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Truth
and
Good Advice,
to the
Inhabitants of Germany,
Especially in
Hesse.

Deliver the oppressed from the hand of the oppressor; let not justice be repugnant to you.

Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth, and don't be afraid of anybody.

Jesus Sirach and Paul.

Philadelphia, Printed by *Carl Cist*, on
Market Street, 1783.

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Apology.

Not for critics, not for the learned, no! I write only for people of common sense. I don't sit in a study, nor at a table covered with books; the tent, or quarters that aren't much better, is my abode where I make public the following obvious truths. I do this purely out of love for my compatriots (I was once a Hessian) so that I might see them happy and wrested from a yoke of slavery.

I am, unfortunately, not a scholar; I commend myself, therefore, not to the protection of the learned; after all, what concern are critics to people of common sense? Only to you, my former compatriots, do I commend myself. God bless you and my undertaking!

The Honest Truth.

[4] Empty

[5] The love of one's fellow human beings, especially of those who are in more than usual need of compassion, obligates everyone, including me, to come to their aid with good advice and to give them the necessary suggestions for the improvement of their circumstances. This is also, upon closer consideration, our duty and very much in accord with the mandates of our holy Christian religion which commands us most definitely: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself and whatsoever you would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Thus, it must be our utmost endeavor to show the necessary means with which we can improve the circumstances of those near us in order to make them as happy as possible: Since it is certain that people deserve, in accordance with their noble destiny, to be happy—free—and independent.

Therefore I want to turn first of all to my compatriots who, in my opinion, are most in need of good advice and of the means necessary (6) to free themselves from their oppressive slavery (which is in every respect comparable to the Egyptian servitude) and to make themselves free and happy people.

Let me dedicate, then, with God's help and blessing, to these my friends and compatriots this small endeavor which they can rightfully demand of me.

All of Germany, except for a few imperial cities, sighs these days under the iron yoke of slavery. This country, hardly one third the size of North America, has to maintain an emperor, a king, more than seventy electors, and other greater and lesser princes and bishops in royal splendor and wastefulness. In addition, Germany must provide for a huge number of prelates with princely rank and other types, counts and barons, as well as countless privileged peasant abusers, all of whom they [the inhabitants] alone must support with their sweat and hard work. While, on the other hand, only fourteen governments have to be maintained in the big and expansive America, each one of which costs little more than 50,000 *Gulden* annually to keep up, which is thus much (7) less than what a count's court and government costs. What, then, is left over in Germany for the pitiful citizen and countryman is unfortunately very little and hardly sufficient to keep him alive; and even this little is misused by the German tyrants. Husbands are being forcefully separated from their children and wives, some from the hearths of widows and old

parents whose support they should have been and sold to bloodthirsty tyrants. All this so that these husbands and sons can be treated worse than brute cattle, and can be shot dead or shot lame in foreign wars for no other reason than to enrich their pleasure-seeking and unjust territorial lord so that he can indulge himself even more with his favorites and court creatures with this blood money.

I don't think it is necessary to show and prove that this way of treating your fellow human being is not in any manner permissible according to divine and human right and that it is in conflict with nature: a bit of common sense with which benign mother nature has endowed us to examine what is right and wrong will be sufficient to understand that this way of proceeding on the part of the German tyrants is abominable, (8) highly unjust, and completely contrary to the will of the most wise creator.

If all human beings were equally virtuous and if all were to follow the laws of our God and nature, as it is indeed their duty, then authorities would not be necessary. But unfortunately, since the beginning of creation experience has shown that good and bad people were created at the same time; therefore, it was necessary to choose authorities to be in charge of the law and of justice, so as to protect the weak from the strong and to maintain good order. These persons of authority who thus took care of the well-being of the entire society could not, at the same time, provide the necessary livelihood for themselves and their families. Nothing was then fairer than that all of society, over which such authority ruled and which was protected from all enemies and injustices by that authority, had to maintain said authority in its proper station out of society's means.

However, insofar as such an authority can be compared to today's tyrants who claim to represent the authority instituted by God, I want to leave to your own judgment.

The tyranny in our fatherland today cannot be considered as an authority instituted by God; (9) it is an authority which, instead of untiringly caring for the best interests and the well-being of its subjects, is only trying to figure out with their favorites and advisors how they can steal from their poor subjects, either by force or cunning, the money and the fruits of their hard work.

I don't find in Holy Scripture, which I take here as a guide, a special creation of kings and princes; only human beings did God create; and later on these were godless and foolish enough to make kings and princes, causing their own misery and ruination, contrary to God's specific command. Thus, their presumed privilege cannot be proved with the word of God; and those who will read God's word in its entire context and not in single, fragmented pieces, as the teachers of such enslaved subjects are told to use for their instruction, will find that Holy Scripture is completely opposed to this presumed privilege. All one needs to do is to read, for example, verses 22 and 23 in chapter 8 of the Book of Judges and the 10th, 11th, and 12th chapter of the Book of Wisdom in proper context.

Therefore, I would like to state the wish (10) to be persuaded and enlightened by Holy Scripture as to whence those of my fellow human beings who call themselves princes, etc., by the grace of God, have the right to pretend to have a hereditary right of authority and power over their fellow human beings to decide arbitrarily questions of life and death, to make their often all too godless will to be the law of the land, and to press out of them lots of taxes. (The question to our redeemer "whether it is lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" whereupon the redeemer very wisely responded *Render therefore unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's* doesn't belong here, and that for two important reasons: First, as Christ himself comments, the coin was imperial with Caesar's own image, thus his very own money, coined by him. Secondly, the Jews were then Roman vassals and consequently as such obligated to pay tribute to their conquerors, the Romans.) Furthermore, that these princes rob from their so-called subjects the fruits of all their hard work, and not content with what the founder of our religion says, that while one may take the wool from sheep one may not skin them. And even though, in a figure of speech, the (11) latter happens all too often, they, not content with doing that, drag away by force and cunning their subjects from their God-given fatherland and sell them for money to bloodthirsty tyrants and force them to make their innocent fellow human beings become unhappy slaves like themselves (fellow human beings who possibly still possess as much virtue as those Israelites in Egypt to dare to shake off the iron yoke of slavery). Or these subjects are forced to satisfy their

Princes' mania for domination, conquest, assassination, and vengeance and their insatiable envy and avarice and in so doing lose their lives and health in foreign wars and become the innocent victims of this foolishness.

For he who lets himself be used, against the conviction of his conscience and of reason, for this hangman-like, murderous business, doesn't deserve to be a human being. These dregs of the human race, I mean those Americans who turn their back on virtue, humanity, and their fatherland which gave them existence, life, and nourishment, Americans who are commonly called Tories or refugees, who left their fatherland, friends, and relatives in time of need and became their [the compatriots's] traitors and (12) Judasses, and even went to fight in the manner of bandits this just and innocent people, and were even their worst enemies, Americans who washed their godless and murderous hands in the blood of their relatives with devilish pleasure. Americans who wherever they went and didn't find any resistance, robbed, plundered, murdered, and burned widows and orphans without distinction. Can one call them human beings? No! They are devils incarnate, worse even than their tyrants whom they serve and whose interest is furthered by them.

But ignorance, superstition, and prejudice, which are carefully maintained in the German despotic and absolutist states and are even preached to the ignorant people from the pulpit, are the causes of the slavery of such people. Any investigation whether this or that is really just and fair is punished there [in the despotic states] most cruelly, and every budding, patriotic virtue is carefully nipped in the bud by a large number of subordinate and always alert minor tyrants. Because only people who are without true love of human beings and extremely conceited, proud and servile (13) in their crawling, slave-like honor, a shame to the human race, are appointed to these tyrannical offices, to be administrators and commanders. The endeavors of these godless people are directed only to maintain themselves and their superiors in as much luxury and abundance as possible so as to be the only ones to travel in coaches, to live in palaces, and to be supported in all this and in their life of sin by a host of their wretched subjects whom they endeavor to let languish in utmost misery and to starve in extreme slavery.

A German author, Baron von T. . . , who himself served as a minister of state at one of the German courts, judges quite correctly the German subjects when he says the following:

“To be sure, the subjects were industrious and hard-working animals, their homes full of holes, ready to collapse, unable to think of their improvement because of the frightening amount of taxes: on top of that they only had the shape of human beings, in everything relating to understanding they were completely blind and as ignorant as animals. I found among the entire mass few who could read and even fewer who could write. Still, this is (14) unfortunately the rule of conduct of the German princes, counts, and noblemen, since they say: Our peasants must be oppressed, otherwise their uppishness makes them masters. Also, they must be kept poor by a multitude of taxes, so that they do not leave the boundaries of humility and a state of submissiveness into which they are born. Their knowledge must not go beyond the taking care of their land and animal husbandry; if they know more, they want to argue and they will constantly find something to object to in our ordinances; they will grumble or possibly even complain about imposed assessments, all of which make them stubborn. Stupidity keeps them in slavery as long as they don't know of a better existence. In short, one must treat them like cattle that are created only to obey, serve and give us pleasure and not at all like human beings; otherwise they would think of themselves as our equals. The full weight of the cudgel of the slave master, the sharp whip of the functionary, the penitentiary, and the Spanish torture coat must instill in them such awe that they will crawl in front of us and take us for beings of a higher order.”

(15) “For this reason I no longer take pleasure in being at the German courts; in addition, I cannot crawl since I have been created upright. I don't like to bend down since my back is a bit stiff; a certain inflexibility that has its seat under the left chest caused me not to have learned how to flatter nor to maltreat others. Furthermore, the only thing the courts of the German princes show is the ostentatious exterior of the country in the pompous fake splendor and perpetration of the greatest vices, nourished by the immeasurable taxes of the subjects. While, at the same time, the oppressed subject sheds almost as many tears as drops of sweat when sighing under the yoke of the most severe slavery and works only for the splendor and the revelry of the court, and during all this walks

around poorly and wretchedly clothed and barely feeds himself and his oppressed family with poor bread and the water of misery. For in such German states the peasant dripping with sweat barely has wretched left-over food because he must work, not only for the prince but also for the nobleman, the administrator, the priest, and the leaseholder. All of these, in turn, must render their assessments (16) to the court and make it plentiful, shiny, splendid, and lush.”

From the above truths it becomes clear that in such a country the idea of freedom and how one would save oneself can hardly surface. Furthermore, it is now completely clear and proven why my compatriots cannot have any understanding of the holy rights of human nature and of freedom and why they obey the will of one of their fellow human beings and his appointed tyrannical underlings with unswerving loyalty in every respect. There isn't a town or village too small for the prince not to maintain and to pay his administrators and servants who have to watch out carefully so as to keep the subjects in deepest ignorance and slavery. Even those in charge of pastoral work and teaching the gospel are not free of this vice and naturally cannot be free if they don't want to lose their servile honor, their subsistence which they receive exclusively from their lords of the land or through the mediation of his creatures. No wonder then, that they contribute their share and try to strengthen even more for their own interest the maintenance of slavery under the pretense of religion.

(17) Oh! poor wretches: Is there no means left to liberate you from such a condition that is unbecoming to human beings and inappropriate to their noble destiny. Yes, there is an easy one, namely, if you want to break the weak bonds of slavery—want to leave your land of slavery—and want to come to America and there become free and happy citizens. Especially for you, my fellow soldiers, for you who were, because of the insatiable avarice of your tyrants, sold to England and now find yourself by fate in this land of freedom and true humanity, for you, I say, it is something very easy.

But, I hear some among you say: we had *to swear the oath of loyalty* to our Landgrave and to the King, and isn't it perhaps a sin to break it?

You don't have to worry that leaving the Hessian slave service is a *sin*. No, on the contrary, it is a virtue, one of the noblest. Hesse, because it sold you to England, naturally had to waive all claims on you as

subjects. If you lived in your fatherland and were protected against any kind of injustice, as is proper, then it is your duty to obey its (18) laws and fulfill your obligations. However, as soon as you renounce your rights in the fatherland and live in another country and enjoy its protection, then your loyalty toward the first ceases immediately and is due to the country in which you live or to which you intend to go.

But this is not at all the case here. You were led out of your fatherland with shameful intentions, sold to a foreign monarch for his murderous service, and already over 5,000 of your compatriots have become victims, suffering an untimely death in battle (by the sword) or by field diseases. They died because of their dishonorable slave-like service which is a disgrace to human beings. Therefore, if you will leave this slave-like service—and what can you do that would be more praiseworthy—then your fatherland can no longer protect your property [?], or to state it better, then the Landgrave can no longer abuse you, also no longer sell you, something from which, as you yourself know, you are never secure; and therefore you owe him and your former fatherland no more duties. If you look at it closely, you were already released of your (19) duties toward your country when you landed here in America, according to the law of nature which doesn't err and is among all rights the safest and the only true one. Would it then not be ridiculous and foolish to consider yourself as a Hessian subject unless you voluntarily agreed? After all, your Landgrave sold you and left you at the mercy of a tyrant who had bought you for his blood service, a Landgrave who left you also at the mercy of those you were taught to consider your enemies.

In addition, the oath you swore is not a legitimate one but a forced one, and that oath is better broken than kept. You were unconditionally forced to swear it, and you had in your fatherland not the least way out to avoid swearing it; in short, you had to swear it, no matter what your heart, conscience or inclination felt or thought about it: thus, exactly what the Apostle Paul says in his Letter to the Romans, chapter 13, verse 5, would apply to you: *ye must needs be subject*, that is, when you can't change or prevent it. Because he also says in his first Letter to the Corinthians, chapter 7, verse 21: *but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather*, try as hard as you can and use all your powers to gain freedom because (20) this is better [than enslavement]. In the same place, in

verse 33 [recte 23] he says: *You are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.* This is such a clear warning that it cannot tolerate any other interpretation.

This country, America, is free and her steadfast and virtuous inhabitants have been declared worthy of independence by most of the European powers, and soon it will certainly be recognized in the definitive peace treaty as one of the happiest free republics by the entire world.

Here there aren't any tyrants, any kings or princes, etc., whom you have to maintain in splendor, pomp, arrogance, abundance, and gluttony. Here you don't find any distinction by birth, you don't find the birth defects of slavery, the rewards of tyranny, the fruits of human vanity and foolishness, (namely) counts, lords, barons, etc. And should by chance one of them, having come from far-away places, live in the Free States of America, he does not enjoy any privileges as he would among us; rather, he is in the political as well as in the common life the equal of the free citizen in every respect; here everything is completely in accordance with nature; there are no differences other than those of religion, I mean (21) pious and godless ones, and that of nature, as rich and poor, and still I have to admit in truth that I haven't seen a beggar, despite the disastrous war, during my stay here of more than seven years.

Here the law of God, of nature and of fairness is the only ruler, and not, as back home, the often godless will of a fool, of an incompetent or a ruthless one, the law of the land. No, here the administrators are elected only from the wisest, oldest, and the patriotically minded people to maintain law and justice and the necessary good order in society so as to protect each one's life and property; in order to watch out incessantly for the well-being and common good. Different from the way we have it where the authorities have nothing else in mind but how they can take away from the poor subject all of his earnings by force under the pretense of a law, imposing new and increased taxes for the luxurious life at their courts.

Here authority cannot be tyranny since authority depends on your choice; thus you wouldn't elect to be your judge a godless or an evil person; and should (22) by chance a dissembler, unbeknown to you, obtain a position of authority, and it turns out that he is more concerned about his own advantage than about the common good, then all you have to do is to demand from him an accounting and make him

responsible, to depose him, to punish him according to his crime, and to elect someone else in his place. In general, all the authorities, from the highest to the lowest position, are elected here every year anew.

Here exists and is valid no law and ordinance other than those to which you (once you are American citizens) give your full consent by the majority of votes. Here you don't have assessments, Petri, Martini, and princess taxes, no customs, lease payments, rents, tithe, concessions, forest, and mast payments, water tributes, in addition to forest, office, reprimand, judicial court fines and penalties. The entire sequence of an infinite number of assessments which at home the citizen has to pay, the end of which he doesn't ever see, are totally unknown here. — The ignoble business of a country inspector, or a visiting agent, and the military enforcement of forced sales are completely unknown here.

(23) Here there are no such lazy loafers who are all over our fatherland, who are maintained and live off the poor citizen and countryman whom they squeeze out of all their money.

Here in America one doesn't have any taxes except those that we have, too (but not those for the Prince and the revenues), that is, for the salaries of a few persons of authority and public servants; for the maintenance of public buildings, in the service of justice, of good order, of peace in the land, of church service, of military and general roads, and in the service of the poor and the needy. Furthermore, the interest on the foreign and national debt of about 80 million Spanish *Thaler* or 160 million German *Gulden* incurred during the most recent glorious war—a war, as you yourself know, in which a substantial part of the noble human race through benign God's obvious help freed itself from slavery and made itself independent. That is a very reasonable and low price for America which has over three million inhabitants [souls] and is increasing in population every day more and more; so that if each person were to pay off the (24) debt with five *Gulden* annually, that debt would have been completely paid off within eleven years, including interest. Add to this that America has so many important advantages and resources in connection with the most extended commerce (since almost every inhabitant has a harbor in front of his door), of the many important commercial products, such as victuals, ships, and wood products, fur, fish, fish oil, spices, pharmaceutical products, indigo, rice, tobacco, cotton, silk, tar, and the other products of the pine tree, hemp,

flax, and iron, etc., etc. Furthermore, on account of the almost immeasurable and more than 30,000 million acres of uncultivated, first-rate land, it turns out that taxes here in America are therefore relatively very small. For someone who owns 120 *Morgen*, all of his taxes will not reach more than six *Gulden* annually, and these six *Gulden* even the lowest day laborer can earn easily within eight days.

Now I ask you, my dear compatriots, compare these few assessments with the multitude of assessments in your fatherland which the Prince uses at his court to show off like a king, to erect unnecessary, expensive buildings, palaces, to build gardens, etc., etc., (25) to feed a host of useless loafers, such as ministers, advisors, generals, state and other officers, servants for the court and the hunt, people in charge of finances, peasant abusers in innumerable numbers. Furthermore, he feeds Italian and French actors, marmot carriers, puppet makers, musicians, singers, dancers, eunuchs, whores, and fools, and God knows whom else, entire armies of unnecessary rabble. And all of these he takes care of and maintains in great splendor, waste, and abundance: While the poor peasant, in order to feed all of these, has to carry out the toughest labor, worrying about food, sweating and crying from early morning to very late at night. He must clothe himself in rags and still his hunger with the rawest and worst gifts of God in order to earn the taxes for the above purposes.

Here one doesn't know anything of tithes or compulsory labor, even during a war.

Every one of the inhabitants here may do, believe and think what he wants and what his fancy tells him. Nothing keeps him from this either on the part of the authorities or of religion; freedom of conscience has no limits here.

(26) Also, here no man or youth is forced to become a soldier nor are sons taken away from their parents and sold to foreign monarchs. Here one doesn't know of any mercenary soldier, every citizen is a soldier, and every soldier a citizen and always ready to defend and protect the fatherland against all tyrants and invasions. And precisely this is the noble destiny of the soldier and the citizen, and for that reason God has let the inhabitants of this country carry off the most glorious victory over its proud, mighty enemies which number more than a dozen nations—inhabitants who had no standing armies, no ammunition

depots, no manufacturing plants. And isn't it strange that this heap of citizens who rallied, who didn't even know how to shoot a gun, did not, during the entire war, experience the shame of an affair like Saratoga or Trenton?

Oh! immortal Washington! most glorious hero of all heroes! who ever lived! Redeemer and liberator of your compatriots, to you, next to God, is due immortal thanks and eternal honor. May your patriotic heroic honor live forever in America (27) and may enemies tremble before your name!

You are being invited to this happy country where already many thousands of our compatriots are well-to-do, happy residents, living in abundance and where there is uncultivated good rich land for many millions of people to become happy—free and independent citizens. One hundred acres of land (which is the same as our 120 *Morgen*), with ten years [free of taxes] are at the disposal of any man for a very low price and fifteen-year credit; the land can be in an area of your choice, with the condition that there have to be at least sixty of you who want to settle in such an area. After the fifteen years you will have to pay off this small purchase amount as is surely right and as you without doubt will be able to do. In addition, you will also be given the necessary advance for the purchase of livestock, farm equipment, seeds, the necessary household items, and victuals for one year, with the reasonable stipulation that after fifteen years all this has to be paid back, including interest. Can you think of anything fairer than this to make one's fellow human beings happy?

(28) Within a year, then, a new beginner can have built a comfortable, so-called blockhouse, planted a kitchen garden, and harvested at least three acres of grain of all kinds, while, at the same time, his cattle for breeding and poultry will have multiplied a lot. For a change you can also, at a convenient time, go hunting, and, if there are rivers or lakes nearby, go fishing to improve the food supply. Because fish and game are for the taking and belong to him who catches or shoots them, not as back home where the Landgrave has appropriated to himself all of this, even the use of the mast in the forest, and all the wood and water on the basis of a foolish hereditary right, even though the benign creator has made all this for the use of all of mankind, not for the property of a single individual. Because, if this were true [i.e.,

the hereditary rights of princes], why then did God not create a separate race of people which had such advantages over others and was superior to people? Therefore, daily experience convinces me that with appropriate orderliness, willingness to work, and industry, you will not, within a period of three years, exchange your happy situation with the best (29) German farmer, even, I may say, with a German nobleman; because Americans enjoy surely more freedom and rights than a nobleman in Germany.

Therefore, I have to try to make my compatriots in New York, etc. better aware of the advantage as regards human happiness in this country in comparison to the miserable and slave-like existence in Hesse and to relate this difference more directly to them.

You are, or better, you were Hessian subjects. Your territorial lord sold 13,500 of his subjects or of your fellow citizens to the king of Great Britain to serve in the American war, for 35 pounds sterling or 200 *Thaler* per head, annually, exclusive of the subsidies which are also considerable. If such turning over of Hessian troops to English payrolls in return for such an enormous sum of money—of which the regiment receives but a little less than half for payment, clothes, and other military necessities—cannot be called “sold,” then I truly do not know a more appropriate term for it. Unless I were to call it sale of souls, and I am very much (30) justified to call it that since the English crown has to compensate the Landgrave with a large sum for each one who died in action or who died from his wounds; also for every wounded one and for those who have been taken prisoner. Now it will have become clear to you that you were sold by the Landgrave, and this cannot be denied by his filled-up coffers, his court creatures, made wealthy in this manner, and the unhappy parents, women, and children whose relatives remained in America dead.

The 44th Psalm and other passages of the Holy Scripture will put in a despicable light your Prince’s presumptuous behavior and godless and diabolical way, contrary to the laws of God and humanity.

Enough, you were recruited by force in the winter of 1776, put into the regiments and, under escort of Hanoverian cavalry, marched to Bremerlehe and Ritzbüttel, a march that took six weeks. There an oath of loyalty to England and Hesse was wrested from you by force and you were packed without your consent onto the boats. To be sure, you were

led to believe you were to be taken (31) to England as an occupation force; but a twenty-two week ship journey finally opened your eyes and you were in the country of liberty without tasting it; rather, you still drag the chains of slavery to this day.

And he who still has all his limbs in good shape, who escaped death, lived through the exertion of a seven-year, laborious, and bloody war, can indeed call himself lucky. But what will be your reward, when you come home, for your faithful and good services that brought for the money-greedy Prince the sum of one million pounds sterling annually, blood money that cries out for revenge. Shall I answer for you? An arduous return journey that you already know and the success of which is known only to God. Storms are the steady companions of the sea, and imagining you on it, entrusted to a semi-rotten barge, that makes me shudder! I will, though, wish that you will happily get home; what do you have then?

He who is still young and sufficiently tall, receives the favor, as long as it is to the captain's liking, and until he is old and stiff, to remain a soldier at the daily rate of three *Kreutzer* and a half (32) pound of bread as well as a coat every three years.

He who is already an old son of a gun or good for nothing, who is short of stature, and he who has been made unfit for the service by the fatigues of war, these have the privilege of being sent to the countryside with a discharge or beggar's permit. So that, if a bloodthirsty sovereign has the notion of making war, the ruler can sell his subjects once more and let them be killed. Such a one can now go begging wherever he wants or he can work for a farmer for twelve to eighteen *Thaler* annually and eat but meager food, do the most strenuous and heaviest work from early morning until late at night. What of this pay can be saved, you know yourself.

Another one possibly has a bit of land and money. He can go home and work for his Prince day and night. He can do compulsory labor for the court and for the nobility. He can worry day and night about how he can raise his assessments and the many other taxes and how he can keep away from the door those who collect debts by force and he can worry about how he can pay his laborers. And even if God's blessing was abundant, he will be able (33) to eat hardly a bare pound of meat on Sunday and drink at the most a pot of beer. He who has lost the use

of some of his limbs as the result of a bad injury or another who after thirty years of service has turned old and stiff and has sacrificed his health and energy to the insatiable avarice of his Prince, that is, maybe one out of fifty, what does he have to expect? A pension of one *Gulden* for life or one *Thaler* monthly. But that is hardly enough to stay alive even if he lives off nothing but water and bread; from where will he pay for clothes and shoes, etc.? He will have to go begging. Oh, good God! how miserable does he fare, and still this is called a princely act of grace. May God graciously protect everyone from this.

Oh! my dear countrymen and soldiers! consider all of this quite carefully and tear yourself away by force from such slavery. You are even going to be made responsible for putting children into this world in such a country. Human beings are free and are born so; but not in Germany where they are slaves beginning with their birth. You don't even (34) enjoy freedom of conscience even though you are Protestants. For example, is it not certain that the father, if he belongs to the Reformed Church, is not allowed to let his son become a Lutheran, or vice versa. Conscience, being each human being's own, may think about this what it wants. When the sons are fourteen years old, they are confirmed, entered into the church record—and into the draft register. These tender fourteen-year-old youths have to swear by the colors of their canton so that they won't leave the country for another where they would learn a skill and not return, meaning the Prince could not make a claim on their money. Also, if the Prince needs them as soldiers and wants to sell them, they would be easily called in, and if they don't report immediately, he would confiscate their possessions or their part of them, without regard to their family or parents. These are in addition to heavy fines and prison sentences if it can be shown even in the slightest way that their sons left the country with their knowledge; and the parents are also tortured until the Prince gets their sons.

(35) When a father has educated a son or several sons with great patience, care, sacrifice, and costs to let him or them learn a craft or farming; when he then hopes and believes, since he is already advanced in age and weak, that these his sons, out of childlike duty, would share the heavy load with him and would lighten his work; then they are drafted as soldiers either into field or garrison regiments. In the former the son receives only three *Kreutzer* per day; this he knows how to convey

to his father so that he, in turn, tries his best to supply his son with an additional sum of money as well as the cost of new pants, leggings, shoes, and shirts so that his captain won't deny him furlough for a few months. The other son who is maybe in a garrison regiment where he doesn't receive any pay and a coat hardly every twelve years, the father has to support in everything with his own money. Truly I have known parents and widows who had three, also four to five sons, all of whom had been recruited as soldiers just because they had the misfortune of having grown a bit tall and handsome; these parents, in order to come up with their taxes, had to hire laborers from other places. (36) In addition, their sons cost them a pretty penny; all this without having therefore remitted the least little bit of their taxes. So that at the end they were totally ruined, and their property, because of outstanding governmental and other types of debts, was declared from the pulpit in the church to be auctioned off by judicial authority, and they themselves were turned into beggars.

All this would really still not mean so much since the sons remained, after all, in the country and served, in name if not in fact, the fatherland, and the parents could make use of their sons once in a while, even though in general in a rather limited way. But then a war starts (I want to assume the case in the years 1741 until 1744) between the emperor and Holland; now all the sons are drafted, widows are bereft of their support, and young women of husbands, and these sons are leased, or better, sold [i.e., to the emperor and Holland]. Because even though Holy Scripture says: *No man can serve two masters*, still the above-mentioned years have shown that it is possible in-as-much as at that time Hesse, for money, served both parties.

(37) Sooner or later the relatives hear about the death of their friend or the father that of his son, etc., etc. The death of that son results in a sizable sum of money for the Prince; without the father or mother having the least advantage from this, except that they can truthfully say: Now, praise the Lord, he is dead! and has endured all misery, and we are relieved from taking care of him. — Another soldier returns home without an arm or a leg or otherwise as a cripple, or because of diseases contracted during the war, with an emaciated, unhealthy body and brings with him maybe one *Gulden* or one *Thaler* monthly charitable pay if he

is lucky; now he is a burden to the family which must feed him until death as a countryman or citizen whom the Prince cannot use.

I repeat therefore once more: Is it not a sin, one of the greatest sins, to beget sons and to bring them up just for the avarice, the profit, and the pleasure of such a tyrant?

It is indeed a real shame for the human race that some let themselves be used by their so-called princes who are made of the same earth as they themselves and who quite often possess less (38) reason, etc., than one of the least of their fellow human beings, that these people let themselves be used for the lowest and most shameful purposes. These human beings only work for their Prince, all the money they can raise they give him while they live off the most miserable food, food no dog would eat in America; they drink water and clothe themselves in rags so that they can deliver the rich blessing of the Lord to the gullet of their insatiable Prince; their children, yes, even themselves they leave to the Prince for the most despicable and shameful purposes so that he can profit from them and sell them like cattle and leave them to be shot dead or to become cripples. Do such human-shaped creatures who let themselves be treated thus in the most ignoble way by one of their fellow human beings in an arbitrary and disgraceful manner, do they, I say, deserve to be human beings or to be called that?

No! rather apes would deserve this name. Because this kind of human being resigned from the nature of humanity and has become lower in the world of creation than non-rational cattle. If our free ancestors had known that their descendants should degenerate worse than (39) to a slave-like and animal-like level and should deny everything human, they would rather have mutilated themselves in order not to be able to produce such a species of human shapes. I believe that if the devil were to come out of hell (and I speak metaphorically) and wanted to go to war with God or his pious followers and demanded for this purpose 10,000 or 15,000 Hessians for a good price, the Prince would, without the slightest reflection, sell them to him, and even if the devil wanted to throw all of them into hell so that the Prince would not see a single one again, that would be very much to the Prince's liking. Especially if there had been the agreement with the devil, as there has been one now with England, that the devil would have to pay the Prince for each missing Hessian after the end of the subsidy treaty 150 to 200 *Reichs Thaler*. That this

accord is much to the liking of the Prince is shown by the present American war in which certainly more than 5,000 innocent Hessians have been sacrificed, for which the tyrants pulled in the precious blood money. And I am certain the Hessian people would not resist this but would rush with pleasure straight into hell or at least into ruination because the Landgrave wants it thus. (40) It is not possible to believe that human beings could deviate from their noble and divine destiny to such a degree but still, it is, as experience shows every day, all too true. You Hessians! be ashamed of your disgraceful, despicable situation which is most unbecoming a human being, no longer be the absolute slaves of one of your fellow human beings, break the chains of slavery, tear yourself out of darkness and slavery into which your ancestors, because of their timidity and fear, plunged you, come to this land of freedom where you, even if you arrive naked, can become within a short time again human beings, indeed free and happy ones. Be pious here, virtuous, congenial, and industrious; thus you will be a human being as God created him in his image, free and not as a servant; you are masters of the earth and of creation, and happy here and there, forever. Break the unjust oath that you swore, by force, out of fear, and without reflection to a human being who pretends in a sacrilegious and unjust manner to have power, mastery, and tyranny over you. Leave such a monster who calls himself *Father* of his people and who, as soon as someone gives him 100 or (41) 150 *Thaler* binds his child's hands, leads the child personally to the slaughtering bench, and calmly watches as the child's throat is cut and who can sleep peacefully with the blood on his conscience of more than 5,000 innocent subjects entrusted to him. And who can wallow in all devilish debaucheries together with his courtiers and other creatures on the basis of this infernal blood money. Despise the tyrant, come all of you, and may his blood-indebted land be deserted and stay so, and may nobody live in it anymore.

I believe I fairly opened the eyes of my compatriots by these few truths and if they themselves want to use their eyes, then they will see everywhere around them additional misery in their fatherland, which on the one hand is not possible to enumerate because of the little space of these few leaves, and which on the other hand are connected closely with those already mentioned and which are the unavoidable consequence of slavery.

Therefore, I want to conclude at this time in the hope that on the basis of a reasonably carried out comparison between the free and happy citizens of this America and the subjects of Germany, at least of Hesse, my beloved compatriots will certainly find the advantage on the side of America.

(42) Oh! May you now make the firm decision to leave the Hessian slave service as soon as possible, to settle here in America, not to reject, to your disadvantage, the generous offers of the noble Americans but to become here happy and free citizens. I am convinced beforehand that if you work but four days per week you will find yourself within four years in such circumstances that, when you consider matters carefully, you will hesitate to exchange your happy situation with one of the wealthiest German farmers or noblemen.

May the good Lord, the creator, father and mild ruler of us all give to this his best blessing; that wishes sincerely your

countryman and best friend.

[43]

Excerpt from a song,
by an American Grenadier,
to the Hessians and others.
In the year 1777.

Are there not enough graves
In Europe for you
That the sea carried you
From far-away realm to our coast?
2. Did wild rage inflame you,
Fill you with such murderous lust
That you condemn a foreign people
To be servants as you are?
3. You enemies, listen to this! Your burden
Will not be eased
If the yoke of slavery bends
Ever so hard our neck, too.
4. But we scorn your army
And will never bow our heads,
Even if like sand at the sea
A continent were to run over us.
5. God is with us, and our hand
We harden in battle,
We fight for the fatherland
That we freed from the yoke.
6. Helvetians, Batavians,*
You, noble ones, we cheer,
You defied the tyrants' army,
We defy it like you.

* The Swiss and Dutch.

7. You have long enjoyed the bliss of peace
After many a hard battle,
On us, too, through rage and smoke
Peace smiles from the distance.

(44)

8. Once when cannons no longer glow,

Cannon thunder is silent,
 No longer warriors pass through the land,
 Then the goal has been reached.
 9. Then the hero rejoices in his victory,
 Rejoices in safe peace,
 We harvest then in the field of carnage:
 The entire world will cheer us.
 10. Early on you learned the art
 Of slaughtering us,
 The art of murder we never practiced
 In the bosom of peace.
 11. Still we rejoice in many a
 Victory already!
 To that Boston, Montreal,
 And Trenton bear witness.
 12. Only for low wages do you fight,
 You don't fight for freedom.
 In our army there is *Washington*,
 Who only fights for freedom.
 13. Not pay inflames noble ardor
 To great deeds,
 Do you have the man who like him*
 Can scorn money and property?
 * Like Washington who served without pay.
 14. With your powder we thunder,
 Put on your clothes;
 By your arms you fall,
 Steed and man fall.
 15. You, too, our mighty sword will strike,
 You sons of Germany,
 Why did you leave your hearth,
 Tell us, what did we do?
 (45)
 16. What are you looking for in this foreign land,
 Augmenting our enemy's army?
 The spirit of your ancestors,
 You unworthy ones, no longer rests in you.

17. If Siegmund saw you from Valhalla,
If Hermann saw his people,*
They would surely be ashamed of you
And rightly so.

* The courageous ancestors of the Germans and Hessians.

18. They fought the army of the Romans
With German arms and courage,
And drenched their mighty spears
Only in Tyrants' blood.

19. Their children's children languish now
In the service of foreign nations,
Sell themselves as slaves do,
To the Prince's profit.

20. Come to us, shake off his yoke,
Then you show greater courage,
Come to us, he has sold you,
And feasts upon your blood.

21. And builds palaces of towering height,
And fancies to be great in this;
Woe! that it doesn't call for vengeance,
The blood that he shed.

22. Instead of seeking to murder us
And to destroy our crop,
Enjoy the fruit of your industry
Which now the Prince consumes.

23. Oh come, let Germany be Germany,
And give us your hand.
Beat your swords into sickles
And till with us the land.

(46)

24. Come to us without rancor or deceit
And eat the friendship meal;
We have plenty of shelter
And land beyond all measure.

25. Forgotten shall be the enmity,
Forgotten then the sword,
We want to rejoice like brothers,

Rejoice at one hearth.

26. Now choose, choose what you want,
Be it freedom or death;

Come, favor the plan of friendship,
And don't repay us with scorn.

27. Else God who gave us freedom will help;
Then we will thunder with might,

Like pieces of rock, down upon you,
Upon you, in the fury of the battle.

28. And dust will be your fleet,
Because God grants us fortune;

To your Weser, to your Rhine,
Only a few will ever get back.

[47]

Notice,

All Hessians or Germans who want to become American inhabitants under the conditions contained in this pamphlet, must go to *South Carolina* where a settlement for their benefit will be established.

