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Extract of a Letter from General **WASHINGTON** to the President of **CONGRESS**, dated *New-York*, August 18.

I HAVE the honor to inclose you, for the perusal and consideration of Congress, sundry papers, the whole of which, except no. 2 and 7, I received yesterday evening by a flag, and to which I beg leave to refer Congress.”

“August 17, 1776. SIR. “Being deeply interested in the welfare of America, I think it my duty to communicate a matter of intelligence which, I flatter myself, may be rendered conducive to the restoration of a desirable peace. And in this view I request your Excellency's permission to land at New-York, to go directly to Philadelphia, in order to lay the same before the General Congress.

“In the course of a conversation I have had with Lord Howe, I perceive that the powers he is vested with, as well as his disposition for establishing an equitable and permanent peace, are altogether misunderstood by the colonies.

“For in consequence of a sketch of some propositions being offered for his consideration, he very frankly assured me he was willing to confer upon those grounds with any gentlemen of the greatest influence in this country.

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“As I am at liberty to declare his sentiments, I have the honor to enclose, for your Excellency's information, a copy of my correspondence with his Lordship, and of the propositions referred to in his letter, which are the motives of my present request.

“Attending in the boat, to be indulged with your answer, I have the honor to be your Excellency's most humble servant. **DRUMMOND.** “;General Washington, &c. &c. &c.

“New-York, August 17th, 1776. “My LORD, “I have your Lordship's favor of this day, accompanied by papers on subjects of the greatest moment, and deserving the most deliberate consideration.

“I can allow much for your Lordship's well meant zeal on such an occasion, but I fear it has transported you beyond that attention to your parole, which comprehends the character of a man of strict honor. How your Lordship can reconcile your part or present conduct, with your engagement, so as to satisfy your own mind I must submit to your own feelings, but I find myself under the disagreeable necessity of objecting to the mode of negotiating proposed, while your Lordship's line of conduct appears so exceptionable.

“I shall, by express, forward to Congress your Lordship's letter, and the papers which accompanied it. The result will be communicated as soon as possible. I am sorry to have detained your Lordship so long, but the unavoidable necessity must be my apology. I am, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient very humble servant, G. WASHINGTON. “Lord Drummond.”

“MY LORD, “I take the liberty of sending inclosed the sketch of propositions referred to in my last conversation with your Lordship, which propositions, I have understood, the colonies were disposed, not many months ago, to make the basis of a reconciliation with Great-Britain. I have the honor to be, with great respect, your Lordship's most obedient humble servant, DRUMMOND. Sloop Polly, August 12, 1776. To Lord Howe.

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SKETCH of PROPOSITIONS communicated to Lord Howe on the 12th of August.

1. "That it shall be ascertained, as far as can be determined by calculation, what supply towards the general exigency of the state each separate colony can furnish consistent with its ability.
2. "When such supply is thus ascertained, that each colony shall, by acts of its own assembly, impose such taxes as they shall find expedient for the raising of the said supply.
3. "In consideration of the fluctuating state of all young countries, that such taxes may not in their operations, become partially or accidentally burthensome on the one hand, nor on the other hand gradually become deficient in producing the aid intended by the colonies towards the general exigency of the state, such articles shall be chosen as the objects of Imposition, as they shall deem the most likely to keep pace with the growth or decline of the said colonies.
4. "That these taxes, so imposed, shall, as in the customs, be levied by officers of the appointment of the king; and that a perpetual grant, of the producer of these taxes, shall be made by the respective Assemblies to the crown of Great-Britain.
5. "As the direct means of removing the fatal grounds of this contention, by establishing a security against the apprehended invasion of property by Parliament, a formal relinquishment shall be made, on the part of Great-Britain, of all future claim to taxation over these her colonies.
6. "To remove all future suspicions from the minds of the Colonists, that under the appearances of regulating commerce, duties may be imposed for the farther purposes of revenue, an application of the produce of all duties, imposed on articles of trade by the British legislature, shall be made towards defraying the expences of collection, and the

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surplusses in each colony to be paid into their separate treasuries, and to be subject to the disposal of the respective Houses of Assembly. DRUMMOND.

“Eagle, off Staten-Island, August 15, 1776. “MY LORD, “I have received the honor of your Lordship's letter of the 12th, enclosing a sketch of the propositions mentioned in your late conversation, which I return herewith. As I think they contain matter that, upon a conference and cool discussion, might be wrought into a plan of permanent union, I shall, with great satisfaction, embrace the first opportunity that may be offered upon those grounds, to promote so desirable an event. I have the honor to be, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant, HOWE, Right Hon. the Lord Drummond.

The following is the purport of the message sent from Lord Howe to Congress, by General Sullivan. “That though he could not at present treat with Congress as such, yet he was very desirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would consider for the present only as private gentlemen, and meet them himself as such at such place as they should appoint.

“That he, in conjunction with General Howe, had full powers to compromise the dispute, between Great-Britain and America, upon terms advantageous to both, the obtaining of which delayed him near two months in England, and prevented his arrival at this place before the Declaration of Independancy took place.

“That he wished a compact might be settled at this time when no decessive blow was struck, and neither party could say that they were compelled to enter into such agreement.

“That in case Congress were disposed to treat, many things, which they had not as yet asked, might and ought to be granted them; and that if, upon the Conference, they found any probable ground of an accomodation, the authority of Congress must be afterwards acknowledged, otherwise the compact could not be complete.”

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Extract from the Minutes, **CHARLES THOMSON**, Secretary. In **CONGRESS**, Sept. 5, 1776.

Resolved, That General Sullivan be requested to inform Lord Howe that this Congress, being the Representatives of the Free and Independent STATES of America, cannot with propriety send any of its members, to confer with his Lordship in their private characters, but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a Committee of their body to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorised by Congress for that purpose, in behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same.

Resolved, That to-morrow be assigned for electing the Committee. September 6, 1776.

Resolved, That the Committee, to be sent “to know whether Lord Howe has any authority to treat with persons authorised by Congress for that purpose, in behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same,” consist of three.

The members chosen, Mr. Franklin, Mr. John Adams and Mr. E. Rutledge. Extract from the minutes, **CHARLES THOMSON**, Secretary.

The Committee, who were appointed to wait on Lord Howe, having returned to Congress, made their report in the following words:

“In obedience to the order of Congress, we have had a meeting with Lord Howe. It was on Wednesday last, upon Staten-Island, opposite to Amboy, where his Lordship received and entertained us with the utmost politeness.

“His Lordship opened the conversation by acquainting us, that tho' he could not treat with us as a Committee of Congress, yet as his powers enabled him to confer and consult with any private Gentlemen of influence in the colonies, on the means of restoring peace

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between the two countries, he was glad of this opportunity of conferring with us on that subject, if we thought ourselves at liberty to enter into a conference with him in that character. We observed to his Lordship, that as our business was to hear, he might consider us in what light he pleased, and communicate to us any propositions he might be authorised to make for the purpose mentioned; but that we could consider ourselves in no other character than that in which we were placed by the order of Congress. His Lordship then entered into a discourse of considerable length, which contained no explicit proposition of peace except one, viz. that the colonies should return to their allegiance and obedience to the government of Great-Britain. The rest consisted principally of assurances that there was an exceeding good disposition in the king and his ministers to make that government easy to us; with intimations that in case of our submission they would cause the offensive acts of Parliament to be revised, and the instructions to Govenors to be reconsidered, that so if any just causes of complaint were found in the acts, or any errors in government, were perceived to have crept into the instructions, they might be amended or withdrawn.

“We gave it as our opinion to his Lordship, that a return to the domination of Great-Britain was not now to be expected. We mentioned the repeated humble petitions of the colonies to the king and parliament, which had been treated with contempt, and answered only by additional injuries; the unexampled patience we had shown under their tyrannical government, and that it was not till the last act of Parliament, which denounced war against us, and put us out of the king's protection, that we declared our independance. That this declaration had been called for by the people of the colonies in general, that every colony had approved of it when made, and all now considered themselves as Independant **STATES**, and were settling or had settled their governments accordingly; so that it was not in the power of the Congress to agree for them that they should return to their former dependant state. That there was no doubt of their inclination to peace, and their willingness to enter into a treaty with Britain that might be advantageous to both countries. That though his Lordship had at present no power to treat with them as

Library of Congress

Independant States, he might, if there was the same good disposition in Britain, much sooner obtain fresh powers from thence for that purpose, than powers could be obtained by Congress from the several colonies, to consent to a submission. His Lordship then, saying that he was sorry to find that no accommodation was like to take place, put an end to the conference.

“Upon the whole, it did not appear to your Committee that his Lordship's commission contained any other authority of importance than what is expressed in the act of parliament, viz. that of granting pardons with such exceptions as the Commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America or any part of it to be in the King's peace, upon submission. For as to the power of inquiring into the state of America, which his Lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and consulting with any persons the Commissioners might think proper, and representing the result of such conversations to the Ministry, who (provided the colonies would subject themselves) might after all, or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in the former instructions to Governors, or propose in Parliament any amendment of the acts complained of, we apprehended any expectation from the effect of such a power would have been too uncertain and precarious to be relied on by America, had she still continued in her state of dependance.”