

**YEARBOOK OF GERMAN-AMERICAN STUDIES**

**Supplemental Issue**

**Volume 1**

**Karl Friedrich Fühler**

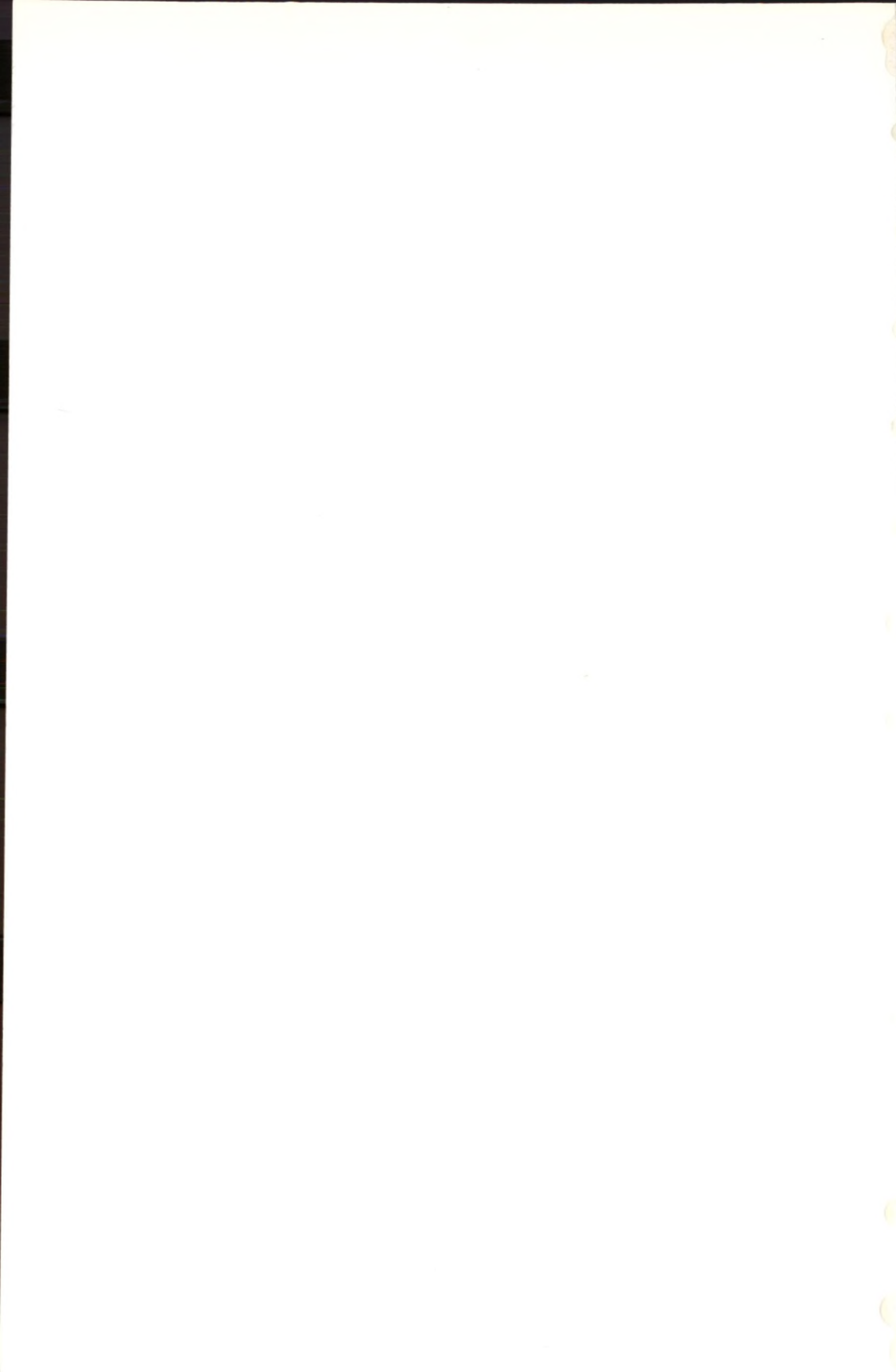
**Wahrheit und Guter Rath, an die Einwohner  
Deutschlands, besonders in Hessen (1783)**

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

**Edited and Translated by Christoph E. Schweitzer**

**2003**

**The Society for German-American Studies**



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YEARBOOK OF GERMAN-AMERICAN STUDIES

Supplemental Issues

William D. Keel, Editor

Karl Friedrich Führer

Wahrheit und Guter Rath, an die Einwohner  
Deutschlands, besonders in Hessen

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

Philadelphia: Carl Cist, 1783

Edited and Translated by Christoph E. Schweitzer

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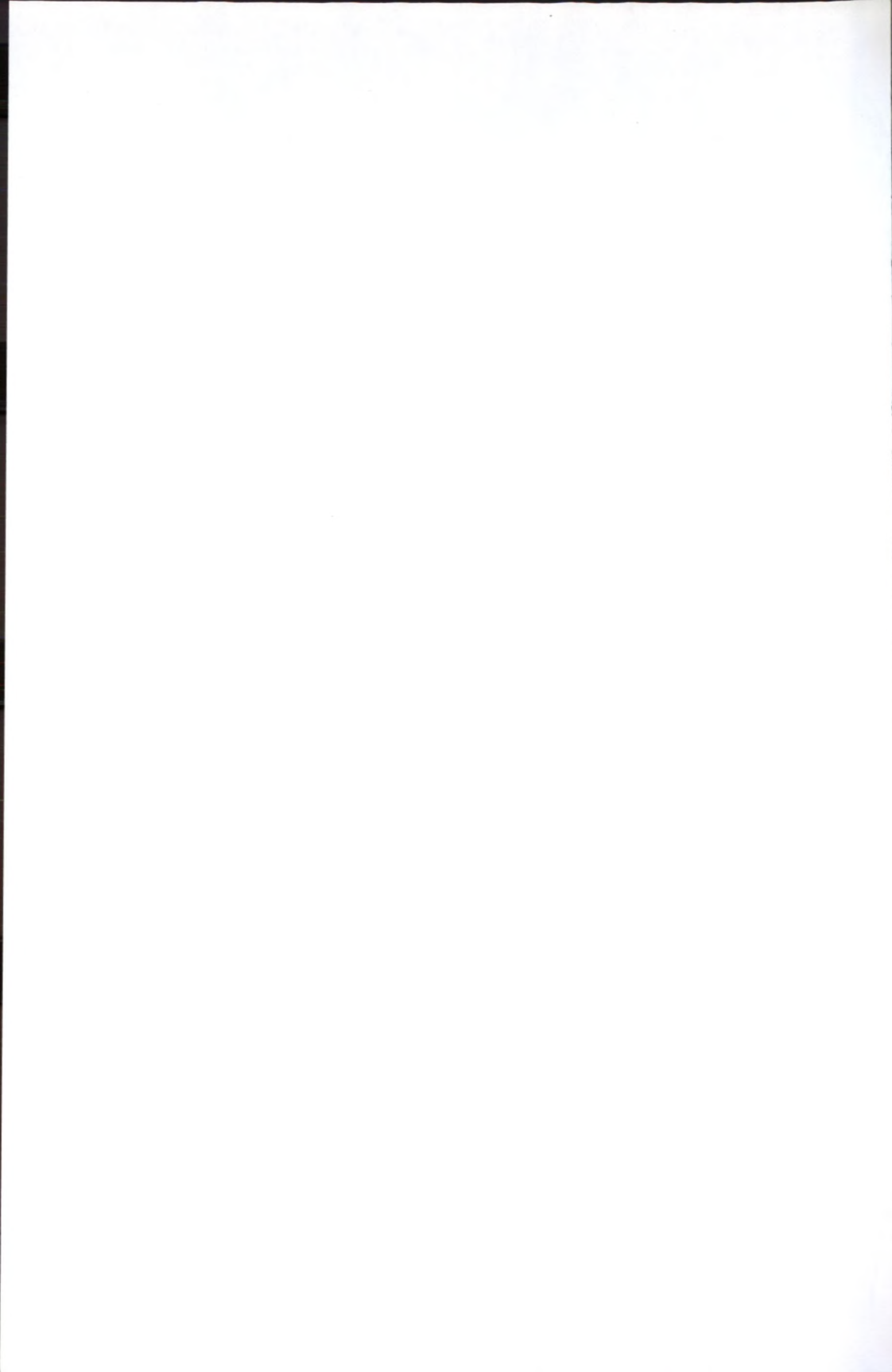
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## Preface

On page 2 of the 28 October 1783 issue of the *Gemeinnützige Philadelphische Correspondenz* the following advertisement appeared:

Es ist in der Presse und wird in ein Paar Tagen zu haben seyn, bey *Carl Cist*, Buchdrucker, In der Markt=strasse, gegenüber dem Schwarzen Bären, [für 15 Pens das Stück und 12 Schillinge das Dutzend,] Wahrheit und Guter Rath an die Einwohner Deutschlands, besonders in Hessen. Obige Schrift enthält eine freymüthige und lebhaftige Schilderung von dem elenden Zustande des armen Landmanns in Deutschland; entgegen gestellt der Glückseligkeit, welche derselbe in diesem freyen Lande genießt; nebst einer Einladung zu einer Niederlassung in America.

Den Beschluß macht ein feuerreiches Lied eines Americanischen Granadiers an die Heßischen und andere nach America gesandte Deutsche Truppen; verfertigt im Jahr 1777.

(The following is being printed and will be available in a few days at *Carl Cist*, printer, on Market Street, opposite the Black Bear, [for fifteen pence a copy and twelve shilling a dozen,] Truth and Good Advice to the Inhabitants of Germany, Especially in Hesse. The above pamphlet contains a frank and vivid description of the miserable condition of the poor peasant in Germany; contrasted to the happiness that the peasant enjoys in this free country; in addition to an invitation to a settlement in America.

At the end there is a fiery poem of an American grenadier, written in 1777 and directed to the Hessian and other German troops that were sent to America. [The Historical Society of Pennsylvania graciously gave me permission to reproduce the advertisement.]

Carl Cist, the printer was, like his former employer Henry Miller, an ardent Revolutionary. The advertisement, which very well might have been written by the author, gives an excellent summary of the contents of the pamphlet. It was reissued in the same year, with a number of emendations and a couple of new mistakes. The revised version is reproduced here, with a translation, a commentary, and notes.

The pamphlet has been mentioned in a cursory manner by a few scholars and is listed in some bibliographies. It is always characterized as an attempt to make the Hessian soldiers, who were waiting in New York to go back to Europe, desert the British army, and stay in America. If the pamphlet were nothing more than that, i.e., an offer of land and

other incentives to those who would leave the British army, the pamphlet would not deserve special attention since the texts of several such appeals have been published in various places. However, this is a unique document in that it shows intimate knowledge of Hesse-Kassel at the time when the German princes recruited soldiers and leased them to England for substantial sums of money. Also, the author shows good knowledge of his adopted country, contrasting America's advantages with the miseries experienced by the common people in the feudal society of Germany.

Stylistic features of the text point to an author with literary ambition. The twenty-eight stanza poem at the end of the pamphlet gives evidence of his having been, while still in Hesse-Kassel, a reader of the poetry of the Göttinger Hain, formed by a group of poets in 1772 and active for a few years afterwards, that is, exactly during the time prior to the author's departure for America. That departure must have been in 1776 since he mentions in the 1783 pamphlet that he has been in America for more than seven years (p. 21). He converts the purely rhetorical "Tyrannehass" (hatred of tyrants) of the group, especially prominent in the poems of Friedrich Leopold Graf von Stolberg, into the reality of an attack on the German princes in general and on Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, in particular. There is no other document dealing with the Hessians in the American Revolution that combines factual information with literary skill in such an unusual manner as the 1783 pamphlet. It is of equal interest to German and to American historians and to literary scholars and therefore deserves to be published. I hope that the publication of the pamphlet will give the author the distinguished place in early German-American political writing that he so clearly deserves.

*Wahrheit und Guter Rath* was published anonymously. I believe that its author was Karl Wilhelm Führer, who was twenty years old when he came over to America as an officer in Wilhelm von Knyphausen's regiment in 1776. As I will show in detail in the commentary, Führer, who was captured when Washington defeated a Hessian brigade at Trenton and who then spent over a year as a prisoner of war in Dumfries and Fredericksburg, both in Virginia, had the appropriate background

in Germany and the connections in America to have authored the pamphlet.

It is an important pamphlet in that it not only tells us about the excesses of the recruitment practices in Hesse-Kassel but also presents the most radical anti-feudal statement in German at the time. Führer turned out to have been a most unusual Hessian officer who came to abhor the government of his country and who opted to change loyalties so as to be "im Lande der Freyheit" (in the country of liberty; pp. 17 and 31) and to enjoy its many material and political advantages.

I want to thank, first of all, Ms. Ann W. Upton of the College Archives & Special Collection Libraries of Franklin & Marshall College for giving me permission to reproduce the text of the unique copy of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Wilson Library staff helped me in innumerable ways. Gerd-J. Bötte and Werner Tannhof located the unique copy of the pamphlet, and Gerd-J. Bötte also assisted me in trying to locate another rare pamphlet. Inge Auerbach, Archivoberrätin of the Hessisches Staatsarchiv Marburg repeatedly gave me invaluable advice. My former colleague, Richard D. Lawson, read through the English translation and made excellent suggestions for improvement. William Keel, Editor of the *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, encouraged me to submit the manuscript for possible publication as a supplemental issue of the *Yearbook*. Finally, my two sons, Stephen and Peter, as well and most of all, Cathy, my wife, assisted me greatly in the preparation of the edition for publication. Also, a grant from the Research Council of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill helped defray the cost of publication of the pamphlet.

*Chapel Hill, North Carolina*

*Christoph E. Schweitzer*



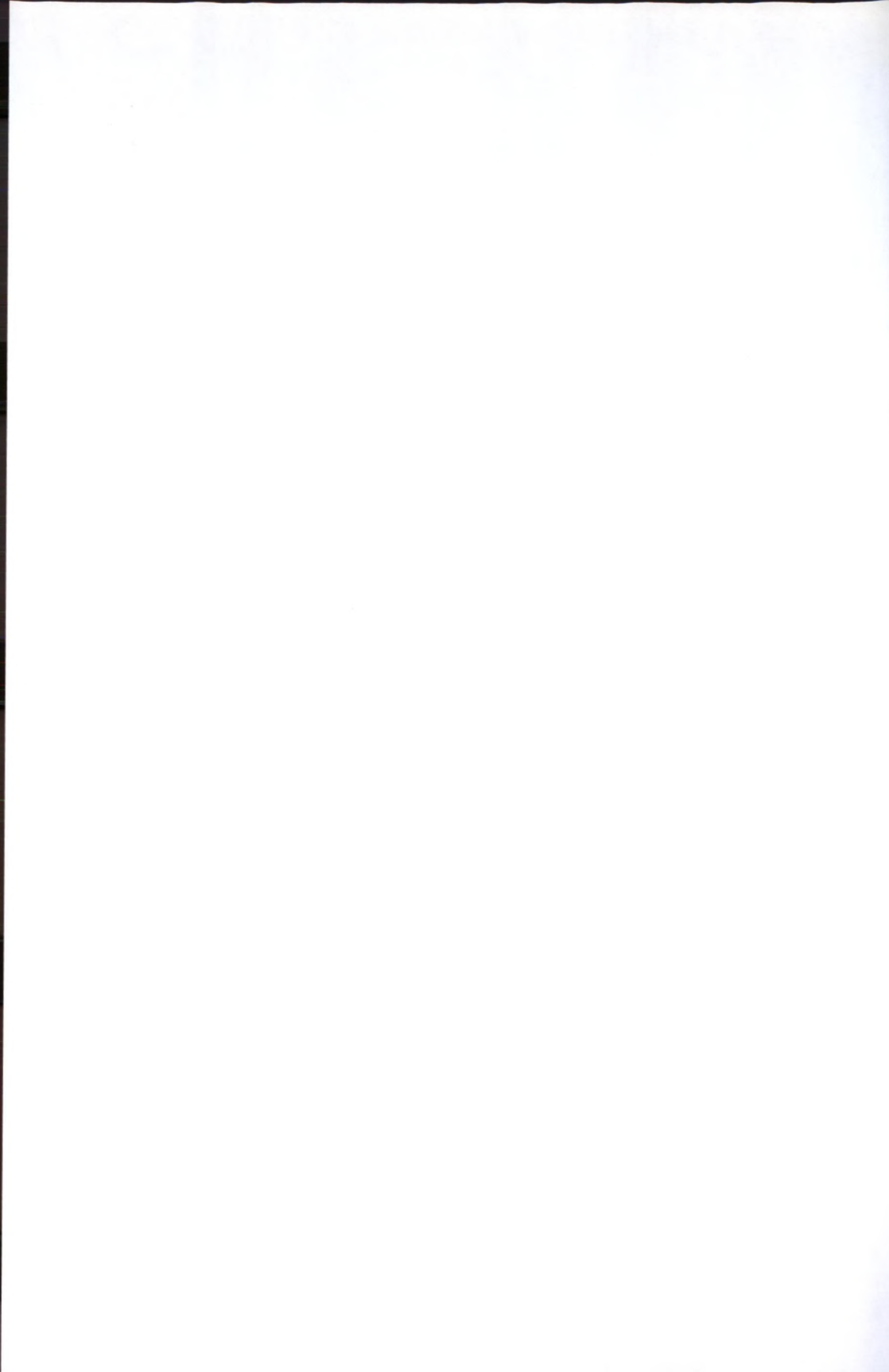
W a h r h e i t  
und  
G u t e r R a t h,  
an die  
E i n w o h n e r D e u t s c h l a n d s,  
b e s o n d e r s i n  
H e s s e n.

---

Errette den, dem Gewalt geschieht, von dem, der ihm Unrecht thut, und seye unerschrocken, wenn du urtheilen sollst.  
Rede die Wahrheit, hasse die Lügen, und schene Niemand.  
Jesus Strach und Paulus.

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Philadelphia, Gedruckt bey Carl Eist, in der  
Markt-strasse, 1783.



[1]

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Philadelphia, Gedruckt bey *Carl Cist*, in der  
Markt=strasse, 1783.

[2] leer

[3]

### Apologie.

Nicht für Kritiker, nicht für Gelehrte, Nein! blos für Leute von gesunder Vernunft schreibe ich. Ich sitze in keiner Studir=Stube, am Tisch mit Büchern belagert; das Zelt oder ein Quartier das nicht viel besser, ist mein Aufenthalt, worinnen ich nachstehende am Tage liegende Wahrheiten, bloß aus Liebe meiner Landsleute (ich bin ein Hesse gewesen) um selbige glücklich—und aus einem Slaven=Joch entrissen zu sehen, öffentlich zu erkennen gebe.

Ich bin, leider! kein Gelehrter; ich empfehle mich daher nicht dem Schutz der Kenner; und was gehen Leute von gesunder Vernunft die Kritiker an? Nur euch empfehle ich mich, ihr meine ehemaligen Landsleute. GOtt segne euch und mein Vornehmen!

Aufrichtige Wahrheit.

[4] leer



[5] Die Liebe zu seinem Neben=Menschen, besonders zu denen, welche das Mitleid in einem höhern Grad bedürftig sind, macht jeden Menschen, also auch mich, verbindlich, ihnen mit gutem Rath an die Hand zu gehen, und ihnen die nöthigen Vorschläge zur Verbesserung ihrer Umstände mitzutheilen. Dieses ist auch, in genauerem Betracht, unsere Pflicht, und den Vorschriften unserer heiligen Christlichen Religion sehr gemäß, welche uns schärfstens gebietet, "Unsere Nächsten zu lieben als uns selbst, und ihnen das zu thun, was wir wünschen, daß sie uns auch thun sollen." Und folglich muß es unser äusserstes Bestreben seyn, die nöthigen Mittel zu zeigen, wodurch wir unsers Nächsten Umstände verbessern und solche so glücklich als möglich machen können: So wie es denn gewiß ist, daß die Menschen ihrer edlen Bestimmung gemäß, verdienen glücklich—frey—und unabhängig zu seyn.

Ich will mich daher erstlich an meine Landsleute wenden, welche, meiner Meinung nach, eines guten Rathes, und der nöthigen (6) Mittel, um sie aus ihrer sehr harten Slavery, (welche mit der Egyptischen Dienstbarkeit in allen Stücken zu vergleichen ist) zu retten, und sie zu glücklichen, freyen Menschen zu machen,—am meisten benöthiget sind.

Und diesen meinen Freunden und Landsleuten sey dann diese wenige Bemühung, welche sie mit Recht von mir fordern können, unter GOTTes Beystand und Segen, gewidmet.

Ganz Deutschland, einige wenige Freye Reichs=städte ausgenommen, seufzet heutiges Tages under dem harten Joch der Slavery. Dieses Land, welches in Vergleich mit Nord=America kaum ein Drittel so groß ist, muß einen Kaiser, einen König, mehr als Siebenzig Chur=grosse und kleine andere Fürsten und Bischöffe, in Königlicher Pracht und Verschwendung erhalten, und ausser diesen noch eine ungeheure Menge von gefürsteten und andern Prälaten, Grafen und Frey=Herren, nebst einer unzählbaren Menge von privilegirten Baurenschindern, mit ihrem sauren Schweiß und Arbeit, bloß allein ernähren; da hingegen in dem grossen und weitläufigen America nur vierzehn Regierungen zu versorgen sind, wovon eine in die andere gerechnet, kaum über 50,000 Gulden jährlich zu erhalten kostet, welches also weit (7) weniger ist, denn eines Grafen Hofstaat und Regierung kostet. Was also in Deutschland dem bedauernswürdigen Bürger und Landmann übrig bleibt, ist leider sehr wenig, und kaum hinlänglich,

ihn bey dem Leben zu erhalten, und sogar dieses wird von ihren Tyrannen gemißbraucht. Ehegatten werden von ihren Kindern und Weibern— die Söhne aus dem Schooße der Wittwen und betagten Eltern, deren Stütze sie hätten seyn sollen, mit Gewalt getrennet, und an blutdürstige Tyrannen verkauft, um sich ärger als das unvernünftige Vieh behandeln, um sich, wollte ich sagen, in fremden Kriegen todt und lahm schießen zu lassen, bloß um ihren wollüstigen und ungerechten Landesherrn zu bereichern, damit er desto mehr mit seinen Favoriten und Hof=Creaturen von diesem Blutgelde schwelgen könne.

Daß dieses Verfahren mit seinem Nebenmenschen unbillig, nach göttlich und menschlichen Rechten höchst unerlaubt ist, auch gegen die Natur streitet, glaube ich, ist nicht nöthig weiter darzuthun, und zu erweisen: Ein wenig gesunder Menschen=Verstand, welchen die gütige Mutter Natur in uns gelegt hat, um zu prüfen, was recht und unrecht ist, wird hinlänglich seyn, um einzusehen, daß dieses Verfahren der Deutschen Tyrannen abscheu- (8) lich, höchst ungerecht, und dem Willen des allweisesten Schöpfers gänzlich zuwider ist.

Wären alle Menschen gleich tugendhaft, und folgten sie alle, wie es freylich ihre Pflicht ist, den Gesetzen unseres GOTTES und der Natur, so würden Obrigkeiten unnöthig seyn; da aber von Anfang der Schöpfung an, die Erfahrung es leider bezeuget, daß gute und böse Menschen zugleich entstanden sind; so war es nöthig Obrigkeiten zu erwählen, welche Recht und Gerechtigkeit handhaben, den Schwächern vor dem Stärkern schützen, und gute Ordnung erhalten musten. Diese Obrigkeitliche Personen, welche also für das Wohl der ganzen Gesellschaft sorgten, konnten nicht zu gleicher Zeit für sich und ihre Familien den nöthigen Lebensunterhalt besorgen: Nichts war demnach billiger, als daß die ganze Gesellschaft, über welche eine solche Obrigkeit regierte, und sie vor allen Feinden und Ungerechtigkeiten schützte, solche auch aus ihren Mitteln standesmäßig erhalten muste.

In wie weit aber dieses mit den heutigen Tyrannen, welche die von GOTT eingesetzte Obrigkeit vorstellen wollen, zu vergleichen sey, will ich einem jeden zu seiner eigenen Beurtheilung überlassen.

Die heutige Obrigkeitliche Tyranney in unserm Vaterlande kan als keine von GOTT (9) eingesetzte Obrigkeit betrachtet werden; welche anstatt für das Beste und Wohl ihrer Unterthanen unermüdet zu sorgen, nur mit ihren Favoriten und Räthen unaufhörlich darauf sinnen, wie

sie dem armen Unterthan das Geld, und die Früchte seiner sauren Arbeit, entweder mit Gewalt oder List, abstehlen können.

Ich finde in der heiligen Schrift, welche ich hier zum Wegweiser nehme, keine besondere Schöpfung der Könige oder Fürsten; sondern nur Menschen schuf GOTT, und diese waren hernach gottlos und thöricht genug, Könige und Fürsten, zu ihrem eigenen Elend und Verderben, dem expressen Befehl GOTTES zuwider zu machen. Ihr angemessenes Vorrecht kan also nicht aus dem Wort GOTTES erwiesen werden; und der welcher dasselbe in seinem ganzen Zusammenhange und nicht, wie leider die Lehrer solche slavische Unterthanen unterrichten müssen, in einzeln abgerissenen Stücken lieset, wird finden, daß die heilige Schrift diesem angemessenen Vorrecht ganz entgegen stehet. Man lese, z. E. den 22sten und 23sten Vers im 8ten Capitel im Buch der Richter, das 10te, 11te, und 12. Capitel im ersten Buch Samuel und das 6te Capitel der Weisheit, in seinem gehörigen Zusammenhang.

Ich möchte daher wohl gerne den Wunsch (10) äussern, um aus der heiligen Schrift überführt und belehrt zu werden, woher jene meine Mitmenschen welche sich von GOTTES Gnaden Fürsten, etc. nennen, ihr Recht haben, über ihre Nebenmenschen ein Erbrecht der Macht und Gewalt zu prätendiren, über Leben und Tod eigenmächtiger Weise zu gebieten, ihren gar zu oft gottlosen Willen zum Gesetz des Landes zu machen, und ihnen eine Menge von Abgaben auszupressen; (denn die Frage an unsern Erlöser, obs auch recht sey, daß man dem Kaiser Zins gebe? Worauf derselbe sehr weislich erwiederte: *Gebt dem Kaiser, was des Kaisers ist, und Gotte, was GOTTES ist*, gehöret hieher nicht; und das zwar aus zweyen wichtigen Gründen: Erstens, wie Christus selbst anmerket, so war die Münze eine Kaiserliche, mit des Kaisers eigenem Bildniß, folglich dessen originaliter eigenes Geld: Zweytens, so waren damals die Juden Römische Vasallen, und folglich als solche, durch ihre Ueberwinder, die Römer, einem Tribut unterwürfig gemacht.) Ferner, daß sie ihren sogenannten Unterthanen die Früchte aller ihrer sauren Arbeit rauben, und nicht zufrieden mit dem, was der Stifter unserer Religion sagt: Daß man den Schafen zwar die Wolle abnehmen, aber nicht die Haut über die Ohren ziehen dürfte; und obgleich das (11) letztere Gleichniß=weise gar zu oft geschiehet dennoch damit nicht vergnügt, sondern ihre Unterthanen mit Gewalt und List, aus ihrem ihnen von GOTT gegebenen Vaterlande reissen, und sie an blutdürstige

Tyrannen um Geld verkaufen, und sie zwingen, ihre unschuldige Nebenmenschen, (welche vielleicht noch so viel Tugend haben, und es wagen, wie jene Israeliter in Egypten, das harte Joch der Slavery abzuschütteln) zu unglücklichen Slaven, wie sie selbst sind, zu machen, oder sonst deren Herrsch= Eroberungs= Mord= und Rachsucht und ihren unersättlichen Neid und Geitz mit Verlust ihres Lebens und Gesundheit in fremden Kriegen zu befriedigen, und die unschuldigen Opfer dieser Thorheit abzugeben.

Dann der, welcher sich gegen die Ueberzeugung seines Gewissens und der Vernunft zu diesem henkersmäßigen Mord=Handwerk gebrauchen läßt, verdient warlich nicht ein Mensch zu seyn. Diesen Abschaum des menschlichen Geschlechts, (ich meine die der Tugend, der Menschheit und ihrem Vaterlande, das ihnen Daseyn, Leben und Nahrung gab, abtrünnigen Americaner, gemeinlich Tories oder Refugies genannt, welche ihr Vaterland, Freunde und Anverwandte in Zeit der Noth verliessen, und Verräther und (12) Judasse an ihnen wurden, ja selbst gegen dieses gerechte und unschuldige Volk bandittenmäßig auszogen, und sogar die schlimmsten aller Feinde waren, die ihre gottlosen und mörderischen Hände in dem Blut ihrer Anverwandten mit einem teuflischen Vergnügen wuschen, allenthalben wo sie hinkamen und keinen Widerstand fanden, Wittwen und Wäisen, ohne Unterschied, raubten, plünderten, mordeten und brannten)—kan man diese, frage ich, Menschen nennen? Nein! Sie sind eingefleischte Teufel, ärger als ihre Tyrannen, denen sie dienen, und deren Intresse durch sie befördert wird, selbst.

Aber Unwissenheit, Aberglauben und Vorurtheil welche in den Deutschen despotischen und absoluten Ländern sorgfältig erhalten, und dem unwissenden Volk sogar von der Kanzel gepredigt werden, sind die Ursachen der Slavery eines solchen Volks. Alle Untersuchungen, ob dieses oder jenes auch recht und billig sey, wird daselbst aufs grausamste bestraft, und jede aufkeimende patriotische Tugend durch eine ungeheure Menge von untergeordneten stets aufmerksamen kleineren Tyrannen, in ihrem ersten Keim sorgfältig erstickt. Denn nur Leute ohne wahre Menschen=Liebe, ohne Billigkeit, und im höchsten Grade aufgeblasen, stolz und hoffärtig auf ihre kriechende (13) knechtische Ehre, (welche dem menschlichen Geschlecht Schande macht); werden nur zu diesen Tyrannen=Aemtern, zu Beamten und Befehlshabern ernannt, und dieser

gottlosen Leute Bemühungen gehen nur bloß dahinaus, um sich selbst und ihre Vorgesetzte im größten Pracht und Ueberfluß zu erhalten, um nur allein in Karossen fahren, in Pallästen wohnen, und durch einen Haufen elender Unterthanen in allem diesen und in ihren Wollüsten unterhalten zu werden, welche sie bemühet sind, im größten Elende schmachten und in der tiefsten Slavery darben zu lassen.

Ein Deutscher Schriftsteller, Herr Baron von T = = =, welcher selbst als Staats=Minister an einem Deutschen Hofe gedienet, urtheilet von den Deutschen Unterthanen folgendes, ganz richtig, wenn er sagt: “Die Unterthanen waren zwar fleißige und arbeitsame Thiere, ihre Häuser durchlöchert, den Umsturz drohend, durch die erschreckliche Menge Abgaben ausser Stande auf ihre Verbesserung zu denken; sie hatten über das vom Menschen nur die Gestalt, in allem was man Erkenntniß nennt, waren sie in der größten Blindheit und viehischen Unwissenheit; ich fand unter dem ganzen Haufen wenige die lesen, und noch wenigere die schreiben konten. Dieses ist (14) aber leider die Maxime der Deutschen Fürsten, Grafen und Edel=Leute, denn sagen sie: Unsere Bauren müssen gedrückt werden, sonst macht sie der Uebermuth zu Herren, sie müssen auch durch eine Menge von Abgaben arm erhalten werden, damit sie nicht aus den Schrancken der Demuth und Unterwürfigkeit, dazu sie geboren sind, weichen. Ihre Erkenntniß muß sich nicht weiter als auf die Bearbeitung ihres Ackers und auf die Viehzucht erstrecken; wenn sie mehr wissen, wollen sie klügeln, und finden immer etwas wider unsere Verordnungen einzuwenden, murren oder beschweren sich auch wohl noch gar über angeordnete Auflagen, und dieses macht sie hartnäckigt. Die Dummheit erhält sie in der Slavery, wenn sie von keinem bessern Zustand etwas wissen. Kurz man muß sie wie ein Vieh, das bloß zu unserm Willen, Dienst und Vergnügen geschaffen ist, und bey Leibe nicht wie Menschen behandeln, sonst würden sie sich uns gleich zu seyn düncken. Der vollwichtige Prügel des Frohn=Vogts, die scharfe Peitsche des Beamten, das Zuchthaus, und der Spanische Mantel müssen ihnen eine solche Ehrfurcht einflößen, daß sie vor uns kriechen, und uns vor Geschöpfe höherer Art halten müssen.

(15) “Deswegen bin ich nicht gerne mehr an den Höfen Deutschlands, zudem kan ich nicht kriechen, weil ich aufrecht erschaffen bin; ich bücke mich nicht gerne, denn mein Rücken ist ein wenig steif eine

“gewissen Unbiegsamkeit, die ihren Sitz unter der lincken Brust hat,  
“hat es dahin gebracht, daß ich nie schmeichlen, daß ich nie schinden  
“lernen konte. Zudem so zeigen die Höfe der Deutschen Prinzen nur  
“die pralende Aussenseite des Landes im pompösen falschen Glantz,  
“und die Ausübung der grösten Laster, durch die unermeßliche Abgaben  
“der Unterthanen genähret. Da indessen der gepreste Unterthan fast  
“eben so viel Thränen als Schweißtropfen vergießt, indem er unter dem  
“Joch der härtesten Slavery seufzet, nur für den Glanz und Schwelgerey  
“des Hofes arbeitet, unterdessen selbst übel und elend genug bekleidet  
“geheth, und mit schlechtem Brod, und Wasser des Trübsals, sich und  
“die gedrängte Seinigen kümmerlich nähret; denn in solchen Ländern  
“hat der schweißtriefende Landmann kaum das elende Mitessen, da er  
“noch über das ausser dem Fürsten, für den Edelmann, den Beamten,  
“den Pfaffen und den Pächter arbeiten muß, welche sämtlich dem Hofe  
“hinwiederum ihre Ab- (16) gaben entrichten, und denselben zahlreich,  
“glänzend, prächtig und üppig machen müssen.”

Aus dieser Maxime erhellet nun klar, daß in einem solchen Lande, der Gedancke der Freyheit, und wie man sich retten wolle, kaum zum Vorschein kommen kann. Ferner ist nun ganz klar und erweißlich, warum meine Landsleute keine Einsichten von den heiligen Rechten der Menschlichen Natur und der Freyheit haben können, und warum sie dem Willen eines ihrer Mitmenschen und seiner nachgesetzten Tyrannen in allen Stücken aufs unverbrüchlichste gehorchen. Denn es ist kein Städtgen oder Dörffgen so klein, wo nicht der Fürst seine Beamten und Bedienten erhält und besoldet, welche sorgfältig wachen müssen, um die Unterthanen in der tiefsten Unwissenheit und Slavery zu erhalten. Selbst die Seelsorger und Lehrer des Evangelii sind von diesem Laster nicht frey, und können es natürlicher Weise nicht seyn, wenn sie ihre knechtische Ehre, ihren Lebens=Unterhalt, welchen sie nur durch die Landsherren oder durch die Vermittelung seiner Creaturen erhalten, nicht verlieren wollen, und folglich ist es kein Wunder, wenn sie das Ihrige, zur Erhaltung der Slavery, ihres eigenen Intresse halber, unter dem Deckel der Religion mit beytragen, und noch mehr zu bevestigen suchen.

(17) O! arme Unglückliche! Ist denn kein Mittel übrig, euch aus einem solchen, dem Menschen so unanständigen, und seiner edlen Bestimmung unangemessenen Zustand zu befreyen? Ja, gar leicht, wenn

ihr nur die schwachen Fesseln der Slavery selbst zerbrechen—euer Slaven=Land verlassen—und nach America kommen, und daselbst freye und glückliche Bürger werden wollt. Zumalen euch, meinen Brüder=Soldaten, die ihr durch den unersättlichen Geitz eures Tyrannen an England verkauft, und nunmehr durch dieses Schicksal im Lande der Freyheit und der wahren Menschheit euch befindet; Euch, sage ich, ist es etwas sehr leichtes.

Aber, höre ich einige unter euch sagen: Wir haben unserm Landgrafen und dem König den *Eid der Treue schwören müssen*, und diesen zu brechen ist vielleicht Sünde?

Ihr braucht euch keine Sorgen zu machen, daß die Verlassung des Hessischen Slaven=Dienstes *Sünde sey*. Nein, es ist vielmehr eine Tugend, die eine der edelsten ist. Hessen, da es euch an England verkaufte, mußte natürlicher Weise auf alle Unterwürfigkeit Verzicht thun. Wenn ihr in eurem Vaterlande wohnt, darinnen gegen alles Unrecht, wie billig, geschützt werdet, so ist es auch eure Pflicht, den Gesetzen und Diensten desselben (18) gehorsam zu seyn. Sobald ihr aber auf eure Rechte im Vaterlande Verzicht machet, und in einem andern wohnt, und dessen Schutz genießet, so höret eure Treue gegen das vorige unmittelbar auf, und gebühret dem Staat, worinnen ihr alsdann wohnt, oder wohin ihr euch zu begeben gedenket.

Dieses ist aber hier der Fall gar nicht. Ihr wurdet aus eurem Vaterland schändlicher Absichten halber, heraus geführt, an einen fremden Monarchen, zu seinem Mord=Dienst um Geld verkauft, und schon über 5000 eurer Landsleute sind durch diesen unehrlichen, und dem Menschen schimpflichen Slaven=Dienst, dem unzeitigen Tod durchs Schwerdt oder Feld=Krankheiten, ein unschuldiges Opfer worden; folglich, wenn ihr nun diesen Slaven=Dienst verlasset (und was könnt ihr wohl löblicher thun) so kan euch euer Vaterland nicht mehr in eurem Eigenthum beschützen, oder besser zu sagen, so kan euch der Landgraf nicht mehr schinden, auch nicht mehr verkaufen, wovor ihr wie ihr selbst wisset, keine Stunde sicher seydet; und folglich seydet ihr ihm und eurem gewesenen Vaterland keine Pflichten mehr schuldig. Ihr waret in genauem Verstand, dem Rechte der Natur gemäß, welches nicht irret, und unter allen Rechten das sicherste und einzige wahre ist, schon eurer (19) Landespflichten entlediget, wie ihr hier in America anlangtet, und wäre es nun nicht lächerlich und thöricht, euch als

Hessische Unterthanen zu betrachten, dessen Landes=Herr euch verkaufte und verstieß, der Gnade eines Tyrannen. der euch zu seinem Blut=Dienst gekauft hatte, und der Gnade derer, welche ihr gelehret wurdet als eure Feinde zu betrachten, überließ; wenn Ihr nicht selbst gutwillig woltet.

Ueberdis so ist der Eid den ihr geleistet habt, kein rechtmäßiger, sondern ein erzwungener Eid, und der ist besser gebrochen, denn gehalten; ihr waret ihn zu thun absolute gezwungen, und ihr hattet im Vaterlande nicht die mindeste Ausflucht, ihm zu entgehen; kurz, ihr mustet ihn schwören, euer Herz, Gewissen, oder Neigung, mochte dazu sagen oder denken was es wollte: Also hiesse es bey euch vollkommen recht, was der Apostel Paulus sagt, in seinem Brief an die Römer, im 15ten Capitel, im 5ten Vers: *So seyd denn aus Noth unterthan*, nemlich, wenn Ihr es nicht ändern oder verhüten könnt, denn er sagt auch in seinem ersten Brief an die Corinther, im 7ten Capitel, im 21ten Vers: *Könnt ihr aber frey werden*, so gebt euch hierzu alle mögliche Mühe, und wendet alle eure Kräfte an, Freyheit zu erlangen, denn (20) dieses ist gewiß besser, und daselbst im 33sten [recte 23sten] Vers, sagt er: *Ihr seyd theuer erkaufet, deßwegen werdet nicht der Menschen Knechte*, dieses ist eine so deutliche Warnung, daß sie keine andere Auslegung vertragen kan.

Dieses Land, America, ist frey, und dessen stand= und tugendhafte Einwohner, sind von den meisten Mächten Europens der Unabhängigkeit würdig erklärt, und wird bald, ganz gewiß, durch den Definitiv=Friedens=Tractat von aller Welt als eine der glücklichsten freyen Republicken anerkannt werden.

Hier sind keine Tyrannen, keine Könige, oder Fürsten, etc. die ihr in Pracht, Pomp, Hoffarth, Ueppigkeit und Schwelgerey zu erhalten habt. Hier findet man keine gebohrne Distinctionen, die Mißgeburten der Slavery, die Belohnungen der Tyranney, die Früchte der menschlichen Eitelkeit und Thorheit, (nemlich) Grafen, Freyherrn, Baronen, etc. Und sollte allenfalls einer dergleichen, aus fremden Landen gekommen, in den Freyen Staaten von America wohnen, so genießt er keine Vorrechte, wie bey uns; sondern ist im politischen sowohl als im gemeinen Leben, dem freyen Bürger in allem gleich; hier ist alles der Natur vollkommen gemäß; kein anderer Unterschied, als der der Religion, ich meine, (21) Fromme und Gottlose, und der der Natur, als



Reiche und Arme, und dennoch muß ich aufrichtig und mit Wahrheit gestehen, daß während einem mehr als Siebenjährigen Aufenthalt dahier, des verderblichen Krieges ohnerachtet, ich noch keinen Bettler gesehen habe.

Hier ist das Gesetz GOTTes, der Natur und der Billigkeit, die einzige Regentin, und nicht wie bey uns, der öfters gottlose Wille eines Narren, Unverständigen oder Ruchlosen, das Gesetz des Landes; sondern die hiesige Obrigkeit wird blos aus den Weisesten, Aeltesten und Patrioten des Volks gewählt, um Recht und Gerechtigkeit zu handhaben; um die nöthige gute Ordnung in der menschlichen Gesellschaft zu erhalten; um einem jeden sein Leben und Eigenthum zu beschützen; um vor das Wohl und allgemeine Beste unermüdet zu sorgen; nicht aber, wie bey uns, wo die Obrigkeit blos darauf bedacht ist, wie sie mittelst neuer und vermehrter Auflagen, zum Endzweck der Schwelgerey ihrer Höfe, dem armen Unterthan sein ganzes Verdienst mit Gewalt und Anschein eines Rechts abzwacken könne.

Hier ist die Obrigkeit unmöglich Tyranny, denn sie dependiret von eurer Wahl, ihr würdet deswegen keinen gottlosen oder bösen Mann zu eurem Richter wählen, und solte (22) allenfals ein Heuchler, unwissender Weise, zu einer obrigkeitlichen Stelle gelangen, und es zeigt sich, daß er mehr vor seinen eigenen Nutzen, denn vor das Wohl des gemeinen Wesens sorget, so habt ihr weiter nichts zu thun als ihn zur Rechenschaft und Verantwortung zu fordern, ihn abzusetzen, seines Verbrechens gemäß zu bestrafen, und einen andern an seine Stelle zu wählen; überhaupt so wird hier die gesamte Obrigkeit vom grösten bis zum kleinsten, wie auch alle öffentliche Bedienten jedes Jahr neu erwählet.

Hier ist und gilt kein ander Gesetz und Verordnung, als nur solche, zu welchen ihr selbstn (wenn ihr dermaleins Americanische Bürger seyd) durch die Mehrheit der Stimmen eure völlige Einwilligung gebet. Hier hat man keine Contributions= Petri= Martini= und Prinzeßin=Steuern, keine Zölle, Pachten, Renten, Zehnten, Concessions= Forst= und Mast=Gelder, Wasser=Zinsen, nebst Wald= Amts= und Rüge= Gerichts=Bussen oder Strafen; das ganze Gefolge der unendlichen Abgaben, welche bey uns der Landmann zu entrichten hat, und wovon er nie das Ende ersieht, sind hier gänzlich unbekant.

— Das unedle Geschäfte eines Landbereuters, Visitators und die militärische Zwangsmittel der Executiones sind ebenfalls hier unbewust.

(23) Hier werden keine solche faule Müssiggänger wovon unser Vaterland schwärmet, erhalten, welche nur blos von dem armen Bürger und Landmann leben, und ihn vollends aussaugen.

Keine Abgaben hat man hier in America, ausser solche die man bey uns (ausser den Landes=Fürstlichen Abgaben und Revenuen) auch hat, nemlich die Besoldung einiger weniger obrigkeitlichen Personen, und öffentlicher Bedienten; zur Erhaltung öffentlicher Gebäude; zum Dienst der Gerechtigkeit, der guten Ordnung, des innerlichen Friedens, des Gottesdienstes, der allgemeinen Heerstrassen, und der Armen und Nothdürftigen. Sodann die Intressen von denen im letztern glorreichen Kriege, (in welchem, wie ihr selbst wisset durch des gütigen Gottes augenscheinlichen Beistand, ein beträchtlicher Theil des edlen menschlichen Geschlechts, sich aus der Slavery befreyt, und unabhängig gemacht hat) gemachten auswärtigen und einheimischen Schulden, von ohngefehr 80 Millionen Spanischen Thalern, oder 160 Millionen Deutschen Gulden; ein sehr wohlfeiler und geringer Preis für America, welches über 3 Millionen Seelen zu Einwohnern hat, und sich täglich mehr und mehr bevölkert; so daß wann jeder Kopf jährlich zu Tilgung dieser (24) Schuld, 5 Gulden bezahlen wollte, diese Schuld in Zeit von 11 Jahren, samt der Intresse, völich abbezahlt seyn würde: Ueberdas so hat dieses America so viele wichtige Vortheile und Hülfsmittel, in Ansehung des ausgebreitetsten Handels, (denn fast jeder Einwohner hat einen Hafen vor seiner Thüre) der vielen wichtigen Handels=Producten, als Lebens=Mittel, Schiffe und Holzwerk, Pelze, Fische, Thran, Spermaceti, Apotheker=Waaren, Indigo, Reis, Toback, Baumwolle, Seide, Theer und die übrige Producten des Tannen=Baums, Hanf, Flachs, und Eisen, etc. etc. Ferner, wegen des fast unermesslichen und über 30,000 Millionen Acker belaufenden unangebauten besten Landes; daß die Abgaben hier in America deshalb sehr geringe fallen, und vor einen der 120 Morgen Landes besitzt, nicht über Sechs Gulden jährlich alle seine Abgaben erstrecken werden; und diese Sechs Gulden, kann der geringste Tagelöhner in Zeit von 8 Tagen rein verdienen.

Diese wenige Abgaben, bitte ich euch nun, meine beste Landsleute, vergleicht mit der Menge von Abgaben in eurem Vaterland, wovon der Fürst an seinem Hof wie ein König Staat führet, unnützig kostbare

Gebäude, Palläste, Gärten, etc. etc. erbauet (25) und erhält, eine Menge unnützer Müßiggänger, als Ministers, Räthe, Generals, Staats und andere Officiere, Hof= Jagd= und andere Bedienten, Beamten, Rechnungsführer, Baurenschinder, in unzählbarer Menge. Ferner, Italiänische und Französische Schauspieler, Murmulthier=träger, Puppenmacher, Musicanten, Sänger, Tänzer, Verschnittene, Huren, und Narren und Gott weiß was alle noch mehr, ganze Heere unnöthiges Gesindel ernähret, und im größten Pracht, Verschwendung und Ueberfluß versorgt und erhält: Während der arme Landmann, um diese alle zu ernähren, mit Sorgen der Nahrung, mit Schweiß und Thränen, vom frühen Morgen, bis in die späteste Nacht, die sauerste Arbeit verrichten — sich in Lumpen kleiden, und mit den rauhesten und schlechtesten von Gottes Gaben sättigen muß, um nur die Abgaben zu obigem Behuf aufreiben zu können.

Von Zehnten, Frohn=Diensten, auch selbst während einem Kriege, weiß man hier nichts.

Ein jeder hiesiger Einwohner mag treiben, handthieren, glauben, und dencken was er will und wozu er Lust hat; ihm stehet desfalls nichts sowohl von seiten der Obrigkeit, noch von der Religion im Wege: Die Gewissens=Freyheit hat hier keine Grenzen.

(26) Auch wird hier kein Mann oder Jüngling, oder den Eltern ihre Söhne, mit Gewalt zum Soldaten genommen, und fremden Monarchen verkauft. Hier weiß man von keinem Lohn=Soldat, jeder Bürger ist Soldat, und jeder Soldat ist Bürger, und immer bereit das Vaterland gegen alle Tyrannen und feindliche Einfälle zu vertheidigen und zu beschützen; und eben dieses ist die edle Bestimmung des Soldaten und des Bürgers, und deswegen hat auch Gott die Einwohner dieses Landes, welche keine stehende Armeen, keine Kriegs=Vorräthe, keine Magazine noch Manufacturen hatten, dennoch über seine stoltze, mächtige, und aus mehr als ein Dutzend Nationen auserlesene Feinde, den herrlichsten Sieg davon tragen lassen. Und merckwürdig ist es, daß dieser Hauffen zusammen getretener Bürger, die nicht einmahl wusten, wie man ein Gewehr angreifen sollte, dennoch den gantzen Krieg hindurch, die Schande einer Saratogischen oder Trentown=ähnlichen Affaire nicht erlebt haben.

O! unsterblicher Waschington! ruhmvolltester Held, aller noch je gelebten Helden! Erlöser und Befreyer deiner Landsleute, dir gebühret,

nächst Gott dem Allmächtigen, unsterblicher Dank und unverweßliche Ehre. Möchte dein patriotischer Heldenmuth in A= (27) merica ewig leben, und Feinde vor deinem Namen zittern!

In dieses glückliche Land, worinnen schon viele tausende unserer Landesleute, wohlhabend, glücklich und im Ueberfluß ansäßig sind, und worinnen noch für viele Millionen Menschen, gutes und reiches Land unangebaut liegt, werdet ihr eingeladen, um glückliche—freye und unabhängige Bürger zu werden. Ein Hundert Acker Land, (welches bey uns 120 Morgen sind) mit 10 jähriger Freyheit, in einer euch selbst beliebigen Gegend, mit dem Beding, daß eurer wenigstens 60 Personen seyn müssen, die eine solche Gegend anbauen wollen, stehen einem jeden Mann für den billigsten Preis auf einen 15 jährigen Credit zu Diensten, nach welchem Zeitverlauf, ihr, wie es freylich billich, und wie ihr gewiß dazu im Stande seyn werdet, diesen geringen Ankaufs=Betrag abtragen müsset: auch der nöthige Vorschuß zu Zuchtvieh, Arbeitsgeschirr, Saatfrüchten, nöthigem Hausrath, und Lebens=mittel auf ein Jahr, wird euch mit der billigen Condition gereicht werden, daß ihr diesen geringen Betrag nach Verlauf von 15 Jahren nebst der Intresse wieder vergüten müsset. Kann wohl je was billigeres erdacht werden, um seine Nebenmenschen glücklich zu machen, dann dieses?

(28) In einem Jahr kann demnach ein neuer Anfänger, ein bequemes sogenantes Blockhaus gebauet, einen Kuchen=Garten gepflanzt, und wenigstens 3 Acker Land mit Getreyde aller Arten geerntet haben, während sich sein Zucht= und Federvieh sehr gemehret hat. Um eine Veränderung in der Arbeit zu machen, könnt ihr auch zu schicklicher Zeit auf die Jagd—und wenn Flüsse oder Seen nahe sind, auf den Fischfang gehen, um die Küche zu verbessern; denn Fische und Wildpret sind hier frey, und gehören dem, der solche fängt oder schiesset; nicht wie bey uns, wo der Landsherr sich dieses alles, sogar die Nutzung der Maste im Walde, und alles Holtz und Wasser, durch ein thörigtes Erbrecht zueignet, obgleich der gütige Schöpfer dieses alles zum Nutzen des ganzen menschlichen Geschlechts, nicht aber zum Eigenthum eines einzigen geschaffen hat. Denn wäre dieses wahr, warum schuff dann GOTT nicht, ein separates Geschlecht von Menschen, welches vor andern solche Vorzüge hatte, und über die Menschen erhaben war. Ich bin demnach vollkommen aus der täglichen hiesigen Erfahrung überzeugt,

daß mit gehöriger Ordnung, Arbeitsamkeit und Fleiß, ihr in Zeit von 3 Jahren euren glücklichen Zustand nicht mit dem be= (29) sten Deutschen Bauer, ja ich darf wohl sagen, nicht mit einem Deutschen Edelmann vertauschen werdet; denn die Americaner geniessen wahrlich mehr Freyheiten und Rechte, denn in Deutschland ein Edelmann.

Ich muß daher suchen, diesen Vortheil in Betracht menschlicher Glückseligkeit dieses Landes, in Vergleich des Hessischen elenden und slavischen Zustandes, meinen sich in Neu=York, etc. vorfindenden Landsleuten besser begreiflich zu machen, und auf sie näher anzuwenden.

Ihr seyd, oder besser, ihr waret Unterthanen Hessens. Euer Landesherr verkaufte 13500 seiner Unterthanen oder eurer Mitbrüder an den König von Groß=Brittannien, zum Americanischen Kriegsdienst, vor 35 Pfund Sterling oder 200 Thaler jeden Kopf jährlich, exclusive der Subsidien, die ebenfals sehr beträchtlich sind. Wenn diese Ueberlassung Hessischer Truppen in Englischen Sold, gegen Bezahlung einer solchen ungeheuren Summe Geldes, wovon das Korps nicht völlig die Hälfte zur Löhnung, Kleidung und andern Feld=Nothwendigkeiten erhält, nicht verkauft genennt werden kan, so weiß ich wahrlich keine schicklichere Benennung dafür, ich müste es denn Seelenverkauferey nennen, und dazu habe ich auch vieles (30) Recht, weil die Krone England jeden todtgeschossenen oder an Blessur verstorbenen, jeden Blessirten und Gefangenen, mit einer starken Summe, dem Landgrafen vergüten muß; und nun wird es euch doch einleuchtend genug seyn, daß ihr von ihm verkauft seyd, und dieses werden auch seine angefüllte Kasten, und seine dadurch reich gewordene Hof=Creaturen, und die unglücklichen Eltern, Weiber und Kinder, deren Angehörige in America Todes verblieben sind, nicht leugnen können.

Der 44ste Psalm, und andere Stellen der Heiligen Schrift, werden dieses von eurem Fürsten, gottloser und teuflischer Weise, den Gesetzen GOTTES und der Menschen zuwider, sich angemaßte Betragen, und euch angethane Unrecht, in ein zu verabscheuendes Licht setzen.

Genug, ihr wurdet im Winter 1776 mit Gewalt ausgehoben, in die Regimente gesteckt, und in Zeit von 6 Wochen unter Escorte Hanöverischer Cavallerie nach Bremerlehe und nach Ritzebüttel marschirt, hier euch der Eid der Treue gegen England und Hessen, gewaltsamer Weise, abgezwungen, und ihr, ohne eure Einwilligung, auf die Schiffe gepackt. Man machte euch zwar damalen weis, ihr soltet nur

zur Besatzung (31) nach England gebracht werden; eine 22 wöchige Schifffreise aber öffnete euch endlich die Augen, und ihr waret im Lande der Freyheit, ohne es zu schmecken, vielmehr schleppt ihr die Ketten der Slavery noch bis jetzt.

Und wer seine gesunde Gliedmassen noch hat, wer dem Tode entrunnen, die Fatiguen eines siebenjährigen mühseligen und blutigen Krieges überstanden hat, der kan sich warlich glücklich schätzen. Was ist aber nun eure Belohnung wenn ihr nach Haus kommt, für eure getreue und gute Dienste, und daß ihr dem geldgeitzigen Prinzen alle Jahr eine Million Pfund Sterling racheschreyender Blut=gelder mehr eingebracht habt? Soll ich für euch antworten? Eine beschwerliche Zurückreise, die ihr schon kennet, und wie der Ausgang hievon ausfallen wird, ist nur GOtt bekannt. Stürme sind die beständige Gefährten des Meers, und auf demselben einem halb verfaulten Kasten anvertraut, macht mich schaudern! Ich will aber wünschen, ihr kommt glücklich nach Haus; was habt ihr dann?

Wer noch jung und groß genug ist, hat die Gnade, so lange es dem Capitaine gefällt, und so lange bis er alt und steif ist, bey 3 Kreuzer und ein und einem halben (32) Pfund Brod täglich, nebst einem Rock alle 3 Jahre, ein Soldat zu bleiben.

Der welcher schon ein alter Sacramenter oder Taugenichts ist, der welcher klein von Statur, und der welcher durch die Fatiguen des Krieges zum ferneren Dienst untüchtig gemacht ist; diese haben die Gnade, mit einem Laufpaß oder Bettelbrief ins Land fortgeschickt zu werden; damit wenn es einem blutdürstigen Monarchen gefället Krieg zu machen, der Landes=Fürst sie noch einmal verkaufen und todtschiessen lassen kan. Und nun kan ein solcher betteln gehen wo er will, oder dem Bauren für 12 bis 18 Thaler Lohn, das Jahr dienen, und mit rauher Kost, vom frühen Morgen bis in die späte Nacht, die sauerste und schwerste Arbeit verrichten; was an diesem Lohn zu ersparen ist, wißt ihr selbst.

Ein anderer hat vielleicht eine Heimath, und etwas Vermögen; da kan er hingehen, und Tag und Nacht für seinen Fürsten arbeiten; Herrschaftliche und Adelige Frohndienste verrichten; Tag und Nacht sorgen, wie er seine Contributions=Steuern, und andere Menge von Abgaben aufbringen, und Executanten von der Thür abhalten, und sein Gesinde bezahlen könne; und obgleich der Seegen des HErrn groß

gewesen, so kan (33) er dennoch kaum des Sontags 1 Pfündgen Fleisch essen, und höchstens ein Maaß Bier trinken.

Der welcher durch eine harte Blessur den Gebrauch einiger Gliedmassen verloren, oder ein anderer, welcher durch einen Dreißigjährigen Dienst alt und steif geworden, und seine Gesundheit und Kräfte dem nie zu ersättigenden Geitz seines Fürsten gewidmet hat — also, vielleicht Einer aus Fünizigen, was hat er zu erwarten? eine Pension lebenslänglich von 1 Gulden oder höchstens 1 Thaler Monathlich. Da kan ja aber keiner kaum das Leben von erhalten, wenn er auch weiter nichts als Wasser und Brod geniesset, woher will er denn Kleider, Schuhe, etc. nehmen? er muß also dabey betteln. O guter GOtt! wie kümmerlich geht es ihm, und dennoch wird dieses eine fürstliche Gnade genannt. GOtt behüte einen jeden davor in Gnaden!

O! meine theure Landsleute und Soldaten! überlegt dieses alles recht genau, und reißt euch mit Gewalt aus einer solchen Slavery. Ihr habt es sogar zu verantworten in einem solchen Lande Kinder zu zeugen. Der Mensch ist und wird frey gebohren; aber in Deutschland nicht, wo sie von Geburt an Slaven sind; ihr habt sogar (34) nicht die Gewissens=Freyheit, obgleich Protestanten. Zum Exempel, ist es nicht gewiß, daß der Vater wenn er Reformirt ist, seinen Sohn nicht Lutherisch werden lassen darf, und so umgekehrt; das Gewissen was jedem Menschen eigen ist, mag dazu denken was es will. Wenn die Söhne 14 Jahre alt sind werden sie confirmirt, ins Kirchen=Buch—und in das Canton=Register eingeschrieben. Auch, damit sie nicht ausser Land gehen, und daselbst Professiones erlernen können, aus Furcht sie möchten austreten, und der Fürst möchte an ihrem Vermögen nicht haften können, so müssen diese zarten 14 jährige Jünglinge schon an die Fahnen ihres Cantons schwören, um in allem Fall, wenn sie der Fürst zu Soldaten braucht und verkaufen will, sie parat zu haben, und wenn sie sich nicht gleich sistiren, ihr Vermögen, oder deren Antheil an demselben, ohne Rücksicht auf ihre Familie oder Eltern, confisciren zu können. Diese werden gar oft noch überdis mit schweren Geldbussen und Gefängniß=Strafen belegt, wenn man ihnen nur im geringsten darthun kan, daß ihre Söhne mit ihrem Wissen ausser Landes gegangen sind, werden auch wohl gar so lange gequälet, bis sie ihre Söhne herbey schaffen.

(35) Wenn nun ein Vater, mit vieler Gedult, Sorgfalt, Versäumniß und Kosten, einen Sohn oder mehrere erzogen hat, ein Handwerk oder den Ackerbau erlernen lassen; wenn er nun hofft und glaubt, da er nun selbst bereits bey Jahren und hinfällig ist, daß diese seine Söhne, aus kindlicher Pflicht, seine schwere Last mit ihm theilen, und die Arbeit erleichtern möchten; so werden sie ihm zu Soldaten, entweder in Feld= oder Garnisons=Regimenter ausgezogen. In ersteren hat der Sohn nur 3 Kreuzer täglich Lohnung; dieses weiß er dem Vater so beyzubringen, daß er alles anwendet um ihm einen Zusatz, und die Unkosten zu neuen Hosen, Camaschen, Schuhen und Hemden, damit ihm auf einige Monathe der Urlaub von seinem Capitaine nicht versagt werde, zufliessen zu lassen. Den andern, welcher vielleicht in einem Garnisons=Regiment ist, in welchem er gar keine Löhnung, und nur kaum alle 12 Jahr einen Rock bekömmt, muß er gar, auf seine eigene Kosten, in allem unterhalten. Ich habe warlich Eltern und Witwen gekennt, die 3 auch 4 bis 5 Söhne hatten, welche alle zu Soldaten ausgenommen waren, bloß weil sie das Unglück hatten ein wenig groß und gut gewachsen zu seyn; diese mußten um ihre Abgaben aufreiben zu können, fremde Knechte (36) miethen, und ihre Söhne kosteten ihnen überdas ein vieles; ohne daß ihnen deßhalb nur das allergeringste an ihren Abgaben wäre erlassen worden. So daß am Ende sie gänzlich ruinirt, und ihre Güther, herrschaftlicher und anderer rückständiger Schulden halben, von der Kanzel in der Kirche zum gerichtlich meistbietenden Verkauf proclamirt, und sie selbst an den Bettelstab gebracht wurden.

Dieses hätte nun im ganzen dennoch nicht so viel zu sagen, denn die Söhne blieben doch noch im Lande, und dienten dem Ausdruck, obwohl nicht der Wahrheit gemäß, ihrem Vaterlande; und die Eltern könnten auch noch wohl zuweilen, wiewohl im ganzen einen sehr unbedeutenden Gebrauch von ihren Söhnen machen. Aber, es entsteht ein Krieg (ich will hier den Fall annehmen, wie in den Jahren 1741, bis 1744) zwischen dem Käyser und Holland; nun werden alle Söhne ausgezogen, Wittwen ihrer Stützen, junge Frauen ihrer Ehegatten beraubt, und an beyde zugleich verlehnt oder besser verkauft. Denn obgleich die Heilige Schrift sagt: *Niemand kan Zween Herren dienen*, so haben doch obengemeldete Jahre gezeigt, daß es möglich ist; indem damalen Hessen beyden Partheyen um Geld diene.



(37) Ueber kurz oder lang hören die Anverwandten den Tod ihres Freundes, oder der Vater seines Sohnes, etc. etc. Dessen Tod wird dem Fürsten mit einer ansehnlichen Summe bezahlt; ohne daß der Vater oder die Mutter den mindesten Vortheil davon haben, ausser daß sie mit Wahrheit sagen können: Nun, GOtt lob! so ist er denn todt! und hat alles Elend überstanden, und wir sind seiner zu versorgen entlediget! — Ein anderer kommt ohne einen Arm oder Bein, oder sonst als ein Krüppel, oder durch Feld=Krankheiten mit einem abgezehrten ungesunden Körper nach Haus, bringt vielleicht 1 Gulden oder 1 Thaler monatlich Gnadengehalt mit, wenn er glücklich ist; und nun liegt er der Familie zur Last, und sie muß ihn als einen dem Fürsten unbrauchbaren Landmann oder Bürger zu Tod füttern.

Ich erwiedere es demnach nochmals: Ist es nicht Sünde, eine der größten Sünden, einem solchen Tyrannen bloß zu seinem Geitz, Gewinn und Vergnügen, Söhne zu zeugen und groß zu ziehen.

Es ist wahrhaftig eine wahre Schande für das menschliche Geschlecht, daß einige Menschen von ihren sogenannten Fürsten, welche von der nemlichen Erde wie sie selbst geschaffen sind, und die gar öfters we- (38) niger Verstand, etc. haben, als einer der geringsten ihren [*sic*] Mitmenschen, sich zu den niedrigsten und schändlichsten Absichten gebrauchen lassen. Diese Art Menschen arbeiten bloß für ihren Fürsten, alles Geld das sie aufbringen können geben sie ihm, während welchem sie von der elendesten Speise, die kein Hund in America frißt, leben, Wasser trinken, und sich in Lumpen hüllen, damit sie nur den reichen Seegen des HErrn ihrem nie zu ersättigenden Fürsten in den Rachen liefern können; ihre Kinder ja sich selbst überlassen sie ihren Fürsten zu den verächtlichsten und schändlichsten Absichten, um damit wuchern und wie das Schlachtvieh verkaufen zu können, und todt oder zum Krüppel schießen zu lassen. Verdienen solche menschlich=gestaltete Creaturen, die sich solchergestalt, auf die unedelste Art, von einem ihrer Mitmenschen willkürlich und schimpflich behandeln lassen, verdienen solche, sage ich, Menschen zu seyn oder zu heißen?

Nein! vielmehr würde das Affengeschlecht diesen Namen verdienen. Denn diese Art Menschen haben der Natur der Menschheit abgesagt, und sind niedriger in der Schöpfung denn das unvernünftige Vieh geworden. Hätten das unsere freye Voreltern wissen sollen, daß ihre Nachkommenschaft ärger als (39) bis zum slavischen und viehischen

Zustand abarten, und alles Menschliche verneinen sollten, sie würden sich lieber selbst verstümmelt haben, um eine solche elende Species von Menschen=gestalten nicht zeugen zu können. Ich glaube, wenn der Teufel aus der Hölle käme (ich rede gleichniß=weise) und wollte mit GOtt oder seinen Frommen Krieg führen, und verlangte dazu 12 oder 15000 Hessen, für einen guten Preis, der Fürst würde ohne die mindeste Ueberlegung sie ihm verkaufen; und wenn auch der Teufel sie alle in die Hölle stürzen wolte, so daß der Fürst keinen einzigen davon wieder zu sehen bekäme, so würde ihm das recht sehr lieb seyn, zumahlen wenn mit dem Teufel, wie anjetzo mit England, der Accord getroffen wäre, das er jeden fehlenden Hessen nach Endigung des Subsidiën Tractats mit 150 oder 200 Reichs Thaler bezahlen müßte. Denn daß ihm dieses recht sehr lieb seye, hat der jetzige Americanische Krieg gezeigt, wo gewiß mehr denn 5000 unschuldige Hessen aufgeopfert worden sind, wofür der Tyrann das theure Blutgeld gezogen hat. Und ich bin gewiß, das Hessische Volk würde sich dagegen gar nicht sperren, sondern gar gerne, weilen es der Landgraf so haben will, schnurstracks in die Hölle, oder doch wenigstens in das Verderben hinein stürzen. (40) Ist es wohl möglich zu glauben, daß Menschen von ihrer edeln und göttlichen Bestimmung solcher=gestalt abarten können, und dennoch ist es, leider! wie die Erfahrung täglich zeigt, allzuwahr. Ihr Hessen! schämt euch doch eures schändlichen, verächtlichen und dem Menschen höchst unanständigen Zustandes, seyd nicht mehr die willkührliche Slaven eines eurer Nebenmenschen, zerbrecht die Ketten der Slavery, reist euch aus der Finsterniß und Slavery in welche euch eure Voreltern, durch Zagheit und Furcht gestürzt haben, kommt in dis Land der Freyheit, wo ihr, wenn ihr auch nackend ankommt, in kurzer Zeit wieder Menschen, ja freye und glückliche Menschen werden könnt, und hier seyd fromm, tugendhaft, menschenfreundlich, und arbeitsam, so seyd ihr Mensch, wie ihn GOtt, nach seinem Ebenbild, frey und als keinen Knecht erschuf, ihr seyd Herr der Erde und der Schöpfung, und glücklich hier und dort ewig. Brecht den ungerechten Eid, den ihr durch Zwang, aus Furcht und ohne Ueberlegung einem Menschen, der gotteslästerlicher und unrechtmäßiger Weise, Gewalt, Herrschaft und Tyranny über euch präntirt, geleistet habt. Verlaßt ein solches Scheusal, das sich *Vater* seines Volks nennet, und in dem Augenblick,

wenn ihm jemand 100 oder (41) 150 Thaler gibt, seinem Kinde die Hände bindet, es selbst zur Schlachtbank führet, und ruhiglich zusiehet, das ihm die Gurgel abgeschnitten wird, und welcher noch über das mit dem Blute von mehr dann 5000 unschuldiger Landes=Kinder, auf seiner Seele haftend, ruhig schlafen, und mit diesem höllischen Blutgeld, nebst seinen Hof= und andern Creaturen in allen teuflischen Wollüsten schwelgen kan. Verachtet den Tyrannen, kommt alle; und sein blutschuldiges Land müsse öde seyn und bleiben, und niemand mehr darinnen wohnen.

Ich glaube, ich habe durch diese wenige Wahrheiten meinen Landsleuten die Augen ziemlich geöffnet, und wenn sie diese selbst gebrauchen wollen, so werden sie allenthalben um sich herum mehr Elend in ihrem Vaterland erblicken, die theils der enge Raum dieser wenigen Blätter herzuzehlen, nicht erlaubet, auch theils mit denen schon erwähnten in genauer Verbindung stehen, und die unausbleibliche Folgen der Slavery sind.

Ich will demnach für dieses mal schliessen, in der Hoffnung, daß durch eine vernünftig angestellte Vergleichung, zwischen den freyen glücklichen Bürgern dieses America's, und denen Unterthanen Teutschlands, wenigstens Hessens, meine lieben Landsleute den Vortheil gewiß auf Seiten America's finden werden.

(42) O! möchtet ihr euch doch nun auch fest entschliessen, den Hessischen=Slaven Dienst sobald als möglich zu verlassen, euch hier in America anzubauen, die milde Anerbietungen der edlen Americaner nicht zu eurem Nachtheil zu verwerfen; sondern hier glückliche und freye Bürger zu werden. Ich bin zum voraus überzeugt, das wenn ihr nur 4 Tage in der Woche arbeitet, ihr euch in 4 Jahren in solchen Umständen finden werdet, daß wenn ihr die Sache genau erwäget, ihr Anstand nehmen würdet, mit einem der reichsten deutschen Bauren oder Edelleuten euren glücklichen Zustand zu vertauschen.

Der liebe GOtt, der Schöpfer, Vater und milde Beherrscher der Menschen, gebe denn hierzu seinen besten Seegen; dieses wünschet aufrichtig euer

Landsmann und bester Freund.

Auszug eines Lieds,  
 von einem Americanischen Grenadier,  
 an die Hessen und andere.  
 Im Jahr 1777.

- Sind in Europa denn für euch  
 Der Gräber nicht genug,  
 Daß euch das Meer aus fernem Reich  
 An unsre Küsten trug?
2. Hat wilde Wuth euch so entflammt,  
 Der Mordlust so geweiht,  
 Daß ihr ein fremdes Volk verdammt  
 Zu Knechten wie ihr seyd?
3. Ihr Feinde, hörts! es wird euch doch  
 Die Last dadurch nicht leicht,  
 Ob noch so hart das Slaven=Joch  
 Auch unsern Nacken beugt.
4. Doch wir verspotten euer Heer,  
 Und beugen nimmer ihn,  
 Und solt uns auch wie Sand am Meer,  
 Ein Welttheil überziehn.
5. GOTT ist mit uns, und unsre Hand  
 Die stählen wir im Streit,  
 Wir kämpfen für das Vaterland,  
 Daß wir vom Joch befreyt.
6. Helvetier, Batavier,\*  
 Euch, Edlen, jauchzen wir,  
 Ihr trotztet der Tyrannen Heer;  
 Wir trotzen ihm wie ihr.
- \* Schweitzer und Holländer.
7. Euch lohnt nach manchem sauren Kampf,  
 Nun lang das Glück der Ruh:  
 Auch uns, uns lacht durch Wuth und Dampf  
 Von fern der Friede zu.

(44)

8. Wenn einst Carthaunen nicht mehr glühn,

    Canonen=Donner schweigt,

Nicht Krieger mehr das Land durchziehn,

    Denn ist das Ziel erreicht.

9. Denn freut sich seines Siegs der Held,

    Freut sich in sichrer Ruh,

Wir erndten denn, im Leichen=Feld:

    Uns jauchz't der Erdkreis zu.

10. Uns einst zu schlachten, lerntet ihr

    Die Kunst zu morden früh!

Die Kunst zu morden übten wir

    Im Schoos der Ruhe nie.

11. Doch dürfen wir nicht mancher Zahl

    Von Siegen uns schon freu'n!

Das mögen Boston, Montreal,

    Und Trenton, Zeugen seyn.

12. Ihr kämpfet nur für niedern Lohn,

    Für Freyheit kämpft ihr nicht,

In unserm Heer ist *Waschington*,

    Der nur für Freyheit ficht.

13. Nicht Sold entfeuert edle Gluth

    Zu großen Thaten an,

Habt ihr den Mann, der Geld und Gut,

    Wie er\* verachten kan?

\* Wie *Waschington*, der ohne Sold diente.

14. Mit eurem Pulver donnern wir,

    Ziehn eure Kleider an;

Durch eure Waffen stürzet ihr,

    Es stürzet Roß und Mann.

15. Auch euch trifft unser mächtig's Schwerdt,

    Ihr Teutschland's Söhne ihr,

Warum verließst ihr eure Herd',

    Sagt uns was thaten wir?

(45)

16. Was suchet ihr im fremden Reich,

    Mehrt unsrer Feinde Heer?

- Längst ruht der Väter Geist, auf euch,  
 Unwürdige! nicht mehr.
17. Säh' von Walhalla, Siegmar dich,  
 Säh Herrmann sein Geschlecht,\*  
 Sie schämten warlich deiner sich,  
 Und schämten sich mit Recht.
- \* Die tapfern Voreltern der Deutschen und Hessen.
18. Sie fochten selbst der Römer Heer  
 Mit Deutschem Arm und Muth,  
 Und tränkten ihren mächt'gen Spear,  
 Nur in Tyrannen Blut.
19. Und ihre Enkel schmachten nun  
 In fremder Völker Dienst,  
 Verkaufen sich, wie Slaven thun,  
 Dem Fürsten zum Gewinnst.
20. Kommt zu uns, schüttelt ab sein Joch,  
 Denn zeigt ihr grössern Muth;  
 Kommt zu uns, er verkauft euch doch,  
 Und schwelgt von eurem Blut;
21. Und thürmt Palläste in die Luft,  
 Und dünkt sich darin groß;  
 Weh! das es nicht um Rache ruft  
 Das Blut, das er vergoß.
22. Statt daß ihr uns zu morden sucht,  
 Und unsere Saat verheert,  
 Genießt dann selbst des Fleisses Frucht,  
 Die jetzt der Fürst verzehrt.
23. O kommt, laßt Deutschland Deutschland seyn,  
 Und gebt uns eure Hand,  
 Schmied't eure Schwerdt zu Sichel ein,  
 Und baut mit uns das Land.
- (46)
24. Kommt zu uns frey von Groll und Trug,  
 Und eßt das Freundschafts=Mahl;  
 Wir haben hier der Hütten gnug,  
 Und Länder ohne Zahl.
25. Vergessen soll die Feindschaft seyn,

Vergessen denn das Schwert,  
Wir wollen uns wie Brüder freu'n,  
    Uns freu'n an einem Heerd.  
26. Nun wählt euch, wählet was ihr wollt,  
    Sey's Freyheit oder Tod;  
Kommt sey'd der Freundschaft Bitten hold,  
    Und lohnt uns nicht mit Spott.  
27. Sonst hilft GOtt, der uns Freyheit gab;  
    Denn donnern wir mit Macht,  
Wie Felsenstück auf euch herab,  
    Auf euch, im Sturm der Schlacht.  
28. Und Staub wird eure Flotte seyn,  
    Denn GOtt verleyht uns Glück:  
Nach eurer Weser, eurem Rhein,  
    Komm'n wen'ge nur zurück!

[47]

Zur  
Nachricht,

Alle Hessen oder Deutsche, welche unter denen in dieser Schrift enthaltenen Bedingungen, Americanische Einwohner werden wollen, müssen sich nach *Sud=Carolina* verfügen, wo eine *Niederlassung*, zu ihrem Vortheil unternommen werden wird.



[1]

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

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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.

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

[2] Empty

[3]

### 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;

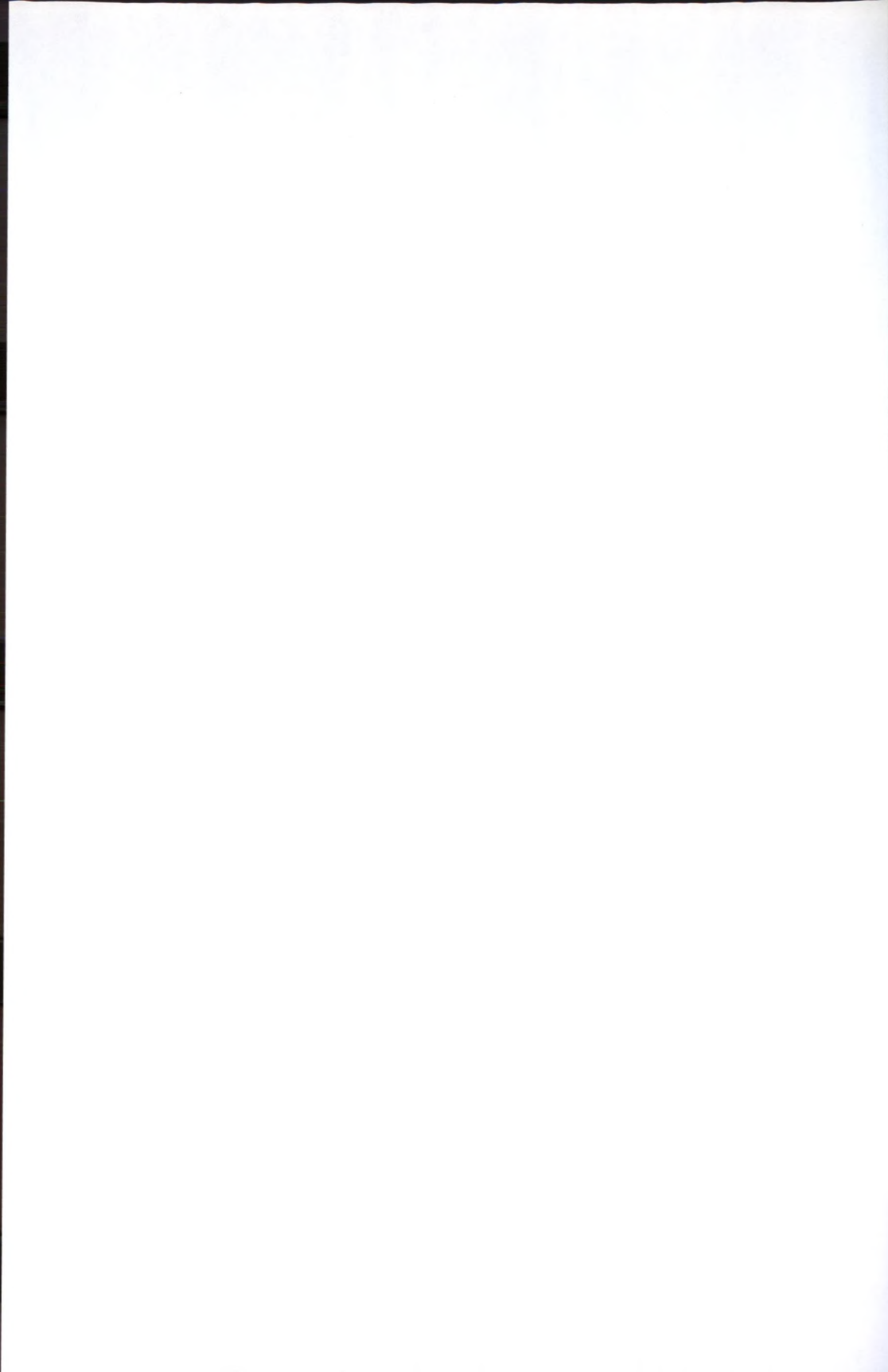
To your Weser, to your Rhine,  
Only a few will ever get back.



[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.



## The Transcription

There are two printings of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath, an die Einwohner Deutschlands, besonders in Hessen*. Both were printed by Carl Cist in Philadelphia in 1783. Copies of the one with 35 pages are at the American Philosophical Society (Philadelphia), Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Library Company of Philadelphia, and Massachusetts Historical Society (Boston). This printing is #18291 in Charles Evans's *American Bibliography* (Chicago: Privately printed for the author, 1903-55). The item is available in the Readex Microprint edition of *Early American Imprints* published by the American Antiquarian Society. Gerd-J. Bötte (# 584) found a hitherto unrecorded issue of the same pamphlet in the Archives and Special Collections of Franklin & Marshall College (Lancaster, PA). This printing has 42 pages and forms the basis for my edition. Franklin & Marshall College has graciously given me permission to base my edition upon the apparently unique copy.

A comparison between the two issues shows a few emendations but also a few omissions and new mistakes in the copy at Franklin & Marshall College. I will call the 35-page issue 1783<sup>1</sup> and the 42-page issue 1783<sup>2</sup>. References are to pagination of original.

5 *seinem Neben=Menschen*: 1783<sup>1</sup> has *meinem Neben=Menschen*.

9 12. *Capitel im ersten Buch Samuel und das 6te: im . . . 6te* was left out in 1783<sup>2</sup>.

12 *und brannten*): ) omitted in both 1783<sup>1</sup> and 1783<sup>2</sup>.

20 *33sten*: in both issues, correct *23sten*.

25 *Jagd* as in 1783<sup>1</sup>; 1783<sup>2</sup> has *Jacht*.

28 *fängt* as in 1783<sup>1</sup>; 1783<sup>2</sup> has *fangt*.

30 *und euch angethane Unrecht*: *euch* supplied from 1783<sup>1</sup>.

32 *aufbringen*: 1783<sup>2</sup> omits *und den Landbereuter* of 1783<sup>1</sup>.

*Landbereuter* is found already on p. 22.

33 1783<sup>2</sup> has the incorrect page number 32.

34 *eingeschrieben*: as in 1783<sup>1</sup>; 1783<sup>2</sup> has *eingeschrieben*,

37 *von ihren sogenannten Fürsten* as in 1783<sup>1</sup>; 1783<sup>2</sup> has *vor ihren sogenannten Fürsten*.

38 *ihren Mitmenschen*: both issues have the incorrect form.

41 *seinen Hof= und andern Creaturen*: both 1783<sup>1</sup> und 1783<sup>2</sup> have  
*seinem*.

43 *Nacken*: 1783<sup>1</sup> has *Rücken*.

45 *Palläste* as in 1783<sup>1</sup>; 1783<sup>2</sup> has *Pallaste*.

## Commentary

### The Hessian Soldiers in the American Revolutionary War

When it became necessary for the British government to increase its military forces in the American colonies so as to try to suppress the Revolutionaries, the government turned to other countries for soldiers. Among the first leaders to agree to have troops go to America was Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel. There were several reasons for his decision. For one, his first wife was the daughter of George II of England. For another, it was common practice at the time to have contingents of soldiers fight under the flag of another country which would pay for such service. That benefit for Hesse-Kassel would indeed turn out to be huge in the case of the subsidiary treaty arranged between William Faucitt, the British negotiator, and Martin Ernst von Schlieffen, the Hessian minister. As a consequence of the sums of money received for the soldiers and the increase in production in various war-related industries, the Landgrave could not only lower taxes but also make Kassel a universally acknowledged beautiful city. At his death he left a surplus of sixty million *Thaler*, or about twenty million pound sterling, in ready money, a good part of the surplus being the result of the sums paid by Great Britain for the soldiers. There were four other German states that entered into subsidiary agreements with England.

The total number of German soldiers shipped to America between 1776 and 1781 was about 30,000. Of these about 20,000 were from Hesse-Kassel (though a number of soldiers in the Hesse-Kassel regiments were from outside the country). The wisdom and overall consequences of Friedrich II's actions have been discussed by various scholars, several of them arriving at a much more positive view of his decision than the author of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* (see especially Ingrao [1982]).

The German population reacted, if at all, with sadness to seeing soldiers depart for faraway America. People in general though did not question the validity of having soldiers hired out to foreign nations. The first and most impressive indictment of the practice came from Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, comte de Mirabeau, in his *Avis aux Hessois et autres peuples de l'Allemagne Vendus par leurs Princes à l'Angleterre* (1777). In a passionate appeal to the Hessians and other Germans Mirabeau

points out the blindness of those who obey their princes and go to America to fight the colonists. Again and again he condemns the German princes for their life of luxury which had led to great debts and thus to the need to hire out their subjects for money. Mirabeau warns the Hessians that they will regret bitterly their participation in the attempt to subdue the Revolutionaries who, in his opinion, were fully justified in defending their rights and freedom. The Hessians should change sides and join, together with other Germans who live under a despotic regime, their many happy compatriots in America who had already made their choice for freedom and who would welcome the defectors with open arms. The author of the 1783 pamphlet must have known Mirabeau's appeal, as I will try to show below and in the notes in connection with certain phrases and issues found in both texts. Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, bought up as many copies of Mirabeau's pamphlet he could get hold of. Schlieffen, his minister, then published a rejoinder which was also written in French. There were German translations of both pamphlets. It is interesting to note that there was also a rejoinder to the 1783 pamphlet, *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*, published in New York City. The rejoinder is entitled *Warnung eines hessischen Feldwebels an seine redliche Landsleuthe gegen die ihnen unter der Masque der Wahrheit und Guten Rathes von einem Verräter seines Vaterlandes gelegten Schlingen* (Warning by a Hessian Sergeant, addressed to his honest compatriots, of an attempt by a traitor to his fatherland to ensnare them behind the masque of truth and good advice). It was also published in 1783 and appears in reliable bibliographies. However, my search for the pamphlet has been unsuccessful. All indications point to Eberhardt Sauer the Third (also spelled Saur and Sower), as the probable author and most likely the printer. Eberhardt Sauer, member of the most prominent German-American family of printers, was an ardent loyalist. He had to flee from Philadelphia to New York City where he worked for the British in 1783.

The author of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* must also have known Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* (1776). As I will show in the notes, there are a reference to the Bible (p. 10) and a particularly striking passage against the cruelty of tyrants (p. 41) that the author of the 1783 pamphlet took from Paine.

When the Continental Congress, meeting in Philadelphia, was informed that the British had hired foreign soldiers to augment their forces in America, Congress was outraged and even readier than before to declare independence. It was also resolved to try to lure these soldiers away from the British forces by a series of handbills that promised land, livestock, provisions, and credit to each deserter. The appeals to the officers and enlisted men vary in certain details but contain basically similar offers of land and livestock and a friendly welcome among the colonists. Often the appeals mention the fact that the colonists had done nothing against the soldiers and that they would find many compatriots living happily in America. In addition to official attempts to make German troops desert the British cause, there were private initiatives to make soldiers see that they were fighting on the wrong side. In contrast to *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*, the above-mentioned appeals are short and lack any literary quality.

## Desertion

The consensus is that the various attempts to persuade the German soldiers to leave their regiments and to settle in America had mixed results. The rate of desertion among the Hessian soldiers was low, especially early in the war. Later there were a good number who came over to the American side. Some of these had been prisoners of war for a long time and had been farmed out, ultimately to stay away from their regiments for good. Also, more and more soldiers comprising the Hessian regiments had been recruited from other German states and thus did not feel the same sense of loyalty the native soldiers felt toward their sovereign and their state. Among the deserters were also some who had enlisted so as to obtain free passage to America where they wanted to settle. Very few soldiers were aware of the political and philosophical issues involved in the War of Independence. If they had any opinion about the war at all, they thought that they were fighting for a just cause, against an ungrateful, disobedient people. They had their families in Hesse-Kassel or other German states and were looking forward to returning home with the money they had saved. Even the officers did not understand the causes underlying the American determination to rid the country of British rule. Their extensive reports on everyday events

during the war—they were required to write such reports for the Landgrave—did not question the validity of their fighting against the colonists. Given the background of the officers, such a conservative outlook is not surprising. The surprise is that the author of the 1783 pamphlet should have arrived at such different conclusions as to the legitimacy of the cause of the Revolutionaries.

### The Author

My pursuit of the identity of the pamphlet author led to many possible candidates. I am now certain however that it is Karl Friedrich Führer (1756-94) who wrote *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*. The reasons for my determination are presented best by sketching Führer's life. The following biographical data are based primarily on work done by Inge Auerbach, Kenneth S. Jones, and Alice H. Lerch. While there is uncertainty about the exact date of a few events in Führer's life and also about the precise role his debts played in his decision to defect, the basic facts are not in dispute.

Karl Friedrich's father, Friedrich Wilhelm Führer (1717-81), studied law at various universities, including at Göttingen, and then participated in the Austrian wars in Bavaria and the Netherlands as an officer in the Hessian army. He was demoted as a result of a conflict with his company major and in 1773 he was appointed "Road and Bridge" engineer, an office he held until his death at his home in Felsberg, a town on the Eder. Frederick Wilhelm Führer and his wife had six sons of whom Karl Friedrich was the fourth. Apparently, Karl Friedrich tended to get into debt, both in Hesse-Kassel and in America. As an ensign in the regiment led by Lieutenant General Wilhelm von Knyphausen he left Kassel on 9 May 1776 and England on 20 July 1776 for New York City where the regiment disembarked on 18 October 1776. An older brother, Karl August, also served under von Knyphausen. Karl Friedrich was taken prisoner when Washington took Trenton on 26 December 1776. As a prisoner of war in Dumfries and Fredericksburg, Virginia, he fraternized with officers of the Revolutionary Army and the people in town. During this time he also made the acquaintance of George Washington. While a prisoner of war, he wrote the poem that he appended to the 1783 pamphlet. According to the title it was written in 1777. It appeals to



the Hessian and other German soldiers to renounce the British cause. I will take up the significance of the poem later. After fifteen months the prisoners of war were exchanged and, back in New York, Führer claims that he tried to resign his commission but that he was refused. He did, though, obtain a certificate to the effect that he had served with honor. In August of 1778 he and a fellow officer, Karl Wilhelm Kleinschmidt, left New York for Philadelphia where on the 26th of that month they wrote to the Continental Congress that they had deserted. They proposed in gratitude for the friendship they experienced during their fifteen months as prisoners of war, to raise a corps consisting of deserters from the German troops in America. But the proposal, which had Washington's approval, failed as did a second such proposal, dated 19 November 1778. On 17 December 1778, still in Philadelphia, they issued a statement justifying the decision to resign their commission in the Hessian service. They claim that they had done so to Lieutenant General von Knyphausen on the 5th of June of that year. The statement was printed in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of 24 December 1778. The criticism of Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, found in the statement, was repeated, in very much enlarged form, in *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*. Führer and Kleinschmidt also composed appeals addressed to the German soldiers fighting for the British to change sides. It appears that in 1779 Kleinschmidt hoped to be reinstated, claiming that Führer had not told him that Knyphausen had set a time for them to give themselves up and that Führer had swindled him out of money. But Knyphausen did not accept Kleinschmidt's plea for reinstatement. Führer and Kleinschmidt were hanged in effigy on the gallows in New York and Fort Mifflin according to the *New York Gazette and Weekly Mercury* of 8 October 1781. Führer's property in Germany was confiscated. Kleinschmidt tried to rejoin the Hessian forces at Yorktown, but that is the last time his name appears in any record and it can be assumed he cannot be the author of the 1783 pamphlet.

Knyphausen and other Hessian officers saw Führer's heavy debts as the cause for his desertion. I do not agree with this explanation and will give my reason below. After assignments in various units, Führer was appointed by Governor Jefferson to serve in the Virginia Line in 1779. With the rank of captain he participated in the Southern Campaign and was seriously injured when he fell off his horse. Back in Philadelphia,

in financial straits, he petitioned Congress for help on 15 November 1781. *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* was published in Philadelphia in 1783. The fact that there are two printings of the pamphlet in that year, one of which incorporates the author's corrections, makes it probable that he must have lived in or near Philadelphia. Thus, the circumstantial evidence points to Führer to having written the pamphlet. His education in Germany, his stay in Dumfries and Fredericksburg while a prisoner of war who was well received in social circles there, and his getting to know Washington personally—there are two passages in the pamphlet praising Washington (pp. 26-27 and 44)—also point to Führer as the author.

The two most often mentioned cases of desertion from the Hessian regiments during the first years in America were those of Führer and Kleinschmidt. The latter can be disregarded as the author of the 1783 pamphlet because of his wavering in loyalty to his fatherland, Hesse-Kassel. Führer, on the other hand, was determined to make America his new home. That commitment to the American cause is already reflected in the poem, dated 1777, and included at the end of the pamphlet. The author says that he has been in America for over seven years (p. 21). Führer arrived in New York City on 18 October 1776. The pamphlet was printed after 28 October 1783, the date of the advertisement in the *Gemeinnützige Philadelphische Correspondenz* in which it is stated that *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* would be available in a few days (see Preface). Thus, Führer had indeed been in America for over seven years when the pamphlet appeared. Führer wrote the 1777 poem when he was a prisoner of war. He claims that it was written by an American "Grenadier," clearly a fictitious attribution. Calling himself an American at this time means that in his mind he has already left the Hessian service and that he is anticipating fighting for the Revolutionaries. In the poem he condemns the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel in the strongest terms and exhorts the Germans fighting on the British side to come over to join the Americans in their battle for independence. The call to the Hessians and other Germans to remember the glorious deeds of Arminius and to join the cause of freedom and the fight against tyranny is patterned on words and sentiments found in the verses of some of the poets of the Göttinger Hain. They profess again and again that they hate tyrants and, on the other hand, talk about a "Freundschaftsmahl" (p. 46; friendship meal)

that they want to share with those who feel the way they do. The poets of the Göttinger Hain—Göttingen being the Hessian university not far from Führer's home—were active exactly during the years preceding his departure for America. As a young man Führer was undoubtedly an admirer of those poets and their ideas. And while their stance was primarily a rhetorical one, he made the hatred of tyrants and the call for freedom his own, even before leaving his native Hesse-Kassel. The seeds of what he was to do after his capture at Trenton had thus been planted before coming to America. In 1777 he still remembered the words and phrases of the poets of the Göttinger Hain and used them to further the American cause and to try to woo the German soldiers fighting for the British to join the Revolutionaries. Since Führer could not have absorbed the call for freedom and the defeat of tyranny found in the poetry of the Göttinger Hain after leaving his native Hesse-Kassel, the poem in *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* constitutes the best evidence against the claim that his debts made him defect and go over to the American side.

In 1777 Führer also read Mirabeau's pamphlet since both the poem of that year and Mirabeau's pamphlet, published also in 1777, use similar titles: both address the Hessians and other Germans. Also both Mirabeau and Führer remind the Hessians and other Germans—as the poets of the Göttinger Hain had done—of their freedom-loving ancestors. He might also have read at that time Thomas Paine's immensely popular *Common Sense* (1776) which Congress had had translated into German immediately. There are echoes of *Common Sense* in *Wahrheit und Guter Rath* as I will point out in the notes.

In 1783 Führer, who now called himself Charles Fierer, became an original member of The Society of the Cincinnati in Virginia, an organization of officers of the Continental Army and their descendants that still exists today. Führer was installed as Worshipful Master of the Masonic Lodge no. 9 of Maryland in 1789. He printed two newspapers, one in Georgetown, the other in Dumfries, both being the first ones in their localities. He was given a pension and 2,000 acres of land for military services performed in the Virginia Line. On 9 December 1794 Führer died in Dumfries.

One aspect of the text of the pamphlet deserves closer attention with regard to the position of the author who states repeatedly that he has been a Hessian. As such it is natural that he would have close ties to

his country of birth and to some of the former comrades. Repeatedly he uses the phrase "bey uns" (back home; pp. 20, 21 22, 23, 28), meaning in Hesse-Kassel. He says he is writing out of love for his compatriots (p. 3) and addresses the Hessians as "meine[n] Brüder=Soldaten" (my fellow soldiers; p. 17) and as "meine lieben Landsleute" (my beloved compatriots; p. 41). Finally, he signs his appeal as "euer Landsmann und bester Freund" (your countryman and best friend; p. 42). One could argue that such phrases are purely rhetorical. After all, the author uses, as I will show below, a number of rhetorical devices to enhance his arguments. Still, one must realize that Führer left his parents and siblings back home and that one of his brothers, serving in the same regiment in which Führer had served, stayed with the Hessian troops. I do not think that Führer's decision to change sides was an easy one. Therefore, I believe that he was sincere in his expressions of love and concern for his former comrades. But he is also furious at them for not seeing the truth and for not coming over to the side he has embraced. He chides them for their blindness and calls them enslaved subjects who should be ashamed of their trying to make other people become slaves, too (pp. 40 and 43). Such a divided attitude toward his former comrades and compatriots makes the pamphlet a personal statement that rings true.

At this point it will be best to summarize the arguments that support my thesis that Führer is the author of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*. On the basis of a comparison between the vocabulary and the ideas found in the 1777 poem and the rest of the text of the pamphlet, we know that both were written by the same author. He was obviously a well educated Hessian officer who must have defected during the first years of his stay in America, since already in 1777 he expressed his hatred of the Landgrave and encouraged his former comrades to come over to the Revolutionaries. Only two Hessian officers of note defected at that early time, Führer and Kleinschmidt. They issued a statement justifying their decision to resign their commissions and wrote appeals in connection with their attempt to form a "German Volunteer" corps; in both the statement and the appeals they used language and ideas that are also found in the poem and the prose text of the 1783 pamphlet. Kleinschmidt can be eliminated as a potential author of the pamphlet since he later regretted the decision to have defected and since he tried to get back to the Hessian forces. This leaves only Führer to have written

*Wahrheit und Guter Rath*. Only he had the information, ability, and the motivation to have authored this impassioned condemnation of his former sovereign and praise of his new fatherland.

### Structure and Contents

Since I believe that the evidence points to Führer as having written *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*, I will from now on use his name as the author.

A comparison of Mirabeau's 1777 title page with that of the 1783 pamphlet also shows that both use a motto, Mirabeau one from Virgil's *Aeneid* which tells the German soldiers that they will bring upon themselves their own destruction. Führer chooses a biblical quotation for his motto to justify his advice to the Hessians and his courage to tell the truth. There are, especially in the early part of *Wahrheit und Guter Rath*, a number of references to the Bible. Clearly, the author wanted to anchor his arguments in scriptural authority. At the same time, he will, later on, praise the religious freedom enjoyed by the Americans (p. 25).

Another look at the German title reveals a curious discrepancy between its message and the central message of the pamphlet. The title is directed at the inhabitants of Hesse and Germany in general, while in the main part of the text the author addresses the Hessian soldiers who are still in New York. It could be that the text was written first, then the title, and that Führer knew that there was not much chance to persuade the dwindling number of Hessian soldiers in New York to defect. Therefore he must have chosen a title that addressed all Hessians and Germans in the hope that the pamphlet would be taken back to Germany and be effective there as an encouragement to emigrate to America.

While Mirabeau presents his case in an uninterrupted emotional appeal, Führer follows a carefully outlined structure. He begins with a preamble in which he elaborates on the ideas contained in the motto on the title page (p. 5). He then apologizes for not writing a learned treatise, claiming that he is in a tent and that he is writing for people of common sense, not for the learned. The structure of the pamphlet, its style, the long, in all probability spurious quotation from the "Baron von T.," and the poem at the end belie the author's claim that he is not a learned man. The many facts presented in various parts of the pamphlet point to a long period of collecting information. The argument proper starts

with a condemnation of the luxurious life style of German princes at the expense of the poor population (pp. 6-17). To buttress his point Führer introduces a long passage, supposedly written by a "Baron von T." In the passage the claim is made that the German princes purposefully keep their subjects ignorant. The passage also includes the "Pfaffen" (a derogatory term for clerics) in the list of people for whom the poor farmer has to work. In the text following the quotation, Führer expands that indictment by condemning the clergy in general as being part of the Landgrave's regime. The fact that the clergy sides with the authorities the author explains as being caused by economic self-interest: They are ultimately dependent on the Landgrave for their subsistence. In a second section of the argument proper Führer addresses the issue of the oath the soldiers had to swear to their sovereign and to George II (pp. 17-20). He declares that the oath is invalid since it was forced upon them and since they were sold.

Führer then proceeds to enumerate the many advantages America has to offer, contrasting the freedom enjoyed in America with the enslavement of people in Germany (pp. 20-26). The emphatic repetition of "Hier . . . Hier . . . Hier" serves to strengthen his argument. In the center of the pamphlet we find a eulogy to Washington, followed by the generous offer Congress made to those who desert the British army (pp. 26-29). After an account of how the Hessian troops were traded to England and transported to America, the author describes the plight awaiting the returning veterans (pp. 29-38). In the concluding sixth section of the argument proper Führer reminds his former compatriots of the atrocity committed by their Landgrave when he sold them to the King of England and tells them of the inhuman conditions prevailing among the less fortunate in Hesse-Kassel (pp. 38-41). The pamphlet proper closes with an appeal to the Hessians and with the wish that God will give them his blessing (pp. 41-42).

It would seem that two factors made Führer append the "Auszug eines Lieds, von einem Americanischen Grenadier, an die Hessen und andere. Im Jahr 1777" (Excerpt from a song by an American Grenadier, to the Hessians and others. In the year 1777; pp. 43-46). For one, the poem expresses many of the same thoughts as the rest of the text. Again, Washington's praise is put in the center. Then there is also the patriotic appeal in which the figure of Hermann (Arminius) is invoked. Additional

aspects of the poem agree with the language and the sentiments of the poets of the Göttinger Hain. I take Führer to have identified with the patriotic stance of Friedrich Gottlieb Klopstock (1724-1803), Germany's most celebrated poet at the time. Klopstock became the idol of the members of the Göttinger Hain. Patriotism was associated with "Tyrannenhass" (hatred of tyrants) in a rather rhetorical fashion by several members of the group, especially by Friedrich Georg Graf von Stolberg (1750-1819). In the poem and in the rest of the pamphlet Führer identifies the tyrants with Friedrich II, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel, and George III. A second factor that made Führer include the poem was to show that he not only embraced the ideals of the American Revolution but that he was also a poet.

Finally, there is the postscript concerning land in South Carolina, available to those soldiers who come over to the American side.

### Language and Style

The pamphlet is written in the standard language of the educated. At the same time, Führer does not shy away from using such colloquialisms as "Sacramenter," "Taugenichts" (son of a gun, good for nothing; both p. 32) and "schnurstracks" (straight away; p. 39). The word "Canton" (draft district; p. 34) indicates that he was familiar with current recruitment practices in Hesse-Kassel. The term had been used first in Prussia, then in Hesse-Kassel. The American scene explains the reference to a "sogenantes Blockhaus" (so-called blockhouse; p. 28) as something a settler could build within a year. Up to the eighteenth century "Blockhaus" meant a structure for defensive purposes. Führer is aware of grammatical correctness when he emends in what I take to be the first issue of the pamphlet "zu . . . nöthigen Hausrath" to read "zu . . . nöthigem Hauerath" (necessary household items; p. 27) in the second. Also, he corrects "dem armen Unterthan das Geld, und die Früchte ihrer sauren Arbeit" in the first issue to read ". . . seiner sauren Arbeit" (his hard work; p. 9) in the second. Certain constructions that seem today to be incorrect can be explained historically. Thus, "welche . . . das Mitleid bedürftig sind" (who are . . . in need of compassion; p. 5) was still possible in the eighteenth century. More interesting are the various rhetorical devices found in the text. At the beginning there is

the modesty formula "Ich bin, leider! kein Gelehrter" (I am, unfortunately, not a scholar; p. 3). The author claims that he has much more to say than what he can state within the space of "dieser wenigen Blätter" (these few leaves; p. 41), when the pamphlet is by far the longest of all the appeals directed at the Hessian soldiers. He also uses rhetorical questions as when he asks "verdienen solche, sage ich, Menschen zu seyn oder zu heissen?" (do they, I say, deserve to be human beings or to be called that? p. 38), only to answer "Nein! vielmehr würde das Affengeschlecht diesen Namen verdienen" (No! rather apes would deserve this name: p. 38). Finally, there is the use of anaphora to which I have already referred when within seven consecutive pages he repeats "Hier" seven times at the beginning of a sentence and inside one sentence three times more (pp. 20-26). This section of the pamphlet is an example of the black and white type of presenting an argument where in this case black is identified with everything connected with the Landgrave and white with America. Pure exaggeration is also found in the assertion that in America almost every inhabitant has a harbor in front of his door, an assertion that finds its correction a few pages later with the phrase "wenn Flüsse oder Seen nahe sind" (if there are rivers or lakes nearby; pp. 24 and 28). Equally exaggerated is the statement that the Revolutionaries were fighting war against more than a dozen nations (p. 26).

To make his attack on the Landgrave even more biting, Führer uses in one instance a play on words. When talking about the miserable pension discharged veterans receive, he says that people call that "eine fürstliche Gnade" and then makes the comment: "Gott behüte einen jeden davor in Gnaden!" (a royal act of grace . . . May God graciously protect everyone from this; p. 33). Later on he refers to the fact that the Landgrave calls himself "Vater seines Volkes" (*Father of his people*) and then "binds his child's hands, leads the child personally to the slaughtering bench and calmly watches as the child's throat is cut" (pp. 40-41).

Thus, Führer uses facts and exaggerated assertions as well as a variety of rhetorical devices to persuade the remaining Hessian soldiers to defect and to stay in America.



## 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.

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