Spanish government . All these circumstances influenced the policy of Spain regarding the United States.

When Carlos III died in 1788, he was succeeded by Carlos IV, a simple-minded man, who reigned during one of the most difficult periods of Spain's history. The fact is that Spain, as a result of the French Revolution, found herself involved in European wars for the next twenty years. The Prime Minister Floridablanca tried to obtain an alliance with England, the ancient enemy, in order to fight against the French Republic, but was supplanted by Manuel Godoy in 1792. With that the alliance was pressed to an early conclusion. This alliance, although directed primarily against France, also provided that if either power were drawn into war, the other contracting party must make common cause against the new enemy. Thus if British restrictions on neutral trade with France should result in war between Great Britain and the United States, Spain would be obliged under this treaty to come to the aid of the British. The relationship between the

United States and Spain could worsen at any moment.

The difficult situation inside Spain had a disastrous effect on her colonies in North America, first and foremost in Louisiana and the Floridas and secondly in Central and South America.

The lack of Spanish authority facilitated the economic penetration of the United States in those territories, an aspect that Spain had attempted to avoid in the previous years. At that time the settlements at the border with Louisiana and Florida were about to implement expeditions against the Spanish territories.

The Treaty of San Lorenzo, whereby Spain surrendered her dispute with the United States, was signed on October 27, 1795 and it marked the beginning of the disintegration of the Spanish Empire as well as the first stage in the territorial expansion of the new Republic. An abrupt change in Spanish policy was carried out by Prime Minister Godoy as he made peace with France, deserted England by violating the Treaty of 1793, and signed a new treaty with the French Republic.

The internal situation in Spain was deteriorating dramatically. The inept king Carlos IV and the incompetence of his Prime Minister Manuel Godoy put Spain in the hands of Napoleon in 1808. Indeed, on 2 May 1808 began the war against France as a result of

the uprising of the Spanish people against the French invader. The nineteenth century marked the lowest point in the decadence of Spain and the beginning of the desintegration of the Spanish Empire that was impossible to maintain united because of the absence of power in the motherland. The century ended with the Spanish-American war and the loss of the final territories of the Spanish empire.

The year 1898 ought to be written in black in the history of Spain. Since 1868 an independentist party began to fight against the Spanish presence in Cuba. But it was considered simply insurgents that were managed by foreign countries. It was supposed that Cuba was different from the other parts of South America, which at that time had obtained their independence, because its population was predominantly composed of Spaniards. But the independence of Cuba had to occur in the very moment that the insurgents obtained support from another country. Cuba was situated inside the zone of influence of the United States and very close to Florida. The accident in the Maine and the blindness of the Spanish politicians resulted in a catastrophe for Spain.

The Spanish Congress, sunk in a collective madness and ignoring the reality, sent the Spanish fleet to combat against the

Americans. Only the professional military, among them the Admiral Cervera, Commander in Chief of the Spanish fleet knew-and so he informed the government-that the confrontation with the American Fleet was a suicide for the Spanish navy because the ships were old and lacked of technical capacity to combat against a modern navy. The Peace of Paris endorsed the defeat of Spain and the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico and Philippines. The next year, Spain sold to Germany the Carolines and Palaos islands in the Pacific Ocean. The Spanish Empire did not exist any more.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

The previous chapters are an attempt to establish a framework that enables us to understand better the relationship between Spain and the United States. That Spain helped the American colonies in their fight against England is a fact that we consider that has been sufficiently demonstrated in the analysis made in this work. Nevertheless that support was carried out in such a way that the Americans did not realize that Spain had contributed to their independence. As a matter of fact, the Americans never believed that they would have, in a way, a debt of gratitude to Spain.

In the political circumstances Spain faced in the eighteenth century, there were two possibilities:

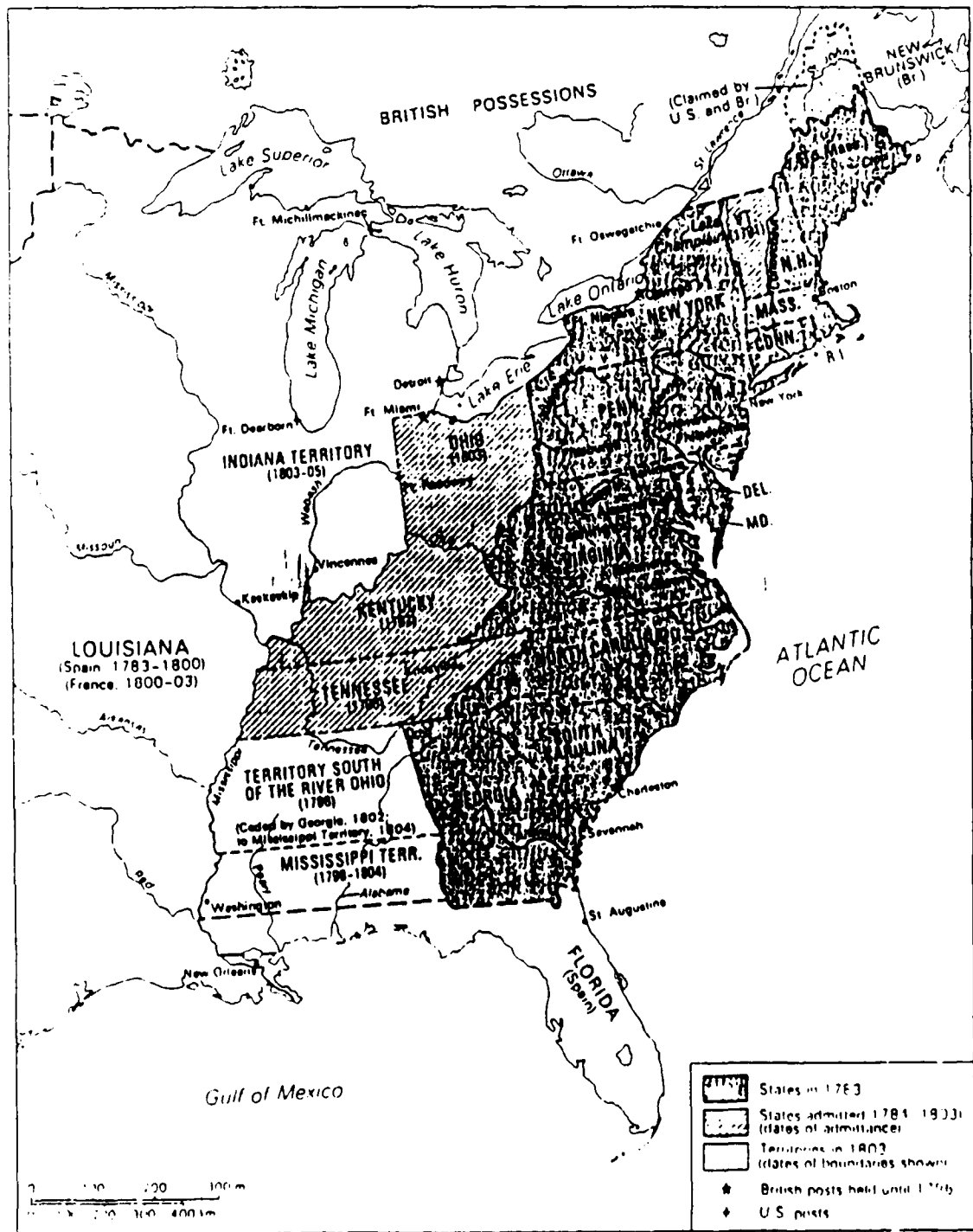
- a) to help England fight against the American insurgents.
- b) to help the colonies fight against England.

The first solution was almost impossible because of the anglophobia that existed in Spain and the alliance with France as a result of the Bourbon family pacts. The right solution, in

accordance with the circumstances, should have been to help the American colonies in their fight against England openly and strongly, such as Count of Aranda had proposed. In this way Spain would have obtained the gratitude of the American people. But the Spanish government did not take a determined policy toward the colonies and failed absolutely. Spain declared war against England and did not help the American colonies in a sufficient way.

The policy Spain carried out toward the new republic after her independence was short-sighted and poorly realistic. The lack of politicians able to face the difficult circumstances that the world lived during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries conducted Spain to the loss of her colonial empire and to internal struggle. Actually, Spain only began to recover after the second half of the twentieth century and in part because of the help the United States provided her after the signing of the first agreement between both countries in 1953. The relationship between both countries after 1953 has developed in a climate of friendship and cooperation (Appendix 22).

At present Spain and the United States are allies that have to face very important changes in the economic, social and political aspects throughout the world.



The United States, 1783-1803

Despacho de Aranda a Grimaldi. — 13 Enero 1777
(N.º 939. Original)

Excmo. Sr.

Mui Sr. mío: A consecuencia del Oficio antecedente diré a V. E., que viendo no se me explicaba el Dr. Franklin, no obstante su promesa, le hice entender que desearía hablarle, y, efectivamente, vino acompañado de Arthur Lee la noche del sábado 4 del corriente.

Por la dificultad de entendernos me pareció, que sería mui del caso valerme del Conde de Lacy, Ministro Plenipotenciario del Rey en la Corte de Petersbourg, y alojado en mi casa, quien posee la lengua inglesa; para que aclarase a Franklin, y Lee la inteligencia de los puntos que se tocasen, si no los concebían bien, y a mí igualmente por la explicación de ellos.

«Pregunté al Dr. Franklin, cuándo entregaría el papel de proposición para la España, respecto a que había proporción de dirigirlo».

Respondió que lo tenía ya formado, faltando solo el confrontar su copia, y haberse retardado, por haber estado algo indispuerto Mr. Dean.

«Si dicho papel contenía alguna cosa diferente del entregado a la Francia».

Respondió que no, y ser idéntico, como también conforme a las órdenes que tenía del Congreso.

«Si no había alguna diferencia precisamente, atendiendo a que la posición de los dominios de España, y sus nombres siempre exigían un contexto que había de variar del de la Francia».

Respondió, que estaba autorizado del Congreso, para tratar con cada una de las Cortes según sus intereses, y con plenos poderes para quanto ocurriese.

«Cómo es que sin hallarse aún asegurados de su independencia, y sin estar tampoco aún reconocidos por estas potencias, venían proponiendo Tratados, quando todo el mundo creía que la venida del Dr. Franklin se dirigía más presto a solicitar auxilios, que los ayudasen hasta conseguir su separación».

Respondió, que por medio de semejante Tratado verían la Potencia que quisiese ser su Amiga de veras; y que hasta haberse asegurado de esta calidad, no habían creído conveniente entrar en el punto de necesidad, tanto más que su situación aún no era tal que necesitase inmediatamente auxilios directos.

«Si era cierto que habían recibido ya socorros de este Reyno; y si había partido el Amphitrite; y si otros dos bastimentos que debían seguirle, lo hacían, o se suspendían».

Respondió; que de esta Potencia no habían recibido socorros algunos; que por medio de una Compañía se les habían provisto diferentes géneros, armas y municiones; que también se habían recibido oficiales a su servicio; y que en todo esto no había hecho la Francia otra cosa, sino el no oponerse, y dejar libertad de practicarlo: que el Amphitrite había salido, y creía haberse suspendido la salida de los otros dos buques.

«Quáles serían los auxilios, que más les urgían en la actualidad».

Respondió que cañones de bronce y buques de guerra, respecto a que los bastimentos que tenían hasta ahora, eran inferiores en fuerza a los ingleses; y bien que eran muchos sus armadores, y habían hecho cantidad de presas hasta el importe de millón y medio de libras Sterlinas según cómputo hecho en el mismo Londres; como no podían presentarse a las naves de Guerra inglesas, siempre era una inferioridad que necesitaban reparar; tanto más que los Ingleses con sus muchas naves de guerra y las de transporte cubiertas de ellas, estaban en estado de llevar sus tropas, y víveres a cualquiera parte de aquel Continente.

«Por qué no hacia de una vez para la Corte de Madrid todas las explicaciones que tubiese que hacerle, respecto a que por la distancia no había la proporción de manifestarlas de un día a otro, como se podía practicar en Versailles, sabiendo desde luego también sus respuestas».

Respondió que en esta consideración entregaría otro papel, que contendría quanto se le había indicado; que si convenía que uno de sus Compañeros diputados pasase a Madrid, lo haría desde luego.

A esto le dije, que el hacerlo o no era libre en ellos; pero que no se adelantaría tanto, porque entre sí tendrían que entenderse por los Correos ordinarios; y la Corte de Madrid en qualquiera proposición que recibiese, querría consultarla con la de Paris, siendo mejor hacer aquí las explicaciones, porque ya se comunicarían a Madrid con el dictamen de esta Corte, y le repetí, que si lo querían, que se propondría a Madrid. Hicieron ambos con este motivo muchas demostraciones de respeto acia el Rey Cathólico, y que su principal fin era el de convencer que de su parte anhelaban su protección.

«Si hacían algún Comercio con los Dominios Españoles de América».

Respondieron que antes, estando bajo la dominación Británica, hacían alguno por la parte de la Jamayca, pero que en este tiempo no lo practicaban.

«Si tenían muchos Oficiales extranjeros.»

Respondió que el mayor número era de Franceses, algunos Alemanes, y un Polaco; que al principio habían pasado algunos desde Sto. Domingo, y otros transferidos desde los puertos de Francia; habiendo tenido el pensamiento de levantar 3 Regimientos en el Canadá, pero inutilizándose por haberlo ocupado los Ingleses. Que mantenían dichos oficiales asalariados bien que sin emplearlos.

«Si no entraría la mala inteligencia en los miembros del Congreso».

Respondió muy sucintamente que no.

Para abrirles un poco el ánimo, y que no extrañasen las cuestiones que se les había hecho, les dije, que se dirigían a tomar una luz del estado en que se hallaban; y que reciprocamente podían preguntar lo que les pareciese, pues en lo que yo pudiese corresponderles, se les diría con franqueza, como también si no me hallase en estudio de contextarles.

Entonces me preguntaron, si tenía probabilidad que la Rusia acordase un Cuerpo de tropas a la Inglaterra contra los Americanos, en tono de hacerles mucha impresión este recelo; y les dije, que las noticias públicas de Gazeta habían hablado de ello, pero que nada más se sabía.

Expusieron que el Congreso había enviado a Cadiz seis cargamentos de su cuenta dirigidos a la casa Inglesa de Buick y Compañía, la cual se resistía a sus pagos; siendo este caudal urgente, porque el Congreso lo había destinado para hacer en Francia las compras que necesitaba; y preguntaron, qué medio había de conseguir de dicha Casa tan justa satisfacción, respecto a que se negaba a toda contextación sobre este asunto.

Les dije si sería acaso una especie de represalia como Casa Inglesa, por descubiertos que otros negociantes de las Islas Británicas tendrían con los Americanos; y a esto respondieron, que no podía ser, pues la correspondencia de los particulares nunca se había cortado, antes bien vigilado el Congreso en que se mantubiese con toda exactitud; de tal modo que en su propio bastimento habían venido varios letras de cambio para el Comercio de Londres. Se les explicó, pues, que el modo de solicitar el cobro de la casa Buick, sería el presentarse un particular con los conocimientos de su deuda, y poderes necesarios, pidiendo ante el Tribunal que correspondiese, el pago de lo que se les debiese; y que en este caso se podría buscar un apoyo de la autoridad, para que se les administrase justicia sin demora.

El martes 7 en la Conferencia ordinaria de Embajadores me preguntó el Sr. Devergennes si me había entregado Franklin sus papeles; le respondí, que aún no, bien que habiéndolo visto la noche del 4 me había ofrecido lo haría en breve; diciendo a S. E. lo substancial de los discursos que habíamos tenido, le parecieron muy propios: quedamos en que apenas me los pasasen, si estaban en Inglés, se encargaría S. E. de hacerlos traducir, en lo que convine muy gustoso, pues de todos modos yo se los había de comunicar.

El miércoles 8 por la noche recibí los papeles del Dr. Franklin, que él mismo me trajo, acompañado de Lee, y en la propia los remití al Sr. Conde Devergennes, quien los recibió en la mañana del jueves para su traducción; y estos se reducen al acto de Confederación, y a la Memoria concerniente a su estado actual, que van inclusos.

El viernes 10 pasé a Versailles; me dijo S. E. que se estaba haciendo la versión, y me dió copia de la proposición posterior de Franklin, pidiendo a la Francia que se les facilitasen buques de guerra a su coste, como verá

V. E. por la del n.º 1: y por la del n.º 2 la respuesta de S. M. Christianísima, ofreciéndoles otros socorros secretos. Me dijo M. Devergenes que esta respuesta se les haría leer a Franklin, Dean, y Lee por su primer Commis. M. Gerard, dejándoles tomar una substancia de ella, para que nunca resultase documento demostrable. Que el Rey había concedido dos millones de libras tornesas con las cuales podrían hacer el giro de seis en las compras necesarias, mediante las reglas del Comercio, y los muchos Negociantes que tomarían parte en proveer a los Americanos de lo que necesitasen. También me dijo, que el Amphitrite, que había arribado a los puertos de Francia por malos tiempos, habiendo padecido en ellos, volvería a partir, y que los otros dos bastimentos suspendidos en el Havre se harían igualmente a la vela, bien que se tomaban disposiciones, para que todo se executase con más disimulo que hasta aquí.

Proponen los Americanos solamente la buena amistad y Comercio recíproco; pero, si es suficiente para la Francia, no sería adaptable a la España, sin limitar que se entienda sólo, y estrechamente con su Reyno en Europa; porque si la concesión se extendiese también a sus dominios de América, quedaría perdido el Comercio Nacional. De esta reflexión bien es creíble, que las provincias Unidas Americanas se hiciesen cargo, contentándose con reducir su correspondencia, y tráfico a la España Europea, y si reconviniesen con solicitar su acceso a nuestras Islas, como lo tendrían en las de Francia, se les podría oponer que las nuestras ligan con aquel Continente, de cuyas reglas son inseparables, quando los Franceses nada tienen en él, y sus Islas se consideran totalmente unidas a estos Reynos, aunque situadas en aquellas partes. Claman también por otros particulares, que les serían conducentes para afianzar el buen éxito de su resistencia, y la Francia se presta por los términos que considera posibles, como uno y otro resulta de los papeles anexos.

Pero dejaré aparte todos estos accidentes auxiliares de las Colonias para su independencia, y voy a exponer al Rey el aspecto presente de su Monarquía, y el de sus intereses sucesivos.

Quatro Potencias Europeas dominaban el Continente de América, la Española, en lo que posee; la Francia, en el Canadá que perdió; la Inglesa, en las Colonias Septentrionales que se le han separado, y el Portugal, en su Brasil, que lo ha duplicado insensiblemente con usurpaciones a la España.

Mientras durase esta división, las miras de la España se debían dirigir a la conservación de lo suyo, procurando el equilibrio de los otros competidores, y aun valiéndose indiferentemente de cada uno de ellos para contener al que se desmandase: pero ya muda el systema, ya son indispensables otras reflexiones políticas.

La España, va a quedar mano a mano, con otra Potencia sola en todo lo que es Tierra firme de la América Septentrional? Y que Potencia? Una estable y territorial que ya ha invocado el nombre patricio de América con dos millones y medio de habitantes descendientes de Europeos, que según las reglas que toman para su propagación, duplicará sus vivientes cada 25. o 30

años y en 50. u 60. puede llegar a ocho u diez millones de ellos, mayormente que de Europa misma continuará la emigración por el atractivo, que ofrecerán las leyes de aquel nuevo dominio.

Para la conservación de sus propias posesiones de América, a fin de distraherlas del ejemplo de las Colonias Inglesas desauciadas de su apoyo, y a fin de impedir a éstas el socorrerlas, importa a la España el asegurarse de aquel nuevo dominio por medio de un tratado solemne, y cogiéndolo en el momento de sus urgencias con el mérito de sacarlo de ellas.

Si antes del levantamiento de las Colonias hubiese sido de la elección de la España, el que sucediese o no; habria habido, sin duda, poderosas razones para dudarlo; porque en fin es cuestionable la diferencia de tener por vecino un Estado consistente en propiedad, o que solo fuesen Provincias de una Corona distante; un Estado que si aumentaba como Colonia lo haría con mayor lentitud; y desprendido del vasallaje, y entregado a su progreso va a multiplicar rápidamente los medios de auge.

Pero de nada sirven estas consideraciones para el día, ni tampoco es tan grande la diferencia del teatro para la España, porque habiendo quedado sólo la Inglaterra en la América septentrional, y uniendo sus posibilidades de Europa con las que iba preparando en América; si bien se reflexiona, tal vez se deduciria que menos contrarrestos pudiera presentar la España en aquellos parajes de los que aora puede proporcionar, si se resolviese a consumir un plano reflexionado, atando bien todos los cabos que ofrece la presente ocasión.

Ya pues, que no tiene otro recurso, el evitar la insurrección, sino el deseo de que la Inglaterra consiguiese su abatimiento triunfando completamente de sus rebeldes, y que el remedio seria peor que la enfermedad, pues la Corona Británica quedaria indomable, y para siempre jamás mucho más temible que nunca a la España; véase, si en este contraste de circunstancias cupiera un medio menos nocivo, que precaviese los dominios de España en América, y pusiese de mejor semblante su consistencia en Europa.

Parece que aun la necesidad exige ya el asegurar con la nueva Potencia de América el reconocimiento de las antiguas propias posesiones; el único para una garantía reciproca, y el formar por un Tratado solemne las reglas de buena correspondencia para lo sucesivo; y si esto se difiriese a quando hubiese salido de sus aprietos, ni su voluntad estaria tan bien dispuesta, ni sus urgencias servirian de apoyo para sacar mejor partido.

Si alguno ha de conseguirse ventajoso, no ha de ser por los medios ocultos de auxilios secretos, e insuficientes, porque ni sirven de gran mérito, ni ponen en el caso de atraer la otra parte a una Convención seria y formal; el tiempo se pasaria en buenas razones, y nada se habria asegurado de importante.

El entrar desde luego a un declarado apoyo para el logro de la independencia, quando su suerte vacila aún, y está a la vista de los enormes esfuerzos que la Inglaterra hará evitarla; seria el medio de pactar lo que se

quisiese con las Colonias. Esta verdad es innegable, y sólo resta que discutir si el romper con la Inglaterra sería o no un desacierto; y si las consecuencias podrían volverse en mal, creyendo adquirir un bien. Para romper, la primera consideración debe ser la de calcular la resistencia del enemigo, y las fuerzas propias y aliadas que se le podrían oponer.

La Inglaterra en el día está reducida a un tercio de sus naturales antiguas fuerzas por un cálculo innegable.

Las Colonias daban a su Marina de guerra el tercio de sus tripulaciones: yo he oído al Dr. Franklin que ascendían de 25. a 30. mil hombres los marineros americanos, que en las precedentes guerras servían en las Escuadras Británicas. Desde la sublevación ya no subsiste este tercio, conque desde luego lo tiene menos la Inglaterra, y ha quedado con solos otros dos.

El tercio distraído, habiendo tomado las armas, tiene empleado contra sí uno de los remanentes a lo menos; con que resulta un solo tercio que conceder a la Inglaterra, en estado de disponer a su arbitrio.

Se sabe, que para armar los 45 navios, y número de fragatas, que quiere tener en estado, no alcanzan las mayores violencias de la leva, ni los buenos enganchamientos que ha ofrecido; a más fuerte razón no cabe, que alcance a tripular sesenta navios, y fragatas correspondientes que se le quisiesen acordar, por no incurrir en la reconvencción de que se le minoren a la Inglaterra sus fuerzas estudiosamente, por apoyar la idea sobre un supuesto voluntario.

Si a esta reducción se añade lo demás, que padece en sus intereses, desguarneciendo el Comercio Marítimo para completar su armamento, el descaecimiento de sus artes, y fábricas por la interrupción con las Colonias; los impuestos y gravámenes exigidos para atender a los indispensables gastos corrientes; el incremento de su deuda Nacional, y en fin el ahogo en que cada día se sufoca más destruyendo el interior y exterior de sus Reynos; se habrá de convenir que real y físicamente se halla la Inglaterra en la actualidad, al punto que se ha supuesto.

Las fuerzas propias, y aliadas que se le podrían oponer, consisten en 80. navios de línea, y fragatas a proporción, según las explicaciones de las Cortes de Madrid, y Paris, con que véase desde luego la superioridad considerable que resulta; siendo constante que estas fuerzas son efectivas, y las que se conceden a la Inglaterra tienen mucho de gracia e imaginario.

En este aspecto las consecuencias humanamente no deben volverse en mal, sino en bien.

Una de las grandes precauciones de la España parece, que sería, la de precaver el no quedarse con dos enemigos naturales en estado ambos de turbarla; y lo serían sin duda las Colonias de América, no habiendo asegurado desde luego su buena correspondencia; y la Inglaterra en restableciéndose de su empresa de América, aunque disminuida en un tercio.

Si la España obtuviese el destruir la Inglaterra, para que no levantase más la cabeza, conseguiría el tener de menos uno de los dos eneemigos; y

tanto habría ganado para en adelante, y sus intereses de Europa, quedándose mano a mano con el de América, si se revolviere.

Pero todo esto depende de una misma operación, que sería la de declarar la guerra a la Inglaterra abiertamente; ofreciendo a las Colonias el ejecutarlo, si mediante un tratado favorable se presentasen a merecerlo. Ellas sin duda lo aceptarían, por abreviar su establecimiento, por aliviarse de sus trabajos, por no arriesgar su suerte; y se obligarían a continuar en apoyo de sus aliados, hasta que por todos se conviniese en una paz general.

Esta guerra declarada no necesita de la mayor actividad, ni de aventurar acciones; pues su conducta, como se dirá, causaría el total efecto que se desea.

Desde luego el plano que ha propuesto la Francia como precaución, para en caso de ser insultada, sería quanto se necesita con leves variaciones en su reparto, con la sola circunstancia de verificar la declaración de la guerra.

Por ella se verían los Ingleses en el caso de disminuir sus esfuerzos contra los Insurgentes, y éstos en el de resistirles, y aniquilarlos.

Por ella quedaría el Comercio de las Islas Británicas totalmente destruído, pues no podrían continuar el que les ha quedado; y ésta sería una batalla decisiva para batir las posibilidades, sin que precediesen combates aventurados.

Por ella se aumentarían los gastos, que desubstancian a la Inglaterra.

Por ella tendrían sus flotas que consumirse, si salían a la mar; quedándose las de España y Francia en sus puertos, aguardando las ocasiones.

Por ella se dividirían en diferentes objetos, y Esquadras, no pudiendo ser tan numerosas las que proveyesen 60. navíos, cubriendo varios destinos, como las que podrían componer 80. con la elección de ir a caer en mayor fuerza sobre aquellas, dirigiéndose a las que pareciesen más atacables.

Por ella el Corso de España, Francia y Americanos sería superior con extremo, al que pudiesen dar de sí las Islas Británicas, con la suma ventaja de sus posiciones para salir, y refugiarse los armadores.

Por ella se había de encender en la misma Inglaterra una disensión civil, que enervase sus esfuerzos, y que obligase su Ministerio a rescatar su total ruina con el sacrificio de algunas pérdidas aunque le fuesen sensibles.

Por ella se vería comprometida la Inglaterra en el momento de peor disposición, que haya tenido desde que se abrogó el predominio Marítimo; pues la sufriría pasivamente con menos fuerzas y con enemigos que nunca encontró en mejor estado.

La España no puede olvidar un Gibraltar, un Mahón, y su pérdida sería para la Inglaterra uno de los mayores golpes; y un sacrificio inexcusable por el derecho con que se les pediría, y porque el restituir una usurpación, los salvaría de su mayor ruina. La Francia tomaría igual parte que la España en procurar este desmembramiento de la Inglaterra; y tanto quanto resiste otras ideas de la España sobre Portugal, sería su parcial respecto al reintegro de dichos puntos.

La Francia no puede menos de conocer que tanto le conviene ahora romper con los Ingleses, como a la España; porque la Corona Británica es su

mayor enemigo natural; porque si no lo abate, lo tendrá encima siempre que su Comercio florezca, o quiera restablecer su Marina; y siempre que por las indispensables circunstancias de la Francia se halle empeñada con otras Potencias del Continente; aprovechando entonces la Inglaterra de la ocasión para atropellarla. La afrentosa sugestión de Dunkerque tampoco se redime, sino en ocasión semejante; de modo que la Francia debiera en todo tiempo temer a la Inglaterra, si no rematase aora el cortarle las alas para siempre.

El tratado propuesto por los Americanos, que esta Corte remitió por su Correo últimamente, está concebido con mucha arte, y tiene sus observaciones que hacer.

Proponen amistad, y Comercio, como si fuesen ya una Potencia consolidada. Al artículo 7 sólo ofrecen a la Francia en caso de guerra con la Inglaterra, el no asistir a ésta de hombres, dinero, navíos, etc., y al 8 exigen la renuncia de quantas posesiones pudiese pretender por sus derechos antiguos, según se expresan en él, conviniendo en la pesca de Terranova.

En este mismo mezclan a la Florida, que sólo puede tocar a la España; y está firmado su original por Hankoc, el Presidente del Congreso, de modo que sus emisarios no han hecho más que comunicar el traslado de su original.

Observará V. E. que no remito la separada proposición para España, bien que me la ofreció Franklin; pero no me la ha traído aún, y en su vista del 8, quando entregó los otros papeles, me indicó si podría dispensarlo, respecto a tener ya un tanto por esta Corte, y hallarse ellos agobiados sin personas de quien fiarse, y Mr. Dean con tercianas, como en efecto las tiene, pues por un conocido suyo le embié de la buena quina con que me hallo.

Estoy instruido por conducto, que me parece confidente de ellos, de quien no se guardan escrupulosamente, de que no quiso el Congreso entrar pidiendo con humillación, ni manifestar extremas necesidades, por no recibir una ley dura, que temió se les impondría, y se ve que en la Memoria última, pidiendo navíos, también ofrecen su satisfacción, y nada quieren de valde.

Los actos de unión manifiestan bien las miras con que se han resuelto a formar un Estado libre, y que su objeto es radicarlo para florecer en cultivos, artes, y Comercio; que su systema es pacífico, y consiguiente al modo de pensar de sus autores, que los más son Quakers de religión. Esta observación es importante para deducir que cualquiera medio que les abrevie su tranquilidad, y el poner mano a la obra de su systema, será bien recibido de las Colonias, y por él se prestarán a quanto les sea arbitrable.

De aquí nace también, que la España debería fijar sus límites, para evitar cuestiones en lo sucesivo; y porque no los tenía arreglados con los Ingleses, tierra adentro, y a la espalda de las Colonias, si no se precaviese esto, con lo que ellas irán aumentando de población, y extendiéndose a voluntad, se podrán internar hacia nuestras posesiones por la espalda de la Luisiana.

Hay que tener presente que el río San Lorenzo por el Canadá sube hasta el lago Ontario, y éste comunica con el lago Erie o Oswego. Que cerca de éste nace el río Ohio que cae en el Mississipi y por él baja a la Nueva Orleans.

Que el lago Erie comunica con el lago Huron, y éste con los otros llamados Superior y Michigan; más allá de los cuales viene corriendo el Mississippi.

No entro en determinar cuales límites convendrían, pues me reduzco a exponer que unos u otros son importantes; que la constitución de aquel país, tan cruzado de ríos y lagos, será muy apreciable a un pueblo que aumentará a pérdida de vista por la libertad y buen tratamiento de sus leyes, como por el cultivo, artes y Comercio en que fundará su felicidad; y deduciré que el conseguir de dichas Provincias Unidas un Tratado favorable, dependerá de sacarlas a cara descubierta de su aprieto, y valerse de esta ocasión, para convenir con ellas.

Por el rompimiento con Inglaterra en el Tratado formal con las Colonias, a más de lo dicho, se conseguiría la reintegración de la Florida, cuya adquisición hizo Inglaterra en la última paz, ya por el derecho que la España tiene a ella para en todo tiempo, y no la disputarian ahora las Colonias, pero sí después, como conquista sobre un otro, ya porque dicha Provincia aún no forme una de las de confederaciones, ya porque es importantísimo que aquel nuevo dominio no cargue con aquella posición, que es la que forma precisamente el Canal de Bahama, y llega hasta el río Mississippi y a las puertas de la Nueva-Orleans, con el célebre puerto de Panzacola en lo interior del Seno Mexicano. Ciertamente la España no necesita de extensiones, pues las que tiene la gravan más que la utilizan; pero en el caso presente sería nocivo el perder la ocasión de volver a sí el uso del Canal de Bahama por ambas costas, y el dejar introducir en el Seno Mexicano aquella Potencia estable.

También pudiera la España sacar partido en la pesca de Terreneuve, y asegurar algún pedazo de su costa para su peculiar uso.

Si la Francia quisiese volver a la posesión del Canadá, lo conseguiría actualmente sin réplica de las Colonias, por el mero hecho de su alianza y rompimiento con Inglaterra, y fuera lo que conviniera a la España, por que las Colonias Unidas de América quedarían sujetas por los dos lados: y habría un contrarresto recíproco entre España y Francia, siempre que ellas se demandasen; a más que en tal caso de reponerse la Francia en sus antiguos dominios, sería también más natural y sólida la garantía mutua de las dos Potencias con la nueva.

Esta idea bien la ha tenido la Francia, y aun la de formar del mismo Canadá otra República, según participé a V. E. en mi número 853, de 10. de Octubre. Si ahora se distrahe de ella, será por la nueva que ha formado de que su Comercio sin otras atenciones es la mayor ventaja que le puede resultar de la separación de las Colonias; pero sea como fuere, la Florida siempre convendría rescatarla.

De una cosa se habian de persuadir la España y Francia, y es de que los Ingleses no volverán a sus Islas vencedores o batidos de los Americanos, sin aprovechar sobre su camino de las fuerzas y armamentos que tienen sobre aquellos mares. He dicho sobre ello a V. E. repetidas veces en mis

anteriores los recelos casi evidentes con que debemos aguardarlo, y así escuso su repetición.

En América, los motivos expresados para con las Colonias; en Europa un Gibraltar y Mahón; unos tratados de Comercio existentes gravosos al de la España, y la utilidad que habria en formarlos de nuevo con otra equidad; un reducir la Inglaterra, quando está más ahogada que nunca, a que jamás levantara cabeza; un buen estado de Marina en que se hallan las dos Coronas Bourbonas; un método de rompimiento, que sin acciones aventuradas, darían el fruto deseable de la guerra con la Corona Británica en esta ocasión, son las razones con que resumo el exponer a S. M. que este punto mereceria su alta reflexión, y oír con un maduro examen el sentir de sus sabios Ministros, para la más acrisolada resolución.

De la Memoria de la Francia diré también, que juzgo, que aunque indecisa, quisiera ella misma que el Rey Cathólico la impeliese, y puedo opinar así según he percibido en parte del Ministerio que lo desea. Creo firmemente que como no se trata de Portugal, que ha sido siempre la piedra de toque y sólo de la Inglaterra, cuyo abatimiento importa tanto a la Francia, procederá ésta con vigor y buena fe en declarándose: y creo que todo pende de la resolución del Rey N. S., y de los términos con que se dirigiese esta obra.

Dios guarde a V. E. ms. as.=París 13 de Enero de 1777.=Excmo. Señor, B. L. M. de V. E.^a su seg.^o servidor, El Conde de Aranda.=Excmo. Señor Marqués de Grimaldi.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Dictamen de Grimaldi. — 1.º Febrero 1777. (Original)

El Pardo 1.º de Febrero de 1777.

Dictamen sobre las proposiciones del Doctor Franklin y otros Diputados de las Colonias, con atención a lo que representa el embajador Conde de Aranda sobre este importante asunto, manifestando su opinión para que sin pérdida de Tiempo se proceda a formalizar un Tratado con los Colonos, para con esto auxillarles después abiertamente y con vigor, a fin de que se puedan mantener y lograr la independencia de la Inglaterra, quedándose estado libre y Republicano.

La determinación que tomaron las dos Cortes en este punto, si fuese conforme a la demanda y solicitud de los Diputados de las Colonias, y a lo que opina el Conde de Aranda; No hay duda que sería lo mismo que una Guerra desde luego con la *inglaterra*.

Pero habiéndose tratado entre los dos ministerios de *Madrid* y *Versailles*, el punto de si convenia anticiparnos, a la Guerra, o esperar más adelante a ver el semblante de las cosas, no obstante el fundado rezelo, de que la *inglaterra* nos la declare quando la convenga; y habiendo quedado por parte de la *España* pendiente su Dictamen, de las noticias y aberiguaciones de las posibilidades de la *Francia* para poder sostener por algunos años una Guerra con *inglaterra*, lo que se recomendó también al citado embajador del Rey de procurar las noticias más veridicas, como asimismo las disposiciones de los ánimos del *Cristianísimo* y de los individuos que componen su consejo, y esto en Carta de (1) cuya respuesta y aberiguación no ha venido; Parece que faltando unos conozimientos tan necesarios y importantes para el azierto de la resolución del Rey; esta sola circunstancia bastaría para decidir que no conviene por ahora entrar descubiertamente en las proposiciones de los Diputados de las Colonias, ni adoptar el dictamen del Conde de Aranda.

Pero no obstante se juzga conveniente examinar las citadas proposiciones de los Diputados, aun independientemente de la consideración Capital expuesta.

Según las últimas noticias se sabe que los Insurgentes se defienden mal, que no resisten en ninguna parte a las Tropas del ejército Ingles; Que han abandonado puestos importantes bien fortificados con cantidad de viveres y municiones de Guerra; que las Armas Británicas han recuperado provincias enteras, las que han prestado ya la obediencia; que este desmembramiento del Cuerpo Unido de las Colonias, deve por necesidad disminuir su número de defensores, y los medios para mantener y continuar la Guerra; y lo peor de todo; que con estos malos sucesos se han abatido los ánimos y que se introduzia la división división [sic], y la desconfianza, aun entre los principales Promotores de la Sublevación.

Con estos antecedentes, qué seguridad havria con un Cuerpo vacilante, que aun sin estas últimas circunstancias no se podía como bien consistente, para tratar con él; empeñarnos descubiertamente, y de cuyo paso resultaria sin la menor duda, un suceso tan grave como la Guerra desde luego con la *inglaterra*, punto que no han decidido aun los dos soberanos.

Pero dado que se pudiera contar sobre la unión y consistencia desta nueva Nación; No havria fundados motivos para creer, que siendo su objeto presente y unico, el lograr la Independencia, si ésta viniese conzedida por la *inglaterra*; No se prestarían las Colonias Unidas, con preferencia a cualquier acomodo que la propusiese la *inglaterra*, más que a cumplir lo que hubiesen contratado con nosotros?; y desconsoladas por la Guerra, sin medios, y sin estar bien arraigada aún su constitución de Gobierno, de qué Utilidad podrían sernos estas Provincias unidas, aunque no se vinculasen con la *inglaterra*? Se ve en sus proposiciones, las que bien manifiestan su de-

(1) Blanco en el documento.

signio de engancharnos a la Guerra, que ellos mismos no se juzgan en estado de podernos auxiliar, pues sólo ofrezan la neutralidad.

No es del caso examinar las pocas ventajas para las dos Coronas que presentan las dichas proposiciones de los Colonos hasta excluir la recuperación de lo que éstas han perdido en la última Guerra, pues no se duda, que si las poderosas razones expuestas arriba, no disuadiesen absolutamente de pensar en formar tratado con las Colonias unidas; Bien se prestarían éstas a cualquiera condición o cesión que desearan los dos Soberanos, a trueque de empeñarlos en la Guerra, en la cual se puede temer que fundan ahora sus solas esperanzas, después de los malos sucesos que han sufrido para salir de algún modo del empeño en que se hallan.

No parece, pues, que convenga tomar otro partido con las Colonias actualmente que el que se ha adoptado por la Francia; esto es, de entretenerla en la esperanza que cabe se decidan las dos Cortes a la guerra con *Inglaterra*, o que el acaso la induzca, y socorrerlas bajo mano y con sigilo de lo que necesitan para continuar a defenderse. (1)

Quando no bastasen las razones expuestas para persuadir que sería imprudente e inoportuno el formar tratado con las Colonias en el momento presente, añadiría peso para esta determinación del Rey el saber que el Ministerio de la Francia piensa del mismo modo, según lo ha comunicado su Embajador, refiriéndonos todas las reflexiones de su Corte sobre este punto, con las cuales prueba que de ningún modo se deve tratar a cara descubierta con las Colonias.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Credencial de Franklin. — 2 Enero 1777.

The Delegates of The United States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. To all who shall see these presents send Greeting.

Whereas a friendly and commercial connection, between the subjects of his Most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, and the people of these States, well be beneficial to both Nations. Know ye therefore, that We confiding in the Prudence and Integrity of Benjamin Franklin, one of the Delegates in Congress from the state of Pennsylvania and a Commissioner from these United States to the Court of France have appointed and deputed, and by these Presents do appoint and depute, him, the said Benjamin Franklin, full power to communicate, treat and conclude with This most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, or with such Person or Persons, as shall be by him for that purpose authorized, of and upon, a true and sincere friendship and a firm inviolable and universal Peace, for the Defence, Protection and Safety of the Navigation and mutual commerce of the Subjects of this most Catholic Majesty and the People of the United States, and also to enter into, and agree upon a Treaty with his most Catholic Majesty or such Person or Persons as shall be by him authorized for that purpose, for assistance in Carrying on the present War between Great Britain and the United States, and to do all other things which may conduce to those desireable ends, and promising in good Faith, to ratify whatsoever our said Commissioner shall transact in the Premises. Provided always that the said Benjamin Franklin shall continue to be possessed of all the Powers, heretofore given him as a Commissioner at the Court of France from these States so long as he shall remain in and be Present at the said Court.

Done in Congress at Baltimore the second day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven.

In testimony whereof the President by order of the said Congress hath hereunto subscribed his name and affixed his seal.=Singed, Jonh Hancock President.=Attest Charles Thomson, Secretary.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Carta de Franklin a Aranda. — 7 Abril 1777. (Original) (1)

Passy April 7, 1777.

Sir.

I left in your Excellency's Hands, to be communicated, if you please, to your Court, a Duplicate of the Commission from the Congress, appointing me to go to Spain as their Minister Plenipotentiary. But as I understand that the Receiving such a Minister is not at present thought convenient, and I am sure the Congress would have nothing done that might incommode in the least a Court they so much respect, I shall therefore postpone that journey, till circumstances may make it more suitable. And in the mean time, I beg leave to lay before his Catholic Majesty, through the Hands of your Excellency, the Propositions contained in a Resolution of Congress, dated Dec. 30 1776, videlicet:

«His Excellency the Comte d'Aranda. That if his Catholic Majesty will join with the United States in a War against Great Britain, they will assist in reducing to the Possession of Spain the Town et Harbour of Pensacola, provided the Inhabitants of the United States shall have the free Navigation of the Missisipi, and the Use of the Harbour of Pensacola; and they will (provided it shall be truth that the King of Portugal has insultingly expelled the Vessels of these States from his Ports or has confiscated any such Vessels) declare War against the said King, if that Measure shall be agreeable to and supported by the Courts of Spain and France.»

It is understood that the tightest Union subsists between those two Courts; and in case they should think fit to attempt the Conquest of the English Sugar Islands, the Congress have farther propos'd to furnish Provisions to the amount of two Millions of Dollars, and to join their Fleet with 6 Frigates of not less than 24 Guns each, manned and fitted for Service; and to render any other assistance which may be in their Power, as becomes good Allies, without desiring for themselves the Possession of any of the said Islands.

These Propositions are subject to Discussion and to receive such Modifications as may be found proper.

With great Respect, I have the Honour to be

Your Excellency's most obedient and most humble Servant, B. Franklin.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 386)

Credencial de Arthur Lee. — 5 Junio 1777. (Copia)

The Delegates of The United States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pensylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. To all who shall see these presents send Greeting.

Whereas a friendly and commercial connection, between the subjects of his Most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, and the people of these States, well be beneficial to both Nations. Know ye therefore, that We confiding in the Prudence and Integrity of Arthur Lee Esquire of Virginia have appointed and deputed, and by these Presents do appoint and depute, him the said Arthur Lee, full power to communicate, treat and conclude with This most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, or with such Person or Persons, as shall be by him for that purpose authorized, of and upon, a true and sincere friendship and a firm inviolable and universal Peace, for the Defence, Protection and Safety of the Navigation and mutual commerce of the Subjects of this most Catholic Majesty and the People of the United States, and also to enter into, and agree upon a Treaty with his most Catholic Majesty or such Person or Persons as shall be by him authorized for that purpose, for assistance in Carrying on the present War between Great Britain and the United States, and to do all other thing which may conduce to those desirable ends, and promising in good Faith, to ratify whatsoever our said Commissioner shall transact in the Premises. Provided always that the said Arthur Lee Esquire shall continue to be possessed of all the Powers, heretofore given him as a Commissioner at the Cour of France from these States so long as he shall remain in and be Present at the said Court.

Done in Congress at Philadelphi the flfth day of June in te year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and seventy seven.

In testimony whereof the President by order of the said Congress hath hereunto subscribed his name and affixed his seal. =Signed, Jonh Hancock President. =Attest Charles Thomson, Secretary.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Memorial de Lee a la Corte española.—4 Marzo 1777. (Original)

No parece que el actual estado de la contienda entre la Gran Bretaña y la América se ha entendido tan perfectamente, que no sea necesaria una clara representación de él.

La América se declaró ya por Estado independiente, y en dos campañas consecutivas ha repellido los esfuerzos de la Gran Bretaña para reducirla. Sin que en esta resistencia haya sido hasta ahora asistida; de modo que su infancia y desprevenida situación se han compensado por su ardor, su indignación y entusiasmo.

Pero la Gran Bretaña duplica ahora sus esfuerzos, y está resuelta a que la inmediata campaña decida el hado de la América. En estas circunstancias llega la América a ofrecer la amistad y su comercio (del que ha privado a la Gran Bretaña) a España y Francia. El valor de esta oferta debe reputarse doblado, por quanto se le priva de él a aquel rival y insolente enemigo que le hubiera de tener. Por lo que se debe suponer que este es un objeto de la primera magnitud, y digno (en el grado más alto) de la atención de ambas Cortes. Se debe asimismo creer que España y Francia no desean que la Gran Bretaña prevalezca en la actual contienda, ni el que consiga ganar a la América por conquista o reconciliación, en cuyo concepto se sigue que la única cuestión del día es la siguiente.

Si es política más sabia el que los dos Soberanos acepten la propuesta alianza, declarándose inmediatamente, o esperen el evento de la campaña siguiente.

Para juzgarla, es necesario considerar cuál podría ser aquel. Como la Gran Bretaña está resuelta a hacer su mayor esfuerzo, debemos creer que el evento más probable será o la reducción de América, o un acomodo fundado sobre un mutuo convencimiento de sus fuerzas recíprocas, porque viéndose la América desesperada por la falta de una buena asistencia desde Europa, apresuraría su acomodo. Es constante que la neutralidad de España y Francia dexa a la Gran Bretaña el campo abierto para obrar con toda su fuerza, y para que resulten dichos eventos; qualquiera de los cuales serán en gran manera perjudiciales a ambas naciones y ventaxosos a su enemigo. Si la Gran Bretaña conquistase la América, será en su mano un poderoso instrumento, para menearlo a su voluntad contra dichas naciones; y que éste no quedará sin ejercicio por mucho tiempo nadie lo debe dudar, si conoce que la corte de la Gran Bretaña se halla bien informada de que a lo menos se ha mirado con alguna protección a aquello, que la llama o titula la más peligrosa rebelión, así como no ignora el que la cabeza de aquella Corte es de un temperamento que jamás lo olvida ni perdona. Si se verificase la reunión por acomodo, se perderán las mismas ventaxas y se deben temer las mismas consecuencias, por cuya razón no puede el fin de la campaña con toda probabilidad prometer momento tan favorable para la efectiva ynterposición de España y Francia que el actual, y toda humana congetura la haría infructuosa.

A la verdad, qué tiempo podrá proporcionarse más favorable que el presente, en que la Gran Bretaña se ve tan sumamente oprimida por las que alguna vez fueron sus Colonias, que la ballanza entre ambas se mira dudosa, ni tampoco debe dudarse que el aditamento de España o Francia, y mucho

menos de ambas, haría que la América preponderase y se separase de la Inglaterra para siempre; con qué podrá haber objeto más precioso que privarla de esta grande y crecedera fuente de su mercantil riqueza, su marina y sus Dominios. La corte Británica está tan persuadida de que la pérdida de la América sería un efecto ynevitable de una guerra Europea, que a nada teme más, de modo que no hay hombre en aquella nación que no lo conosca, y es por esto que el Rey se ve precisado en todas sus Arengas a asegurar al Parlamento la tranquilidad de Europa, para de esta suerte animarlos a mantener su guerra con la América, por esto mismo ha trabajado tanto para impedir el rompimiento entre España y Portugal, habiendo por último renunciado a éste. Débese suponer fixamente que la Gran Bretaña tolerará qualquier cosa hasta el punto de un cruel y abierto acto de hostilidad, por no empeñarse en una guerra con Estado alguno de Europa, mientras dure su contienda con la América. Durante la última guerra proveió la América de doce mil marineros y veinte mil hombres de tropa, de los quales se ve oy privada la Gran Bretaña, y son oy éstos triplicados enemigos contra ella. El comercio de la América (según lo declaró el Sr. Pitt que fué quien conduxo la última guerra) fué el que la hizo triunfar en ella, y el todo de aquel comercio se mira oy contra la Gran Bretaña. En América se proveían para todas las expediciones contra las islas de España y Francia, y desde ella podría aora ynvadirse felizmente sus propias islas, y, en una palabra podría batirse a la Gran Bretaña con todas aquellas ventaxas que en la última guerra la llenaron de felicidades, porque ¿qué pudiera acontecer que la libertase de experimentar el amargo rebés de su fortuna?. ¿Qué política puede impedir a los dos Soberanos, cuya prosperidad es yncompatible con el poder de aquella, para malograr una oportunidad como esta de humillarla, quando, si se pierde, puede no bolverla a tener jamás?. Si la Gran Bretaña consigue por otra vez reesforzarse con la América, bien sea por conquista o acomodo, será en vano amenazarla con la guerra, porque como a la América hasta aora sólo se la ha contemplado como a Hércules en la cuna, la Gran Bretaña, unida de nuevo con un poder tan crecedero, reinará sobre su aborrecido, y será el irresistible árbitro de Europa. Este, pues, es el momento en que el poder de España y Francia podrá cortar las alas de su buelo para siempre. Uno de los cuerpos más respetables de Inglaterra, dixo a su Soberano con gran propiedad y espíritu hace cosa de dos años: «*Que sus Ministros precipitaban la nación a una situación en la qual, sólo el sufrir a sus rivales, podría libertarla de destruirse*». Esta es seguramente aquella situación que ocurre en el día y el resto se halla en manos de España y de Francia. = Arthur Lee, (1) Commlsioner Plenipotentiary from the Congress of the United States of America. = Burgos March 4 th. 1777.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3883. Existe en inglés minuta-autógrafo de Lee y firmada por él en el mismo legajo)

(1) Firma y título en inglés del documento son autógrafos de Lee.

Carta de Arthur Lee a Aranda. — 9 Diciembre 1777. (Original)

Count D'Aranda.

I have the honor of inclosing to your Excellency the Copy of a Memorial presented to his Excellency Count Vergennes, by the Commissioners of Congress for this Court.

The knowledge I have of the great veneration entertained by the United States, for the this of Spain, d'affection for the people, enables me to assure your Excellency, that nothing will give them greater joy, than the happy conclusion of a firm et lasting treaty of Amity et Commerce between the two Nations.

Permit me therefore to hope that your Excellency will co-operate with the favorable disposition of this Court, in bringing the treaty, formerly propos'd, to a speedy conclusion.

I have the honor to be, with the highest respect et consideration.

Your Excellency most obedient mos humble servant. = Arthur Lee. = Commissioner plenipotentiary for the Court of Spain. =

Dec. 9th. 1777. }

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Memorial presentado por los Diputados americanos a las cortes española y francesa. — Septiembre 1777. (Original) (1)

To his Excellency the Count de Vergennes Minister for the foreign Affairs of France etc. etc.

And to his Excellency the Count d'Aranda Ambassador of Spain, etc.

A Memorial from the Commissioners of the United States of America.

The Congress some Months since acquainted us, that 80.000 Suits of Clothes will be wanted for their Army next Winter: Also a Number of brass Cannons, Fusils, Pistols, etc. and a large Quantity of Naval Stores.

To pay for these, they acquainted us that they had purchased great quantities of Tobacco, Rice, Indigo, Pot=Ash, and other Produce of the Country which they would forward to us as soon the great Difficulties of precuring Ships, and Mariners for the Merchant=Service, with Convoys of Force sufficient, could be surmounted.

They also directed us to borrow two Millions Sterling in Europa on the Credit of the United States; which Sum, if the Loan could have been effected here, would have been, as the most profitable in the Manufactures of these Kingdoms, greatly to the Advantage of their People, not only encouraging and encreasing their present Industry, but, by introducing the knowledge of their Manufactures and Produce, and the Taste for them, would have been the Source of great future Commerce.

The Loan was found to be, in our presens circumstances, difficult; and without the Aid of some credit from France and Spain seems impracticable.

And the Ships bringing the Products of America to us, have been intercepted, some by Treachery of the Seamen, but chiefly by the Enemy's Ships of War, which, with the Difficulty above mentioned of finding Ships, and the Blocking up of our Ports, has left us hitherto disappointed of the expected Remittances.

But France, having actually furnished us with some Money en regular Payments, and kindly promised us a continuance of them: and Spain having given us Expectations of considerable Aids, though without specifying the Quantity, the Commissioners conceiving it would not be less than what France was giving, and impress'd with the urgent Necessity of the Clotheing, etc. ventured to order 30.000 Suits: and have also sent or contracted for considerable Quantities of Arms and other Necessaries for which they are indebted.

Spain after furnishing us with 1.870.500 Livs. in money, and some Naval Stores sent directly from her Ports (the Value not yet known to us) has desisted.

And the Commissioners find themselves extremely embarrassed by their Engagements, and likely to be discredited with their constituents by the Expectations they have given of effectual aids from France and Spain, if not a Diversion that might be favourable to the States: But the worst is the Prejudice their cause and Country must suffer by the Disappointment of Supplies.

The Commissioners received soon after their arrival, kind assurances of the amity of France and Spain, and substantial Proofs of It which will ever be remembered with gratitude.

They by Authority from the Congress, offer'd Proposals for a Treaty of Commerce, and for uniting the force of the States with that of France and Spain, in conquering for those Crowns the English Sugar Islands, with other advantages et Stipulations, in case Britain should commence the War on Account of the Aids granted to us: which Proposals the Commissioners hope were not disagreeable, and have long expected with Anxiety an Answer to them.

Some late Proceedings in France relating to our armed Wessels and their Prizes, and to the Exportation of warlike Stores, and the cessation of Supplies from Spain, might occasion a Doubt that the Disposition of those Courts towards the United States is changed, if the Commissioners had not the fullest Confidence in those dispositions as being well-founded in the true Interest of these Kingdoms, and as it is conceived no cause has been given on the Side of America for their Diminution.

They therefore ascribe the late Strictnesses in France to the Circumstances of the times; and the Stoppage of Supplies from Spain to the Inattention occasioned by occupation in other great Affairs.

And they hope that a little time will remedy both the one and the other.

In the mean while, they request a present Supply proportioned to their wants, which will appear by the annexed Estimate.

France and Spain (as they have represented in a former Memoir) will be greatly Gainers by the american Commerce in Wert of Products and Manufactures, Increase of People by furnishing more Employment, Increase of Shipping and Seamen and of course Naval Power, while Britain is diminished and weakened in proportion, which will make the Difference double. But they offer these advantages, not as putting them to Sale for a Price, but as Ties of the Friendship they wish to cultivate with these Kingdoms.

And knowing that after a Settlement of their States in Peace, a few years will enable them, to repay the Aids that may now be lent them, they with the more freedom ask greater Assistance by way of Loan, than they would presume to ask way of Subsidy.

But if those Powers apprehend that the Granting such Aid may be one means of occasioning a War between them and Britain, and the present circumstances render such a War not eligible; and if they therefore decline the same, and would advise the Americans to make Peace; it is requested that these Courts as Friends of the United States, would assist them with their Advice and Influence in the negotiation, that their Liberties with the Freedom of Commerce may be maintained.

And they farther request to be explicitly informed of the present Intentions of these Courts respecting the Promises, that they may communicate as much of the same to the Congress as may be necessary for the Regulating of its Conduct, and preventing the Mis apprehensions that the late Proceeding above mentioned may other wise occasion.

They can assure your Excellencies that they have no Account of any Treaty on foot in America for an accommodation; nor do they believe there is any: Nor have any Propositions been made by them to the Court of England, nor any the smallest Overture received from thence which they have not already communicated; the Congress having the fullest confidence in the good Will and Wisdom of these Courts, et having accordingly give us Orders to enter into no Treaty with any other Power inconsistent with the Propositions made to them, if those Propositions are likely to be accepted; and to act with their Advice and Approbation. And the Commissioners are firmly of opinion that nothing will induce the Congress to accommodate on the Terms of an exclusive Commerce with Britain, but the despair of obtaining effectual Aid and support from Europa.

But as it probable that the England is not yet sufficiently weakned or humble to agree to any equitable Terms of Accommodation; et as the United States with are Aid much less than would be spent by France and Spain in case of their entering into the War, will be enabled to continue it with England as long as may be necessary, the Commissioners request that those Powers would resolve upon Granting such subsidy as may be sufficient for the Purpose; or otherwise lend to the said States the Sum they desire of two millions Sterling at the Interest of six for cent which they have all reason to beleive they shall be well able to pay after an happy finishing of te War, and which they mean punctually to perform.

Dated at Passy this... of September 1777.=B. Franklin.=Silas Deane.=Arthur Lee.=(Rubricados todos menos Lee).

(A. H. N., Estado. leg. 3634)

Estado-presupuesto, unido al memorial anterior.
Septiembre 1777. (Original) (1)

Estimate & &

Ballance of Mr. Grand's Amst. rendered June 10 1777	664.179. 1.1
Payments the August 14 1777	170.186.11.1
Drafts since that time by the Commissioners by Mr. Williams . . . suppose	30.000. 0.0
Agreements are made for 30.000 Suits Cloaths suppose them to cost 35 livres each . . .	1.050.000. 0.0
Ditto . . . for 1.000 Fusees	18.000. 0.0
Ditto . . . 100.000 pd. Copper et Tin for casting cannon	150.000. 0.0
Ditto . . . 100 Tons Salt Petre	110.000. 0.0
Ditto for Shoes, for Pistols & engaged by Mr. Williams including also the Ship for carrying out the Goods suppose	250.000. 0.0
Repairs of several Vessels . . . suppose . . .	50.000. 0.0
Paid Mr. Delap of Amst.	40.000. 0.0
Cordage, anchors, & for a 64 Cun Ship . . .	200.000. 0.0
To compleat & load the Ship in Holland the least sum will be	550.000. 0.0
Mr. Grand receiv'd July 10 th.	500.000. 0.0
Ballance against the Commissioners by their Estimate	1.454.018.10.0
	2.618.186.11.1
 Ballance as above	 1.454.018.10.0
To be receiv'd in October	500.000. 0.0
Ballance against the Commissioners after receiving the Sum of 500.000 will be	954.018.10.0
	1.454.018.10.0
 Ballance as above 954.018.10.0 is carried over to the next Page	 954.018.10.0
Ballance against the Commissioners brought from last page	954.018.10.0

Blankets, Shirts, Then, Cloths, Brass cannon & many other articles essentially necessary are not reckoned, they will amount to a very considerable Sum.

For instance

80.000 Blankets at 7 livres	560.000. 0.0
80.000 Shirts 4	320.000. 0.0
20.000 Shoes 3..10.	70.000. 0.0
10.000 Sterkings already both	15.000. 0.0

70.000 ditto wanted	105.000. 0.0
100 Tons Powder . . . wanted	200.000. 0.0
Brass cannon cannot be estimated at present .	
<hr/>	
The Sum which the Commissioners will be in- debted in October	2.244.018.10.0
The Commissioners orders are for 80.000 Suits of Cloaths compleat, but only 30.000 are or- dered, to compleat this Order will they want.	1.750.000
To give each soldier 2 Shirts	320.000
100.000 pair of Shoes	210.000
Furniture for 3.000 Horse	450.000
Brass cannon ordered will at least amount. .	2.000.000
Adding the charge of transportation & expen- ses of every kind, these goods must be sent in armed vessels the Congress have ordered eight ships of War of the Line	3.000.000
To be purchased which will amount to	7.730.000

The ships or war may now be purchased & probably for the money they are estimated at: they are absolutely necessary as will for the carrying out the Goods & Stores engaged at to open the Commerce & bring bach the productions of America for Payment of the Sum wanted.

The estimate does not include many necessary articles, as the Congress could if their Trade was protected by eight Ships of the Line, procure them in Exchange for their Productions.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Carta de Diego Gardoqui a Arthur Lee. — 17 Febrero 1777.
(Minuta) (2)

Madrid 17 th. Feby. 1777.

Arthur Lee, Esquire.

Sir.

My person et house in the comercial way are well known to the Colonies not only on account of our long standg Correspondance of 30. to 40. years. but also on that of the true affection with which we have endeavoured to

serve them. I am lately arriv'd at Madrid on some particular affairs which have occasion'd my treating with the Minister of State, who have honour'd me with the principal affairs of Europe, among which I have tak'd about your comeing from Paris to Spain undoubtedly with the design of treating on the subjects of the Coloneis as I judge they have already done et continue doing at said Paris, but having hear'd that in such a small place as Madrid it would be absolutly ympossible to remain yncog either by your own or any other name et you would of course be spied by the Gentleman here who have a real Interest thereon, et consequently you could not treat with the ministers without hurting the Coloneis in the highest degree by your own doings, et besides you would set this Court at variance without success, I judge you will ymprove of the oportunity which offers by chance et, I think, is an excellent one et have therefore no objection to hint it you being fully assur'd that it will cause no displeasure here. The Marquis of Grimaldi yntends to set out soon for Biscay et I propose the same for my house at Bilbao all which we shall so manage as to meet one et the other at Vitoria where we shall tarry under some good desguisse until our mutuall arrivall et as this noble Minister has had to this day the entire direction of all affairs et is of course fally acquainted with his Majesty's yntentions, beleive it is the only person with whom you might treat either in said place or in some Country house that might be pick'd up for the purpose, et avoid thereby the yinconveniencies which must ynevitably follow by your comeing to Madrid. By the afore said beleive I have giving you a further proof of my attachment the Coloneis et I must also add with all truth that the principal persons here are of the same opinion, alltho' the present state of affairs obliges them to make no shew thereof; In short Sir I hope you will approve of my propos'd method being the safest et most natural to carry on the wiew of both parteis et beg you would give me an answer thro' the same hands as the present will be deliver'd you, doubting not but you will tarry at said Vitoria until we get there et you will also observe, that you will be at full liberty to proceed to Madrid if you should judge proper after you have talk'd over the matter with said nobleman which being wath ocures subscribe.

(A. H. N., Estado. leg. 3883)

Credencial de J. Jay. — 29 de Septiembre de 1779. (Copia)

The delegates of United States of new Hampshire, Massachusets-Bay, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-Yorck, New Jersey, Pennsilvania, Delaware, Mariland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia in Congress assembled.

To all who shall see these Presents send Greeting.

Whereas an Intercourse between the subjets of his Catholic Majesty and the citizens of these United States, founded on the principles of equality Reciprocity, and Friendship, may be of mutual advantage to both Nations, and it being the sincere desire of the United States to enter into a treaty of alliance, and of amity, and commerce with his Catholic Majesty: Know ye therefore, that we confiding in the integrity, prudence, and ability of the honorable John Jay, Esquire, late President of Congress, and Chief Justice of the state of New York, nominated and constituted, and by these presents do nominate, and constitute him the said John Jay our Minister Plenipotentiary giving him full power, general and special, to act in that quality, to confer, treat, agree and conclude with the Ambassador or Plenipotentiary of his Catholic Majesty vested with equal powers, of and concerning a treaty of amity and commerce and of alliance and whatever shall be so agreed and concluded, for us and in our names to sign, and thereupon make such treaty, or treaties, conventions, and agreements as he shall judge conformable to the ends we have in view, in as ample forme, and with the same effect as if we were personally presents, and acted therein. Hereby promising in good Faith that we will accept, ratify fulfill and execute whatever shall be agreed, concluded, and signed by our said Minister Plenipotentiary, and that we will never act, nor suffer any person to act contrary to the same, in the whole or in any part. In Witness whereof we have caused these presents to be given in Congress at Philadelphia the 29 day of September in the year of our Lord 1779, and in te 4 th. of our independence.

Signed by the President and sealed with his seal. (Signed) Samuel Huntington, President. —(L. S.) Attest. —Charles Thomson, Secretary.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3483. Existen además otros dos ejemplares de esta credencial en el mismo Archivo y Sección, leg. 3384 bis, expediente 8, documentos 15 y 19).

Despacho de J. Jay a Floridablanca. — 6 Marzo 1780.
(Original) (1)

Cadis 6th. March 1780.

Sir.

I have been honored with your Excellency's favor of the 24th. ultimo, which did not come to my hands till sometime after its arrival.

The sentiments which his Majesty is pleased to entertain of me, together with the polite manner in which your Excellency has been so obliging as to express them, demand my warmest acknowledgements; and give additional force to the many motives, which render me desirous of a permanent union between his Majesty and the United States.

The honor and Probity which have ever characterized the conduit of Spain, together with the exalted reputation, which his Majesty has acquired by being an eminent Example of both, have induced the People of the United States to repose the highest confidence in the proofs they have received of his friendly disposition towards them, and to consider every engagement with this Monarchy, as guaranteed by that faith, and secured by that ingeniousness, which have so gloriously distinguished his Majesty, and this Kingdom, among the Princes of Nations of the earth.

Permit me to request the favor of your Excellency to assure his majesty, that the people of the United States are convinced, that virtue alone can animate and support their Governments; and that they can in no other way establish and perpetuate a national character, honorable to themselves et their posterity; than by an unshaken adherence to the Rules, which Religion, Morality and Treaties may prescribe for their conduct. His royal mind may also persuaded, that gratitude will never cease to add the influence of inclination to the power of duty, in rendering them solicitous for the happiness et prosperity of these generous nations, who nobly strengthened their opposition to a torrent of oppression, and kindly aided in freeing them from the Bondage of a nation, whose arrogance and injustice had become destructive to the Rights of mankind, and dangerous to the peace and tranquility of Christendom.

Having therefore the most perfect conviction that the candor and benignity of his Majesty's intentions, are equal to the uprightness and sincerity of these of Congress; I shall set out in a few days for Madrid, with the pleasing expectation that there will be little delay or difficulty, in adjusting the terms of a union, between a magnanimous monarch and a virtuous People, who wishes to obtain by an alliance with each other, only reciprocal benefits and mutual advantages.

I have the honor to be with perfect respect et consideration etc.. =John Jay. =His Excellency the Count de Florida Blanca.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3881 bla, exp. 8, doc. 8)

Carta de J. Jay a Florida Blanca. - 12 Mayo 1780. (Original) (I)

Private

Aranjuez 12th. may 1780.

Sir,

It is the utmost reluctance that I can prevail upon myself, to draw your Excellency's attention from the great objects that perpetually engage it, but the Liberality, Frankness, and candor which distinguished your conduct towards me the last evening, has impressed me with such correspondent sentiments of Delicacy, as to place me in a most disagreeable situation.

Deeply sensible of the benefits received by my country from this illustrious ally, prompted by duty and inclination to act, not only with the highest integrity, but the greatest frankness, towards him et his Ministers; and influenced by the good opinion I have imbibed of the Talents attachment et prudence of the Count de Montmorin, I have given him and his Court assurances, that he should receive from me all that confidence, which these considerations dictate. These assurances were sincere I have most strictly conformed to them and as no circumstances of delicacy forbid it, I have communicated to him the information I gave your Excellency relative to american affairs, et the resolution of Congress for drawing Bills upon me - These being the only transactions within my knowledge et department, which related to that proposed connection between Spain and America, for the accomplishment of which, the King of France has been pleased to interpose his kind offices with his Catholic Majesty. But Sir! my feeling will not allow me to permit the confidence due to one gentleman, interfere with that which may be due to another. Honor prescribes limit to each, which no consideration can tempt me to violate. You spoke to me the last evening in the character of a private gentleman as well as a public Minister, et in both without reserve. Let me entreat your Excellency therefore, to inform me wheter I am to consider your conferences with me, in the whole or in part, as confidential? I am apprized of the delicacy of his question. - I wish I could know your sentiments without putting it. I assure you my esteem et respect is too sincere an too great, not to make me regret every measure that can give you an uneasy sensation - On this occasion I am urged by justice to you as well as myself: and that must be my apology. - Unpracticed in the ways of Courts, I rejoice in finding that I am to transact the business committed to me with a gentleman who adorns his exalted station with virtues as well as talents, and looks down upon that system et finesse and Chicane, which, however prevalent, wisdom rejects and probity disapproves.

With sentiments of attachment et esteem, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most obedient et most humble servant, John Jay. = His Excellency the count de Florida Blanca.

Despacho de J. Jay a Floridablanca. — 9 Junio 1780. (Original)

Aranjuez 9th. June 1780.

Sir,

The propositions which your Excellency did me the honor to send me on the 7th. inst. have been considered with all the attention which their great importance demands.

The evidence they contain of his Majesty friendly disposition towards the United States, will I am persuaded make correspondent Impressions on the Citizens of America; and permit me to assure you that his Majesty desire of contributing to my personal satisfaction, by measures conducive to the welfare of my Country, has excited my warmest acknowledgement and attachment.

The enlarged Ideas my constituents entertain of the power, wealth and resources of Spain, are equal to these they have imbibed of the wisdom and Probity of his Catholic Majesty; and of that noble and generous system of Policy, which as induced him to patronage their cause, and by completing their separation from Great Britain effectually to disarm the latter. Such wise and liberal designs, followed by such great and extensive consequences, would add a bright page to the annales of a reign, already signalized by important Events. It is therefore with deep Regret that Congress would receive information, that the aid they sollicit, small when compared with their Ideas of the resources of Spain, has been rendered impracticable by the expenses of a war, which on the part of Spain, is of a recent date. Nor will their disappointment be less than their regret, when they find their credit diminished by the failure of a measure, from the success of which they expected to raise it. The kind proposition of his Majesty to become responsible at the expiration of two years for the amount of the bills in question, and that even with interest; is a proof of his goodness, by which I am confident, the United States will consider themselves greatly obliged. But when it is considered, that bills of Exchange, immediately on being drawn and sold, become a medium in Commerce, and pass thro' various hands, in satisfaction of various mercantile contracts; that the Drawer and every Indorser become responsible for their credit at every transfer; and that the object of the Merchants last holding the bills, as well as of all other Merchants, is money in hand or actively employed in Trade, and not money lying still at an interest greatly inferior to the usual profits to be gained in Commerce. I say, on considering these things, it appears to me almost certain, that althous no objection can be made to the good faith of his Majesty, which is acknowledged by all the world; yet that the last holders of the bills will prefer recovering the amount of them with the usual damages on protests, to a delay of payment for two years with interest. Should these bills therefore meet with this fate his Majesty will readily perceive its Influence on the credit, operations and feelings of the United States; in the Common cause; on the hopes and Spirits of the Enemy.

The necessity of Prudence which detains his Majestys treasure in his Americans Dominions is an unfortunate circumstance, at a time when it might be usefully employed.

There is never the less room to hope, that the great superiority of the

would rather that the United States should be without money than without good faith, and therefore neither my own Principles of action nor the Respect due to his Majesty and to the Reputation of my Country, will ever suffer me (if my authority extended so far) to enter into any contracts which I had not the highest reason to believe would be fully, fairly, et punctually performed on the Part of my Constituents.

Nor in case his Majesty should think proper to cause Frigates to be built in America, can I encourage your Excellency to expect that they could be easily manned there for Cruises. The fact is, that the American Frigates often find difficulties in completing their complements, principally because the Seamen prefer going in Privateers, which are numerous and too useful to be discouraged. The design of preparing an Armament to intercept the English East Indiamen appears to me very judicious. The Enemy draw their resources from commerce; to annoy the one therefore is to injure the other. Before the present war, there were several but not a great many Americans, well acquainted with the route of the East India mer; But whether any number of these men could now be secretly collected is uncertain, for if by a particular selection of and inquiry for them, the Enemy should become apprized of design, They would naturally take measures to frustrate it. For my part, I should suppose that many of these men are not necessary, and that the proper number may be had from France it not from America. The idea of the United States cooperating in the execution of this Plan, is flattering, and the terms proposed generous; but so far as their cooperation will depend on the building of Frigates there as proposed, it cannot be effected from their want of money. Whether the American frigates could be employed in such an enterprize — that is — whether the services for which they may be already destined, will admit of it, are with other similar circumstances, necessary to be known before that question could possibly be answered. The distance from America and the length of time necessary to ask for, and receive information and instructions from thence, is such, that it would probably be more expedient, that engagements for these purposes should be discussed and concluded there, than here. The circumstances the United States, while inverted, will be more fluctuating than these of Spain, and measures in which they might conveniently embark at one period, may shortly after be rendered impracticable by the vicissitudes of war.

It is further to be observed that a people rising amidst such terrible struggles, with an extensive country to defend, and that Country invaded, et as it were on fire, in several places at once, are not in good condition for foreign enterprizes. But on the contrary, that it must generally be their interest, and of consequence their policy, to keep their forces and strength at home, till the expulsion of their Enemies shall afford them leisure et opportunities for distant and offensive operations. Whenever this period shall arrive, his Majesty may be assured that the United States will not remain idle; but that, impelled by resentments too deep and too just to be transitory, as well as by unshaken attachment to their friends, they will persevere with firmness and constancy in the common cause, and cheerfully unite their efforts with these of France and Spain, in compelling the common Enemy to accept of reasonable terms of Peace. I can also with great confidence assure your Excellency that the United States will be happy in every opportunity which may offer during the war, of joining their arms to these of Spain, and in

allied fleets and armaments in the American seas, will in the course of a year or eighteen months render its transportation safe and easy; and that the greater part of it may arrive, before the bills in question would become payable. This will appear more probable, when the time necessary to sell these bills, and the time which will be consumed in their passage from America, and the time which will be employed in their journey from different Parts of Europa to this place are all added to the half a year which is allowed for the payment of them after they have been presented.

I am authorized and ready to engage and pledge the faith of the United States for the punctual repayment with interest and with in a reasonable term, of any sums of money which his Majesty may be so kind as to lend them.

As to the aids heretofore supplied to the United States, I am without information relative to the precise terms on which they were furnished, as well as their amount. When I left Congress they appeared to me not to possess full et positive intelligence. I ascribe this not to omissions in their Commission, who there had the direction of their affairs, but to those miscarriages and accidents to which the communication of intelligence to a distant country is liable in time of war. If it should appear proper to your Excellency to order that I be furnished with an accurate and full state of these transactions, I will do myself the honor of transmitting them immediately to Congress, and as they happened prior to my appointment, I shall request particular instructions on the subject. With respect to the plan proposed for the Repayment of such sums as Spain may lend to the United States, viz., by the latter furnishing the former with Frigates etc.. I beg leave to submit the following remarks to your Excellencys consideration. In the United States there are, Timber, Iron, Masts, Shipwrights, Pitch, Tar et Turpentine and Spain can furnish the other requisites. But neither the Timber, the Iron, the Mast, or other Articles can be procured without money. The Congress are in great want of money for the immediate purpose of self defence, for the maintenance of their armies, and vessels of war, and for all the other expenses incident to military operations. The Congress pressed by their necessities, have emitted bills of credit, till the depreciation of them forbid further Emissions.

They have made loans from their Great and good Ally, and in aid of the system of gaining supplies by taxation et domestic loans, they have, for the reasons which I have already had the honor of explaining to your Excellency, drawn upon me the bills before mentioned. These bills will be sold in the United States for paper money, and that money will be immediately wanted for the purpose I have enumerated.

If therefore this money was to be turned into Frigates, the obvious Ends of drawing those Bills would not be attained. The war against the United States hath reged without intermission for six years already, and it will not be in their power to pay their debts during its further continuance, nor until the retain of peace and uninterrupted commerce shall furnish them with the means of doing it.

That excellent frigates and other vessels may be built in America, cheaper than in Europe, I am persuaded. And I know that Congress will cheerfully give every aid in their power to facilitate the execution of any plan of that kind which his Majesty may adopt, but, Sir, their necessities will not permit them to supply money to these purposes; and I should deceive your Excellency with delusive Expectations, were I to lead you to think otherwise. I

cooperating with them in any expeditions which circumstances may render expedient against the Floridas or other objects. The Americans would most cheerfully fight by the sides of the Spaniards and by spilling their blood in the same cause and on the same occasions, convince them of their ardent desire to become their faithful Friends and steadfast Allies

I cannot prevail upon myself to conclude, without expressing to your Excellency my apprehension of the anxiety and painfull concern, with which Congress would receive Intelligence of the Failure of their bills; especially after the expectations they have been induced to conceive of the successful issue of their affairs here. What conclusions the Enemy would draw from the Inability of Spain to advance the Sum in question, even so men actually in arms against Britain, I forbear to mention, nor would it become me to point on the several evil consequences flowing from such an event, to those who enjoy from nature and Experience more discernment than I am beseech with.

I still flatter myself that som Expedients may be devised to surmount the present difficulties, and the harvest of Laurels now ripening for his Majesty in America, will not be permitted to wither for want of watering. Influenced by this hope I shall delay transmitting any Intelligence respecting this matter to Congress, till your Excellency shall be pleased to communicate his Majesty further pleasure in the subject.

I have the honour to be with very sincere respect and Esteem.—Your Excellencys most obedient et most humble servant, John Jay.—His Excellency The Count de Florida Blanca.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3884)

Despacho de J. Jay a Floridablanca. — 22 Junio 1780. (Original) (2)

Madrid 22d. June 1780.

Sir,

I have received the note which your Excellency did me the honor to write on the 20th. instant, and I take the earliest opportunity of expressing my thanks for your Excellency permission to accept the bills mentioned in it, which I have accordingly done. Agreeable to your Excellency's recommendation in the first conference, I have turned my thoughts very seriously to the objects which were the subjects of it, relative to the bills drawn upon me. They were two

1. the means of paying these bills.
2. the proposed contract with America for light vessels etc..

With respect to the first, it appeared to me that the principal difficulty was removed by your Excellency's informing me that «at the end of the present year it would be in your power to advance twenty five, thirty or forty thousand pounds sterling». Hence I inferred, that as much time would be taken up in the sale negotiation and transmission of these bills, and as so long a space as six months was assigned for their payment after being presented, that the sums which it would be in your Excellency's power to advance at the end of the year, would probably be equal to the amount of the bills which would the become payable; and that in the mean time such further means might be provided, as would obviate difficulties with respect to those which might afterwards become due. When I reflected that I was Stranger to the resources of Spain, and that your Excellency's acknowledged abilities comprehended all the objects and combinations necessary in determining what supplies they were capable of affording, and the manner and means most proper for the purpose, it appeared to me in the light of Presumption to hazard to your Excellency any propositions on the subject.

Secondly on considering the proposed Contract, it become important to distinguish between the building these vessels with the money of the United States, or with that of Spain. The latter was very practicable, and I gave your Excellency that opinion in my letter of the 20th. instt.. The former on the contrary appeared to me not to be within the power of the United States, and candor obliged me to make this known to your Excellency in the same letter. I know it to be impossible for Congress consistent with good faith, to contract that, not with standing their great want of money, the injuries of a six years war, and their being actually invaded, that they would repay immediately the monies lent them either in ships or otherwise.

It is not uncommon for ancient and opulent nations to find it necessary to borrow money in time of war, but I believe it very seldom happens that they find it convenient to pay these Debts till the return of Peace. If this be the case with powerful and long established Nations, more cannot be expected from a young nation brought forth by oppression, and rising amidst every species of violence and devastation which Fire, Sword, and malice can furnish for their destruction: If, attentive only to obtaining payment of these bills, and thereby relieving my Country from the complicated evils which must result from their being protested, I had entered into the proposed engagements for immediate repayment by building vessels etc. etc.: If I had done this, notwithstanding a full conviction that the contract so made could not be fulfilled, my conduct however convenient in its immediate consequences would have been highly reprehensible. This reflection therefore will I hope convince your Excellency of the Purity of my Intentions, and induce you to ascribe my objections to the contract to want of Ability, and not to want of Inclination in the United States to perform it.

No consideration will ever prevail upon me to practise deception, and I am happy in a Persuasion, that altho' Truths may sometimes not please, yet that when delivered with decency, and respect, they will never offend either his Majesty or your Excellency. Believe me Sir, The United States will not be able to pay their debts during the war, and therefore any plan whatever, calculated on a contrary position must be fruitless. I am ready to pledge their faith for repaying to his Majesty within a reasonable term after the war, and with a reasonable interest any sums he may be so kind as to lend them. What more can I offer? What more can they do?

If there be any services they can do to his Majesty consistent with their safety, and defence, they are ready and will be happy to render them. They respect the King and the Nation, and the very time they are requesting his aid they are soliciting to be united to him by bonds of perpetual Amity and Alliance.

Against his Enemies, as well as their own They are now in arms, and the supplies they ask are not for the purpose of Luxury, or aggrandisement, but for the sole and express purpose of annoying their Enemies, and enabling France, Spain, and themselves to obtain a peace honorable and advantageous to each.

Of his Majestys kind dispositions towards them they had received not only professions but proofs; hence They become inspired not only with gratitude but confidence in his Friendship.

Impelled by this confidence, and a particular concurrence of exigences already explained to your Excellency, They drew the bills in question. The issue of this measure will be highly critical, and followed by a train of consequence very important and extensive.

The single circumstance of your Excellencys having permitted me to accept the first of these bills, will be considered by our Enemies as an unfortu-

nate omen by predicting from it further aids; Their Ideas of the resources of Spain, and the resistance of America will naturally be raised, and their hopes of subduing the one, or reducing the power of the other will naturally be diminished. They will impute these ends to a plan of the House of Bourbon wisely concerted and firmly persisted in to secure themselves and all Europe against the ambition of Britain, by completing the division of the Empire, and they will cease to flatter themselves, that America thus aided will become destitute of resources to carry on the war.

On the other hand America will derive fresh vigor from this mark of Friendship, and their attachment to his Majesty become proportionably more strong.

By mutual good offices, Friendship between nations, as between Individuals, is only to be established, and it is always a happy circumstance, when it subsists between those, whom Nature has placed contiguous to each other. But your Excellencys time is of too great importance to be engaged by such obvious reflections.

Permit me Sir still to indulge the pleasing expectation of being enabled to inform Congress, that his Majestys Magnanimity and Friendship has prompted him, to inconvenient to his own affairs, to secure the Credit of their bills, and I am persuaded that the Benevolence of your Excellencys disposition will be gratified in being instrumental to a measure, which would make such agreeable impressions on the hearts and minds of so great a number of steadfast friends to the Spanish Monarchy.

I have the honor to be with very great respect and Esteem your Excellencys most obedt. et most humble servant, John Jay. = His Excellency the Count de Florida Blanca.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 384)

Proposiciones de Juan Jay a Floridablanca para un tratado con
España. — 22 Septiembre 1781. (Original y autógrafo) (1)

As the Time allowed Mr. Jay for offering such Propositions as may become the Basis of the proposed Treaty between his Catholic Majesty and the United States of North America, is very short; he could fear the consequences of Haste and Inaccuracy, if he was not persuaded that the Candor with which they will be received, will secure him from Inconveniences to which those circumstances might otherwise expose him.

Mr. Jay presumes that it is not expected that he should offer a Plan of a Treaty drawn at Length, but only *General Propositions*, which may be so modified and enlarged, as on due Consideration and Discussion, may appear expedient. With this view he begs leave to present the following as the Basis of a Treaty of *amity and alliance*, vizt.:

REMARKS	PROPOSITIONS
	1st.
	That there shall forever subsist an inviolable et universal Peace et Friendship between his Cath. Majesty et the United States, et the subjects et citizens of both.
	2.
	That every Priviledge Exemption et favor, with respect to Commerce, Navigation et personal Rights, which now are, or here after may be granted by either to any the most favored Nation, shall be granted to the other.
	3.
	That they mutually extend to the vessels, merchants and inhabitants of each other, all that Protection, which is usual et proper between frendly et allies Nations.
	4.
	That the vessels, merchants, or other subjects of his Cath. Majesty and the United States, shall not resort to, or be permitted (except in cases which Humanity allows to Distress) to enter into any of those Ports or Dominions of the other from which the most favored nations shall be excluded.
	5.
On this Proposition Mr. Jay can offer nothing but an assurance of his being ready to concur in every reasonable Regulation that may be proposed.	That the following Commerce be prohibited and declared contraband between the subjects of his Catholic Majesty et the United States, vizt.. All such as his Catholic Majesty may much proper to specify.

The impressions made upon the United States by the magnanimity of his Majesty's Conduct toward them—The assistance they hope to receive from the further Exertions of the same magnanimity—The deep wound which an alliance with so great a Monarch would give to the Hopes et efforts of the Enemy—The strong support it would afford to their Independence—The favorable Influence which the Example of such a King would have on other Nations—and the many other great et extensive good Consequences which would result, at this interesting Period, from his Majesty taking so noble and decided a Part in their Favor—have all conspired in prevailing upon Congress to offer to relinquish in his favor, the future Enjoyment of this territorial et national Privilege; (1) the Importance of which to their Constituents, can only be estimated by the value they set upon his Majesty's Friendship.

By this Proposition the United States offer to forego all the advantages et conveniences which nature has given to the Country bordering on the upper Parts of that River, by ceasing to export their own, et receiving in Return the Commodities of other Countries by that *only Channel*—thereby greatly reducing the value of that Country, retarding its Settlement, et diminishing the Benefits which the United States would reap from its Cultivation.

Mr. Jay thinks it his Duty frankly to confess that the Difficulty of reconciling this measure to the Feelings of their Constituents has appeared to Congress in a serious Light; and they now expect to do it only by placing in the opposite Scale, the Gratitude due his Catholic Majesty, and the great and various advantages which the United States will derive from the acknowledgement and generous

The United States shall relinquish to his Catholic Majesty, and in future forbear to use, or attempt to use the navigation of the River Mississippi from the 31 Degree of North Latitude, that is, from the Point where it leaves the United States, down the Ocean.

Support of their Independence by the Spanish Monarchy, at a Time when the vicissitudes, Dangers et Difficulties of a distressing war, with a powerful, obstinate and vindictive nation, renders the Friendship and avowed Protection of his Cath. Majesty, in a very particular Manner interesting to them.

The offer of this Proposition therefore, being dictated by those Expectations, and this Combination of circumstances must necessarily be limited by Duration of them; et consequently that if the acceptance of it should, together with the proposed alliance be postponed to a general Peace, the United States will cease to consider themselves bound by any Propositions or offers which I may now make in their Behalf.

Nor can Mr. Jay omit mentioning the Hopes et Expectations of Congress that his Majesty's Generosity et Greatness of Mind, will prompt him to alleviate as much as possible the Disadvantages to which this Proposition subjects the United States, by either granting them a free port under certain Restrictions, in the vicinity, or by such other marks of his Liberality et Justice, as may give him additional claims to the affection et attachment of the United States.

7.

That his Catholic Majesty shall guarantee to the United States all their respective Territories.

8.

That the United States guarantee to his Catholic Majesty all his Dominions in North America.

Lastly

Nothing on Mr. Jay Part shall be wanting to expedite the happy Conclusion of this Business by adhering constantly to the Dictates of Candor

As the foregoing Propositions appear to Mr. Jay the most essential, he omits proposing those lesser et subordinate ones, which seem to fo-

Frankness et unsuspecting Confidence.—

—He is ready to receive the Treaty between the United States et his Christian Majesty as a model for this, or with such alterations as founded on Principles of Reciprocity, may be more agreeable to his Catholic Majesty—it being his earnest Desire to arrive at the important objects of his mission in any way that his Majesty may be pleased to prefer.

flow of Course; he therefore concludes this Subject with a *General offer and Proposition* to make and admit all such articles as in the Course of this negotiation shall appear conducive to the great objects of the proposed Treaty.

The subject of aids either by Subsidy or Loan, as may be most convenient to his Majesty, will require a particular Convention; but as the Manner Extent and Terms, depend on his Majesty Pleasure, it is impossible for Mr. Jay without some knowledge of it, to offer Propositions adapted thereto. All that he can at present say on that subject, is that Congress are ready to do every thing in their Power. He will not however endeavour to conceal their Incapacity to do much in the way of Compensation, while the Enemy continue to make the United States the Theatre of a desolating war, and the object of their predatory operations. But when those obstacles shall cease, it will be in their Power, as well as their Inclination, to make Retribution of render important Services to his Majesty. Mr. Jay will therefore continue to decline attempting, to induce his Majesty to make any Measures, however favorable to his Country, by delusive Promises or rash Engagements. But on the other Hand is ready to inter into such reasonable ones as he may have good Reason to say shall be faithfully and punctually performed.

A particular Treaty regulating the Condu't to be observed by his Cath. Majesty et the United States, towards each other, during the war also appears to Mr. Jay important to both. But as the proper Plan et articles of such Treaty can only result from a free Conference et Communication on the subject, he can upon this Occasion, only express his Readiness to concur in every Provision which may be calculated to give Energy et success to the operations et objects of both. =John Jay.=St. Ildefonso 22d. Sept. 1781.

Despacho reservado de Aranda a Grimaldi. — 7 de Junio de 1776.
(Reservado n.º 1. Minuta autógrafa).

Excmo. Sr.:

Muy Sr. mío: Escribo a V. E. este despacho reservado y de mi puño, porque el señor conde de Vergennes me encargó que en derecho lo practicase con V. E., a fin de que ni aquí ni al huviese mas personas enteradas que los dos, para que llegue a noticia del Rey su contenido y se mantenga el secreto que conviene.

Esto es, que habiendo considerado ser ya tiempo de facilitar a los Insurgentes de América aquellos auxilios que se pudiesen prestar sin descubrir la mano ni los conductos; avía obtenido de este Soberano un millón de libras tornesas, de las cuales remitía la mitad en moneda efectiva, porque necesitaban de especie física en el Canadá, donde no corrían los billetes como en las demás Colonias. Que para esto compraban en Inglaterra monedas de oro de Portugal, que eran las más estimadas en aquellos parages: y se embiaban al Cap de la isla de Santo Domingo, donde persona de toda confianza ofrecería dicha cantidad a las Colonias como propia de una compañía y como préstamo pagadero en géneros del país a precios corrientes, quando estuviesen las Colonias en el caso de abrir su comercio: y que en la misma forma y en diversos efectos útiles, a sostener la guerra se invertiría y se haría pasar el otro medio millón. Que sin esto se hacía la vista gorda a muchos otros envíos de armas y municiones que algunos emisarios de las Colonias acopiaban y aun negociantes franceses, que desde las Islas proporcionaban su introducción, bien fuese por sí mismos, o bien yendo a buscarlas los propios Americanos.

Que últimamente se les había facilitado la compra de 15.000 fusiles, desentendiéndose que el asentista del armamento los vendiese a ellos en lugar de entregarlos para el servicio de S. M.

Que sabía que en Liege y otras partes se trabajaba para los Americanos hasta artillería de hierro de campaña; y que estando ya empeñados con tesón, era menester contribuir para que recíprocamente se debilitasen; los Ingleses, para quedar destruidos; y los colonos, para ponerlos a la razón en los principios de su independencía.

He ofrecido al Sr. Conde de Vergennes que de mí no saldría la menor especie de esta su confianza y pediría a V. E. que, comunicada al Rei, la reservase a sí tambien, haviéndome prevenido que a ese Embajador nada comunicaría sobre este particular, respecto que por mí llegaba el secreto a noticia del Rei y de V. E.

Dios guarde a V. E. muchos años. = París 7 de Junio 1776. = Excelentísimo Sr. Marqués de Grimaldi.

Despacho autógrato de Grimaldi a Aranda. — 27 Junio 1776
(Reservado n.º 3.) (1)

Exm.º Sr: He dado cuenta al Rey del despacho reservado de V. E. de 7 de Junio, en que V. E. participa lo que le confi6 con el mayor y necesario secreto

el Sr. Conde de Vergennes, relativamente a los socorros que essa Corte se propone suministrar a los Insurgentes de las Colonias Inglesas y aquellos que por diferentes medios les facilita con disimulo; levando en esto esse sabio Ministerio el fin político de contribuir, para que recíprocamente se debiliten, los Ingleses para quedar destruidos, y los Colonos para ponerlos a la razón en los principios de su independenciam.

S. M. ha aplaudido estas medidas de essa Corte, y las halla muy convenientes para las miras que siempre deven tener la España y la Francia, y respecto de ser común a las dos Monarquías el interés, entiende el Rey ser justo sea común también el paso, que ahora se lleve para mantener a los Insurgentes en su estado de resistencia; con este fin me manda el Rey remitir a V. E. el anejo crédito de un millón de livras Tornesas para que se pueda emplear al mismo objeto; No tenemos nosotros los medios de executar lo directamente, y con el necesario dissimulo y secreto; pero V. E. se concertará con el Sr. Conde de Vergenes para los socorros a que convenga emplear esta suma y para el modo de hacerlos llegar a su destino, ya sea siguiendo el camino ya abierto por la Francia, o discurriendo otro más breve, según V. E. y el Sr. Conde de Vergenes crean convenir.

Para no dar lugar a discursos o sospechas, he supuesto al Ministerio de Hacienda ser esta suma destinada a una compra que de orden del Rey se encarga a V. E., y pongo esta carta de mi letra para que no trascienda a nadie este secreto.

Dios guarde a V. E. ms. as.=Madrid 27 de Junio de 1776.=El Marqués de Grimaldi.=Exm.º Sr. Conde de Aranda.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 4072)

Despacho de Aranda a Grimaldi. — 7 Septiembre 1776. (Reservado
n.º 8. Minuta autógrafa)

Excmo. Sr.

Muy Sr. mío: De los dos millones de libras tornesas destinadas por ambas Cortes para auxilios de las Colonias Inglesas de América, se les embían actualmente:

- 216 cañones de bronce.
- 209 cureñas.
- 27 morteros.
- 20 ajustes.
- 12.826 bombas.
- 51.134 balas.
- 300 millares de Pólvora.
- 30.000 fusiles con sus bayonetas.
- 4.000 Tiendas.
- 30.000 Vestidos completos.

Pasan tambien dos oficiales de mérito y graduados para servir allá como Generales, el uno de artillería, que se llama Mr. de Coudrai; el otro de Infantería que es Brigadier, y Americano de nacimiento, Mr. Hopkins, pariente del que ahora hace de Almirante de las Colonias.

Van 38 oficiales de todos los grados para formar en llegando dos regimientos de artillería.

Muchos Ingenieros.

Muchos obreros.

Plomo para balas de fusil.

El embarco de todo esto se hace en diferentes puertos y bastimentos ligeros, dividiéndolo espresamente por si alguno se perdiese, o cayesse en manos de los Ingleses; y todo se practica como si fuesse a cuenta de las Colonias, y remitido por sus emisarios o correspondientes. Toman todos estos bastimentos la ruta de las Islas Bermudas, porque, sobre ser la más despejada de Ingleses, han descubierto con esta ocasión que también es la más corta.

Los habitantes de dichas Islas son libres hasta ahora, y un conjunto de antiguos Filibustiers, que ya quería la Inglaterra apropiarse. Los Colonos Americanos frecuentan con el motivo actual aquellas Islas, y tienen bien dispuestos sus pobladores a unirse a las Colonias, quando estén independientes.

La persona que supone ser aquí cabeza de la Compañía Corresponsal que se ha encargado de adelantar estos auxilios a las Colonias, les escribe también politiqueando, y entrando en el plan de sus operaciones, apoyada del representante que tienen aquí, Mr. de Dienne: pero no dude V. E.º que es

bajo la aprobación del Sr. Conde de Vergennes, y pasado por su vista. Incluyo a V. E.^a copia de la última carta que ha partido para las Colonias en el mes de Agosto, llevándola bien estudiada el patrón americano del bastimento, que está en la confianza del Congreso, para hechar al agua el pliego que ya va bien dispuesto de peso a fin de colarlo a fondo, en caso de hallarse sin recurso de salvarse de los Ingleses; y por si las personas pudiesen evadirse, haga el patrón en voz el relato de su contenido.

Puede V. E.^a cotejar esa carta con la memoria que le embió en otro de mis oficios de esta expedición, y me entregó el Sr. Conde de Vergennes mismo: previniéndome, que respecto no enteraba de ella a esse Embajador, lo advirtiese a V. E.^a, para reserva de sus explicaciones con él, pues el Rey cristianísimo le avía dicho bastaba que por mi mano llegase a instruirse el rey su tío del modo con que en el día pensaba esta Corte.

Dios gue. a V. E.^a etc. París 7 Setiembre de 1776

(P. S.) Ayer en Versailles me dijo el Sr. de Vergennes que me haría conocer a Hopkins, y oy, escrita ésta, ha venido con un papel de dicho Ministro, cuya copia incluyo a V. E.^a. Me ha dicho ser el que yo sabía, y crehía partir en el mes entrante.

Entre las diferentes especies generales que hemos hablado, me ha preguntado si la España permitiría que los americanos entrasen en sus puertos, asy de Europa como de América, con presas Inglesas y Portuguesas; le he respondido que yo no podía contestarle sobre este particular ni uno ni otro, sin hacerlo a ciegas. Me volvió a instar que le dijese mi parecer a lo menos, pues le urgía por la correspondencia que tenía con las Colonias; y le he dicho, que esa misma pregunta la hiciesse a esta Corte, pues la mía, con la unión en que se halla con ella, era regular conformase con sus resoluciones; y quando este Ministerio se explicase conmigo, lo haría yo con el Rey Católico.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 4072)

**Despacho de Grimaldi a Aranda. — 8 Octubre 1776. (Reservado
n.º 10. Original autógrafa)**

Excmo. Sr.

En carta de 7 del pasado informa V. E. del destino que se iba dando a los dos millones de libras tornesas, aplicadas al socorro de las Colonias Inglesas.

Es cierto que ahora más que nunca nos importa alimentar aquella Guerra y incitar a aquellos Colonos a que extiendan su curso y presas sobre las embarcaciones Portuguesas; en quanto a la admisión en nuestros puertos, he manifestado ya a V. E. lo que pensava el Rey; Pero si hiciesen presas portuguesas en la América meridional, en donde tenemos noticias que navegan los Colonos para la Pesca, ningún reparo havría en admitirlos allá, para que vendiesen y se desiciesen de sus Presas, si les acomodase, atendiendo a nuestra situación actual con Portugal.

Dios gue. a V. E. ms. as. como deseo. = S. Ildefonso y 8 Octubre 1776.
= El Marqués de Grimaldi. = Excmo. Sr. Conde de Aranda.

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 4072)

**Relación de los auxilios prestados en Europa a los EE. UU.
26 Octubre 1794. (1)**

AÑO DE 1776

*Socorros dados a los Estados Unidos de América por medio del señor
Conde de Aranda, Embaxador en París de aquel tiempo.*

Carpeta n.º 2. En 27 de Junio le remitió el Sr. Marques de Grimaldi con dicho objeto un millón de libras tornesas.

Id. n.º 3. En 12 de Julio avisó su recibo.

Id. n.º 7. Y en 7 de Septiembre el destino que se las iba dando con acuerdo del Ministerio Francés.

AÑO DE 1777

Id. por medio del señor Dn. Diego de Gardoqui

Carpeta n.º 1.º En 18 de Marzo dió éste cuenta deque a consecuencia de lo que le tenía prevenido, había empezado a hacer las remesas en géneros para las Colonias por el Navío Fabby, su Capitán Juan Hoadgec, el qual había cargado solo el valor de 3.000 pesos.

Id. n.º 6. En 21 de Abril se le previno por Dn. Bernardo del Campo que dirigiese al Diputado del Congreso residente en París, Arthur Lee, 50.000 pesos en Letras.

Id. n.º 8. En 24 se dió cuenta de que aquella misma noche le remitía hasta la cantidad de 81.000 libras tornesas.

Id. n.º 9. Y en 27 del mismo avisó que aquel mismo día le enviaba también letras hasta la cantidad de 106.500 libras, que juntas con aquellas ascienden a 187.500.

Id. n.º 15. En 10 y 12 de Mayo avisó Lee su recibo desde París, cuya noticia dió Gardoqui en 28 de Octubre.

Id. n.º 12. En 8 de Mayo remitió Gardoqui la razón de todo lo que se había embarcado para las Colonias en 6 Navios, incluso el Fabby, que queda citado, y el importe de todo ascendió a 946.906 reales 16 maravedis.

AÑO DE 78

Carpeta n.º 1. Está en el mes de Abril. En 3 de Mayo previno Campo a Gardoqui que remitiese nuevamente al mismo Lee 50.000 pesos en letras a París y valor de otros 50.000 en efectos a las Colonias.

Id. n.º 3. En 11 del mismo dió cuenta de haber librado en letras 22.500 libras tornesas.

Id. n.º 5. Y en 18 de Junio que las había repetido casi hasta la cantidad de los 50 000 pesos.

Id. n.º 6. En 20 avisó haberle acusado Lee el recibo de las letras que le envió primero de 22.500 libras tornesas.

Id. n.º 14. Y en 11 de Agosto remitió carta Arthur Lee, fecha en París a 30 de Julio, en que acusaba también el recibo de las que le envió posteriores hasta completar los 50 000 pesos.

Id. n.º 7. En 25 de Junio remitió Gardoqui a Campo la lista de todas las letras que había librado a Lee, según la orden que tenía.

Id. n.º 20. En 3 de Octubre dió cuenta el mismo Gardoqui de haberse comprado ya efectos hasta el valor de los 50.000 pesos, y que se iban embarcando para las Colonias.

Id. n.º 23. Y en 6 de Noviembre de que el Americano Lee le había encargado particularmente 30.000 Mantas.

AÑO DE 79

Carpeta n.º 1. En 22 y 25 de Enero dió cuenta Gardoqui de que el Diputado Lee pretendía que las 30.000 Mantas las pagase la Corte de España.

Id. Y en 1.º de Febrero le contestó Campo diciendo que procurase ver, si le pagaban los Estados su importe, y que, cuando no lo lograra, no sufriría perjuicio alguno.

Esto es todo lo que resulta en punto a deudas de los Estados Unidos, sin que conste aquí el resultado de este pago de 30.000 Mantas; pero según hago memoria, éstas las satisficieron a su tiempo.

Sn. Ildefonso 26 de Octubre de 1794.

Para maior seguridad se ha preguntado a Dn. Joseph de Gardoqui y hijos de Bilbao, que fueron los remitentes de todos los efectos, si las 30.000 Mantas se satisficieron por los Estados Unidos.=Gardoqui. (Esta última nota es autógrafa de D. de Gardoqui).

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3598 bis)

**Relación de los socorros suministrados a los Estados Unidos
en Nueva Orleans y en la Habana**

*Razon de los préstamos o socorros en dinero que en la Nueva Orleans
y en la Havana se han dado a los Colonos Americanos por disposición
de sus respectivos Gobernadores, deducida de la correspondencia de
estos desde fin de Diciembre 1776 hasta Junio de 1779.*

DE LA NUEVA ORLEANS

En 9 de Mayo 1778 a D. Oliverio Pollock, 6.294 pesos fuertes.

En 25 al mismo 17.729.

En 5 Agosto y 12 Septiembre 15.945 al mismo.

En carta de Mayo de 1778 dió cuenta el Gobernador de la Luisiana de haber subido los géneros remitidos por los Españoles a los Americanos a 26.900 pesos fuertes; los auxilios eran armas, ropas, Quina. (1)

DE LA HABANA

Se dió orden, 27 Marzo 78, que se prestasen hasta 50.000 pesos: sólo se dieron 14.424 a D. Alexandro Gillón, Jefe de Escuadra de la Carolina del Sur.

Se giraron letras a Miralles por esta cantidad que él debió cobrar.

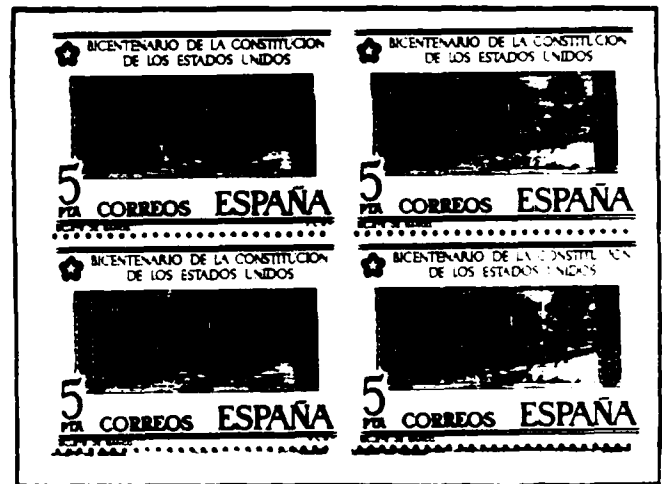
13 Septiembre 1780.=Gálvez.

(Aunque esta relación tiene fecha 13 de Septiembre de 1780, la insertamos aquí por su íntimo enlace con el anterior documento).

(A. H. N., Estado, leg. 3684;

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