

Purpose

The pamphlet was written to persuade Führer's former comrades and other German soldiers to leave the British side and stay in America. Führer first expressed his ideas about the reasons for them to come over to the side of the Revolutionaries in the 1777 poem he included in the 1783 pamphlet. He greatly expanded his argument in its prose sections realizing that poetry was not the right medium to reach the average soldier who often could hardly read and definitely was not interested in literature. Typically, the officers were also not interested in literature. As mentioned above, the officers were in the great majority loyal to their sovereigns and not likely to be persuaded by the condemnation of the German princes and their exploitation of the common man. Führer's hope must have been that copies of his pamphlet would be taken back to Germany by the returning troops and find there sympathetic readers. Thus, he writes toward the end of the exhortation that he wishes that all the inhabitants of Hesse-Kassel would leave their country and come to America (p. 41).

Wahrheit und Guter Rath constitutes a most important statement by a former Hessian officer who went over to the American side and who uses his intimate knowledge of recruitment practices in native Hesse-Kassel to contrast conditions there with the wonderful conditions in America, his newly adopted country.

Notes

References are to pagination of original.

[1] *Hessen/Hesse*: The title is patterned on Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau's *Avis aux Hessois et autres peuples de l'Allemagne Vendus par leurs Princes à l'Angleterre* (1777).

[1] *Carl Cist*: He was born in St. Petersburg in 1738, became a Moravian in America, and had his own printing business, beginning in 1781.

[1] *Paulus*: Letter to the Ephesians 4:25. Biblical quotations are based on the King James Version.

[5] *das Mitleid*: The accusative with *bedürftig* is still possible in the 18th century.

[5] *auch thun sollen/so to them*: Marcus 12:31 and Matthew 7:12.

6 *vierzehn Regierungen/fourteen governments*: In addition to the thirteen original colonies the author might have had Vermont in mind.

9 *Weisheit*: Die Weisheit Salomos.

10 *was Gottes ist/that are God's*: Matthew 22:17-21. Interestingly, Thomas Paine also refers to this biblical passage in *Commons Sense (Rights of Man, Common Sense, and Other Political Writings*, ed. Mark Philip, Oxford University Press, 1995, p. 12), and both Paine and the German author mention that the Jews were Roman vassals at the time.

10 *ziehen dürfte/skin them*: This is a made-up biblical quotation.

11 *Refugies/refugees*: A name given, especially in New York State, to parties of marauders in the American Revolutionary War who claimed British protection.

13 *im größten Pracht*: In the 18th century *Pracht* can be both feminine, as on p. 6, or masculine as here and on p. 25.

13 *Ein deutscher Schriftsteller/A German author*: In spite of an intensive search, I have not been able to identify the author of the quotation. Since the author invented a biblical passage (p. 10), one might assume that he also made up this elaborate passage replete with antifederal arguments.

14 *Spanische Mantel/Spanish torture coat*: A wooden, bell-like yoke worn by convicted criminals.

18 *über 5000 eurer Landsleute/over 5,000 of your compatriots*: The figure is close to the number of dead in Atwood's estimate of 4,983 (p. 255). Other details about the subsidiary treaties, mentioned later on in the text, also seem to be correct in general terms.

18 *dem Rechte der Natur/ 19 law of nature*: The concept of natural law was developed by Samuel Pufendorf (1632-94) and others.

20 *Definitiv=Friedens=Tractat/definitive peace treaty*: The formal treaties of Paris and Versailles were signed on 3 September 1783.

23 *Schulden/debt*: The national debt was \$54,000,000 in 1790.

23 *über 3 Millionen Seelen/over three million inhabitants*: In 1780 there were 2,780,369 inhabitants and 3,929,326 in 1790.

24 *120 Morgen Landes/120 Morgen*: The equivalent of 100 acres.

24 *Sechs Gulden/six Gulden*: About \$2.50. The new government proved to be a model of fiscal responsibility.

26 *mehr als ein Dutzend auserlesene Feindel/mighty enemies which number more than a dozen nations*: There is no basis for this assertion.

26 *einer Saratogischen oder Trentown=ähnlichen Affaire/an affair like Saratoga or Trenton*: The British surrendered at Saratoga on 17 October 1777, Trenton was taken on 26 December 1776.

28 *Blockhaus/blockhouse*: This is the first use of the word with its current meaning. *Blockhaus* is based on American-English *blockhouse* which is in turn derived from *Blockhaus*, a defensive structure. Etymological dictionaries date the first use of the word with its current meaning at the beginning of the 19th century.

30 *Bremerlehe . . . Ritzebüttel*: Bremerlehe, today Bremerhaven-Lehe, northeast of Bremerhaven; Ritzebüttel in the northwest of neighboring Cuxhaven.

31 *nach England/to England*: This is confirmed by Auerbach, pp. 264 and 306.

31 *eine 22 wöchige Schifffreisela twenty-two week ship journey*: Kipping (p. 54) has a reference to twenty-one weeks spent on board ship. Führer's own voyage from England to New York lasted only twelve weeks and six days.

32 *wißt ihr selbst/you know yourself*: The sad fate of veterans is confirmed by Auerbach, p. 343, and Taylor (1994), pp. 193, 223, 228.

34 *14 Jahre alt/fourteen years old*: For confirmation see Auerbach, p. 341. Taylor (1989) states that the *Canton* lists were "backed up by recourse to parish registers" (p. 43).

34 *Canton=Register/draft record*: In Prussia *Canton* was the term for a recruitment district. The term was also used in Hesse-Kassel.

34 *confisciren zu können/would confiscate*: For confirmation of this and the following assertions see Ingrao (1987, pp. 142-45 and 149-50) and Taylor (1994, p. 84). Taylor (1989, p. 51) mentions the flight of entire families upon the approach of recruitment officials.

35 *Feld= oder Garnisons=Regimenter/field or garrison regiments*: Taylor (1989, p. 39) discusses the consequences of the blurring of the distinction between the two types of units by the Landgrave. See also Ingrao (1937, pp. 148-49).

35 *zufließen zu lassen/to supply*. For confirmation see Taylor (1994), p. 223.

36 *an den Bettelstab gebracht würden/were turned into beggars*. For confirmation of the misery families suffered when the sons were drafted, see Auerbach, p. 345, and Ingrao (1987), pp. 142-43 and 148-50.

36 *zwischen dem Kayser und Holland/between the emperor and Holland*: Karl Friedrich Führer, the supposed author of the pamphlet, must have heard about the war from his father Friedrich Wilhelm Führer (1717-81) who participated as an officer in the Hessian army in the Austrian War of Succession.

36 *Zween Herren dienen/serve two masters*: Matthew 6:24.

41 *ruhig schlafen/sleep peacefully*: Thomas Paine in *Common Sense* uses similar language and imagery (p. 29 in the edition referred to in the note to p. 10).

41 *Teutschlands/of Germany*: In the 18th century the spelling with "T" was common, see also p. 44. In the title and on p. 45, on the other hand, we find a "D."

44 *Boston, Montreal, / Und Trenton*: The Battle of Bunker Hill was on 17 June 1775, Montreal was occupied 13 November 1775, and Trenton was taken on 26 December 1776.

44 *verachten kan/can scorn*: Washington accepted the position of commander-in-chief on 16 June 1775 and refused any pay.

45 *Walhalla, Siegmars . . . Hermann*: The appeal to the German past goes back to Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803) and the poets of the Göttinger Hain. According to Klopstock, Siegmars is Arminius's (Hermann's) father. Mirabeau, in the first paragraph of his *Avis aux Hessois*, also reminds the Germans of their heroic ancestors, "qui défendirent avec tant d'acharnement leur liberté contre les vainqueurs du monde, & braverent les armées Romaines."

45 *zu Sichel/into sickles*: The phrase is an adaptation of Isaiah 2:4.

46 *Freundschafts=Mahl/friendship meal*: A typical coinage of the poets of the Göttinger Hain whose cult of friendship is based in part on pietistic tradition.

[47] *Zur Nachricht/Notice*: There is no record that South Carolina made a special offer to Hessians or Germans in general.