

KIT KAT CLUB ESSAY

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WAS THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION A MISTAKE?

WHEN I ATTENDED HIRAM COLLEGE MY FIRST PROFESSOR WAS STEVE BAILEY, WHO HAD BEEN A RHODES SCHOLAR. HE TOLD ME THAT HIS FRIENDS AT OXFORD BELIEVED THAT THE FIRST WORLD WAR WAS A RESULT OF GERMANY'S JEALOUSY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE. IF AMERICA AND BRITAIN HAD BEEN UNITED GERMANY WOULD NOT HAVE CONCLUDED IT WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE US ON.

IN 1952 I HAD A ROTARY FELLOWSHIP TO STUDY IN URUGUAY. MY PROFESSOR, EDUARDO COUTURE, TOLD ME HAD HEARD OF SOMETHING CALLED THE D-A-R AND ASKED ME WHAT THAT WAS. MY ANSWER WAS THAT IT STOOD FOR THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WHO WERE ESTIMABLE LADIES EACH OF

WHOM HAD AN ANCESTOR WHO HAD FOUGHT IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION, BUT THEY THEMSELVES WERE UN-REVOLUTIONARY.

THERE IS A QUESTION AS TO WHY GEORGE WASHINGTON SUPPORTED THE REVOLUTION. HE WAS AN ENGLISHMAN AND PROUD OF IT. HIS BROTHER, VERNON, WAS AN ADMIRAL IN THE BRITISH NAVY.

THE ANSWER MAY HAVE BEEN THAT WASHINGTON WAS A COLONEL IN THE VIRGINIA MILITIA, FIGHTING ALONGSIDE THE BRITISH, IN THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR.

WHEN THEY WERE SUCCESSFUL IN TAKING FORT DUQUENSE, RENAMED FORT PITT. WASHINGTON APPLIED TO THE BRITISH COMMANDER FOR A COMMISSION IN THE BRITISH ARMY, BUT WAS TURNED DOWN.

NOT ALL AMERICANS FAVORED THE REVOLUTION.

ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS, DR. BENJAMIN RUSH, COMMENTED THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN PHILADELPHIA WERE TORIES.

TO UNDERSTAND THE BACKGROUND OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WE NEED TO RETURN TO ENGLAND WHICH HAD A CIVIL WAR IN THE 17TH CENTURY IN WHICH CROMWELL LED THE PARLIAMENTARY ARMY AGAINST THE ROYALISTS.

AND IN EUROPE GENERALLY, A MOVEMENT WAS AFOOT KNOWN AS THE ENLIGHTENMENT, A TOWERING FIGURE OF WHICH WAS THE SCIENTIST SIR ISAAC NEWTON. HE CONFIRMED THAT THE ELLIPTICAL SHAPE OF THE PLANETARY ORBITS WERE CONSISTENT WITH A GRAVITATIONAL FORCE THAT DIMINISHED WITH THE INVERSE SQUARE OF THE DISTANCE.

NEWTON WENT ON TO PRODUCE ONE OF THE GREATEST BOOKS IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE, KNOWN AS 'THE PRINCIPIA', IN 1687. THE COMMERCIAL EQUIVALENT OF THE PRINCIPIA WAS THE "WEALTH OF NATIONS" BY THE SCOTTISH AUTHOR, ADAM SMITH. SCIENCE AND COMMERCE WERE INTERTWINED.

LONDON COFFEE HOUSES AND CLUBS BECAME THE CRUCIBLES OF A SCIENTIFIC AND FINANCIAL REVOLUTION THAT SHAPED THE MODERN WORLD. THE ENLIGHTENMENT GAVE RISE TO PHILOSOPHERS SUCH AS VOLTAIRE, ROUSEAU AND THE WHIG KIT KAT'S FAVORITE, JOHN LOCKE.

LOCKE'S FATHER HAD BEEN AN OFFICER IN CROMWELL'S ARMY.

THE KIT KAT CLUB OF LONDON NOT ONLY ENJOYED WIDE INFLUENCE IN ENGLAND BUT ALSO IN NORTH AMERICA.

THE BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS PAINE

By CRAIG NELSON

REPORTS:

THE FAVORED CLUB OF THE DUKE OF CRAFTON, PAINE'S CHILDHOOD ARISTOCRAT, WAS THE KIT CAT CLUB FREQUENTED BY POWER WHIGS.....

THIS NEW AND ENLIGHTENED SOCIETY CHAMPIONED TOLERANCE, DIVERSITY, PSYCHOLOGY, ECONOMICS, REASON, LOGIC, COURTESY AND MANNERS.

**MEMBERS NEEDED A GUIDE TO MAKE THEIR WAY THROUGH THEIR
REVOLUTIONARY NEW WORLD...**

**THEY FOUND IT IN AN ANTHOLOGY, THE SPECTOR, WHICH WOULD
HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE CENTURIES NEW
MERITOCRATS.**

**THE KIT CAT MEMBERS WHICH FIRST COME TO MIND ARE JOSEPH
ADDISON AND RICHARD STEELE WHO COLLABORATED IN WRITING
AND PRODUCING THE SPECTATOR.**

**THE SPECTATOR CIRCULATED AND READ IN ALL PARTS OF THE
ENGLISH SPEAKING WORLD. AN EXAMPLE WAS BENJAMIN
FRANKLIN WHO READ VOLUMES OF THE SPECTATOR DURING HIS
ADOLESCENCE AND TRAINED HIMSELF TO WRITE HIS FIRST
PUBLISHED ARTICLES BY WRITING SPECTATOR ESSAYS FROM
MEMORY.**

**RETURNING TO HISTORY, THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION IN
ENGLAND IN 1688 WAS SEMINAL.**

**AT THAT TIME JAMES THE SECOND WAS THE KING OF ENGLAND.
JAMES WAS A CLOSE ALLY OF LOUIS CATORZE THE KING OF**

FRANCE. JAMES TRIED TO REMAKE THE ENGLISH STATE IN THE FRENCH MODEL. THE PROBLEM WAS THAT LOUIS WAS OPENLY TRYING TO BECOME THE UNIVERSAL MONARCH IMPOSING HIS VIEW OF ABSOLUTE POWER BASED ON THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS.

JAMES FOLLOWED LOUIE'S EXAMPLE IN EXERCISING THE PREROGATIVE POWER TO OVERRULE ACTS OF PARLIAMENT. WHILE IGNORING CIVIL AND PROPERTY RIGHTS.

JAMES' POLICIES WERE UNPOPULAR AND LED TO A NUMBER OF ENGLISHMEN BECOMING REFUGEES IN HOLLAND, WHERE THEY FOUND A KINDRED SPIRIT IN WILLIAM, THE STADTHOLDER OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC. WILLIAM WAS MARRIED TO KING JAMES DAUGHTER MARY. IN DUE COURSE A NUMBER OF PROMINENT ENGLISHMEN INVITED WILLIAM AND MARY TO COME TO ENGLAND TO TAKE OVER THE ENGLISH CROWN. WILLIAM AND MARY AGREED AND SAILED FROM HOLLAND WITH AN ARMY AND SUPPORTERS MADE UP OF HOLLANDERS AND ENGLISHMEN.

JOHN LOCKE WAS ONE OF THE PASSENGERS ON BOARD WILLIAMS FLEET WHICH LANDED IN SOUTHERN ENGLAND IN 1688. KING JAMES WAS NOT HAPPY WITH HIS SON IN LAWS EFFORT TO DETHRONE HIM AND ORDERED HIS ARMY TO REPEL THE INVASION!

THIS DIDN'T WORK OUT SINCE MANY OFFICERS IN JAMES ARMY DEFECTED TO WILLIAM . ONE OF THESE WAS JOHN CHURCHILL. LATER, THE DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH. ANOTHER DEFECTOR WAS THE DUKE OF GRAFTON WHO WAS A MEMBER OF THE KIT CAT CLUB. BROAD PUBLIC SUPPORT LED PARLIAMENT TO VOTE TO MAKE WILLIAM AND MARY KING AND QUEEN OF ENGLAND WITH CAREFUL LIMITATIONS. IN DUE COURSE JAMES AND HIS ARMY FACED OFF AGAINST WILLIAM'S ARMY. THE WILLIAMITES WON THE BATTLE AFTER WHICH JAMES LEFT FOR FRANCE AND THE HOSPITALITY OF LOUIS CATORZE.

THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION WAS NOT CONFINED TO ENGLAND. THERE WAS POPULAR REVOLUTIONARY SENTIMENT IN NORTH AMERICA. IN BOSTON IN APRIL 1689 MORE THAN FIVE THOUSAND MEN TOOK TO THE STREETS AND THREW DOWN ALL MATTERS OF

GOVERNMENT AND SET UP FOR THEMSELVES. THEY COMPLAINED OF THE UNJUST DEPRIVATION OF THEIR CHARTER AND SUBSEQUENT EXERCISE OF ILLEGAL AND ARBITRARY POWER OVER THEM BY SIR EDMOND ANDROS.

A PROMINENT DEFENDER OF THE RIGHT OF RESISTANCE TO UNLIMITED ROYAL POWER WAS THE WHIG, BISHOP BURNETT, RELATED TO RICHARD BURNETT, A MEMBER OF OUR CLUB. BISHOP BURNETT EMBARKED WITH WILLIAM'S FLEET, LIKE ALL GOOD WHIGS, HE ASSERTED THAT WITH RELATION TO THE LAW OF NATURE ALL MEN ARE BORN FREE, AND THIS LIBERTY MUST BE SUPPOSED TO BE ENTIRE UNLESS AS LIMITED BY THE LAW. THOUGH SUBJECTS ARE UNDER OBLIGATIONS TO PAY DUE ALLEGIANCE TO THEIR PRINCES. THIS DOES NOT EXTEND THAT ALLEGIANCE FURTHER THAN THE LAW CARRIED IT IN ENGLAND. IT WAS CLEAR THAT SUBJECTS HAD A LIMITED RIGHT TO RESIST.

BISHOP BURNETT CONTINUED "THERE IS NOTHING MORE OBVIOUS...THAN THAT ENGLAND IS A FREE NATION THAT HAS ITS LIBERTIES AND PROPERTIES RESERVED TO IT BY MANY EXPRESS

LAWS, IF THEN WE HAVE A RIGHT TO OUR PROPERTY WE MUST LIKEWISE BE SUPPOSED TO HAVE A RIGHT TO PRESERVE IT, FOR THOSE RIGHTS ARE SECURED BY LAW AGAINST THE INVASIONS OF THE PREROGATIVE, AND BY CONSEQUENCE WE MUST HAVE A RIGHT TO PRESERVE THEM AGAINST INVASIONS. IF A KING GOES TO SUBVERT THE WHOLE FOUNDATION OF THE GOVERNMENT HE SUBVERTS THAT BY WHICH HE HIMSELF HAS HIS POWER.

FOLLOWING THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION A DISPUTE REMAINED BETWEEN THE TORIES AND THE WHIGS ECONOMIC POLICIES. THE TORIES MAINTAINED THAT ALL WEALTH WAS BASED ON LAND WHILE THE WHIG POSITION WAS THAT TRADE AND MANUFACTURING WERE MORE PRODUCTIVE.

THE WHIGS WERE OPPOSED TO MONOPOLIES SUCH AS THAT GRANTED TO THE EAST INDIA COMPANY WHICH WAS WELCOMED AT THE FAMOUS BOSTON TEA PARTY BY SUCH MERCHANTS AS JOHN HANCOCK AND SAM ADAMS.

THE FINAL WORD ON THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION PROBABLY BELONGS TO JOHN LOCKE! WHO MAINTAINED THAT GOVERNMENT MUST BE BASED ON THE CONSENT OF THE

GOVERNED AND THAT CONSENT COULD BE GIVEN BY FREELY ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.

RETURNING TO THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION...

KING GEORGE III ORDERED THAT THE REVOLUTION BE PUT DOWN BY FORCE. A BETTER SOLUTION WOULD HAVE BEEN TO ALLOW THE AMERICANS TO ELECT REPRESENTATIVES TO PARLIAMENT ALONG WITH ACCEPTANCE OF THE AUTHORITY OF EXISTING REPRESENTATIVE BODIES. THE LEGITIMATE CLAIM OF NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION COULD HAVE BEEN MET. THIS OF COURSE WAS NOT DONE.

AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WAS THE PERCEPTION THAT AMERICAN LEADERSHIP WAS QUALIFIED TO CREATE A CONTINENT WIDE REPUBLIC.

THE CURRENT ISSUE OF, THE LONDON ECONOMIST, DESCRIBES PHILADELPHIA IN 1787 WHERE 55 OF THE MOST AUGUST MINDS EVER ASSEMBLED SHUTTLED BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE HALL AND THE CITY TAVERN. THOMAS JEFFERSON, THEN THE AMERICAN MINISTER IN FRANCE CALLED THE DELEGATES "DEMIGODS". THESE WERE MEN SUCH AS JAMES MADISON, DEEPLY VERSED IN ARISTOLE, CICERO, LOCKE AND MONTESQUIE.

TO CONCLUDE:

IN THE ABSENCE OF CONSENT OF THE GOVERNED AND GIVEN AMERICAN LEADERSHIP THE REVOLUTION WAS JUSTIFIED AND NOT A MISTAKE, HISTORY IS WHAT IT IS. AMERICA IS INDEPENDENT AND FOLLOWING THE TRADITION OF THE FOUNDERS WILL REMAIN A GREAT AND FREE NATION.

THANK YOU