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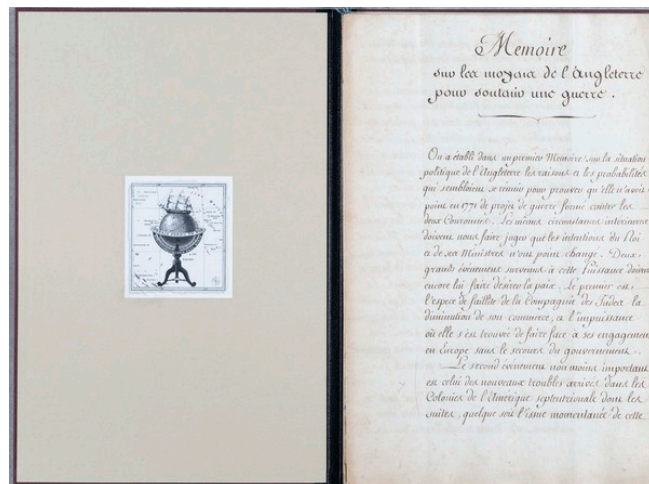
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**(French Perspectives on American Insurrection) Memoire sur les Moyens de
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Stock#: 81744
Map Maker: Anonymous
Date: 1772
Place: n.p.
Color: Uncolored
Condition: VG+
Size: 8 x 12.5 inches
Price: SOLD



Description:

An Invaluable Insight into French Conduct vis-a-vis Britain Before the American Revolution. Includes a Discussion of Unrest in America, Its Implications, and a Bold Prediction - "[R]evolution [in America]. . .is bound to happen naturally, but slowly, by the unstoppable progress and strength of the population."

Forty-seven-page political, military, and economic manuscript risk assessment analyzing the state of the British Empire in 1772, and evaluating the means by which the French could capitalize on English weaknesses in a war they deemed inevitable.

This document devotes itself to categorically examining the British Empire and its colonies, and includes numerous insights into the attitudes of those in power in France and England immediately prior to the American Revolution. A substantial portion of the work devotes itself to the weakness of the British economy and its impact on that country's ability to borrow money during wartime: a discussion of interest to a student of economic history. The state of the British economy is then compared with the precarious state of the English colonies in America and the military weaknesses of the East India Company. The text includes a prescient understanding of the ethos of the American colonies and their state of unrest, with several blunt predictions of revolution in Britain's American colonies. From the outset, the writer describes two major underpinnings of British foreign policy with respect to war with France: the recent bankruptcy of the East India Company and "*the new troubles that have arrived in the North American colonies.*" (page 1).



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Perhaps the most notable insight of the entire document is its brief comment on the inevitability of the independence of the American colonies.

"La conduite impolitique de l'Angleterre vis à vis des Américains peut accélérer la révolution qui doit se faire naturellement mais lentement par le progrès et la seule force de la population qu'il est impossible d'arrêter" (Page 27).

(in translation):

"England's impolitic treatment of the Americans can only accelerate the revolution that is bound to happen naturally, but slowly, by the unstoppable progress and strength of the population."

This suggestion, made in 1772, is remarkable. Only the most radical of the Massachusetts and Virginian ideologues believed in independence as of that date, and hearing this thought process repeated in France shows that the ideas of those activists had made it across the Atlantic.

Numerous other conclusions are made in the five pages that focus on the American colonies, revealing the insights of the document's author:

[S]i enfin l'Angleterre persiste à vouloir les assujeter au joug, elle pourra bien parvenir à les soumettre pour le moment mais elle aliénera à jamais l'esprit de ces peuples et elle accélérera la révolution qui doit un jour séparer les colonies de la Métropole" (Page 28).

(in translation):

If England wants to maintain her yoke on the Americans, she could do this temporarily but would alienate her people and accelerate the revolution that will one day separate the colonies from the homeland.

In addition, the text predicts that the tax on tea will eventually be repealed, just like the rest of the Townsend Acts. This would be done in 1778.

The document's primary purpose is to outline how England would attack France, and how France could best defend itself. It details the current state of the British navy, British finances, and British colonies. Suggestions for strategic advancements are made throughout, and these suggestions played important roles in the American Revolution. One of the primary takeaways from the memorandum is that, unlike in



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the prior wars, France must ally itself more strongly with Spain to be able to defeat the British. France's careful maneuvering in the mid-1770s would bring Spain and its resources into the American Revolution, thus further hurting the British cause. Secondly, this document acts as an exposé, showing that the current state of British affairs was insufficient to carry out a protracted war on multiple fronts. This was a critical insight that allowed France to confidently join the war effort in 1778 without fear of a repeat of the Seven Years' War in which Britain's prolonged strength eventually wore down the French.

The memorandum was made for a cabinet minister or a high-ranking member of the French government, privy to secret information and evidently able to communicate with the king. A translation of the full document from the original French is provided at the end of this description.

The Implications of the Memorandum Shedding Light on the American Revolution as a Global War

Recent studies of the American Revolution have focused on this conflict's role as part of a global struggle for and against empire at the end of the 18th century. In particular, the tie-ins that this text presents between the French-British-Indian conflict and the American Revolution (see the 2010 review "The Age of Revolutions in Global Context, c. 1760-1840") sheds light on French attitudes at the time and on the global causes and implications of the American Revolution.

The depth of insight that this manuscript provides on the Indian question is fascinating. It shows the East India Company as a company in a particularly weak period of its history, which has impressive revenues but still more impressive liabilities. The expressed French regret at not having taken advantage of the previous weakness of India is particularly tangible and written about.

The manuscript also shows how the causes of the American Revolution are rooted in the political economy of the British homeland. This subject has seen significant recent research, including by [New Haven](#) and [Leeds](#) academics.

Authorship and Dating of the Memorandum

The document is unsigned. The writer was very well-versed in English affairs and, in particular, finance. Several authors are possible, but one that stands out is Jean-Étienne Say. Father to the important economist and businessman Jean-Baptiste Say, J-E Say is noted by some sources as acting attaché to the French Ambassador to England between 1770 and 1776. Say was, however, believed to have lived in Paris during this time, which would have allowed him the opportunity to author this memorandum. The



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perspectives that Say, with a background as a major silk merchant, would bring in allowing him to understand the importance of British India to England's finances makes him an attractive possible candidate for the authorship of this text.

The 1772 date for the memorandum is supported by a variety of evidence. The most obvious is the allusion to the English Parliament being four years old. The previous parliamentary elections were held in 1768. Further, various diplomatic dispatches from 1769 to 1771 are referred to, but no later dates are mentioned. This further suggests that the memorandum was likely authored early in 1772. All references to current events, such as the bankruptcy of the East India Company, concur with an early 1772 date.

Diplomatic Dispatches

Many of the interpretations made in the memorandum cite diplomatic dispatches, which were unencrypted but supposedly privileged manuscript letters sent from French diplomats abroad back to Louis XV and his ministers. These messages were oftentimes guarded, as they could easily be intercepted and read, but they were still one of the critical ways in which European 18th-century powers gathered information about allies or strategic adversaries.

It has not been possible to locate the original dispatches referenced in this letter. We have been unable to trace their location in the French National Archives, which holds many diplomatic correspondences and dispatches from that period, including from Spain, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire. It appears that any retained copies of these dispatches may also be lost - the National Archives note in their description of the Chartrier de Castries, a genealogy that discusses the Duc de Guines, French ambassador for much of the period covered by these dispatches, that all the personal papers of the Duc de Guines are now lost.

We have learned of one private collection of transcripts of French diplomatic dispatches that is of interest to the present document. Charles James Fox, the famous Whig politician and supporter of the American Revolution who is twice mentioned in this memorandum [erroneously mistaken for his father, Henry Fox], was himself a collector of transcripts of diplomatic dispatches. During a visit to France in 1802, Fox created transcripts of French dispatches sent from Holland between the period 1685 to 1688 (the lead-up to the Glorious Revolution), many of which concerned England. These transcripts are now held by the University of Nottingham and are among the few such surviving collections.

This memorandum provides a glimpse at what the now-lost diplomatic dispatches from the late 1760s and early 1770s may have contained.



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Synopsis

The memorandum opens by discussing how the bankruptcy of the East India Company and the colonial troubles in North America have affected British hegemony. These brief French respites from fear of British conquest are then contrasted with the prevailing tendencies of the British Empire and its long history of adversity with the French. The introductory section concludes that war with England will happen again due to the British populist political system and that France must prepare for such a war. The purpose of the memorandum is given: to outline the power and potency of British finances, armed forces, and colonies. These are studied so that France may exploit any weaknesses.

The discussion of British finances is a fascinating insight into the mercantile mindset of the late 17th century, particularly during the British credit crisis of 1772, fueled by exorbitant margin trading. The anti-capitalist tendencies of the author are plainly visible, and the author's mercantilist approach is visible in his assertion that only 16 million pounds sterling of currency in circulation paying 12-13 million pounds sterling of taxes is a recipe for failure. The heavily indebted state of Britain is seen as very dangerous for that country. The conclusion drawn is that Britain is overleveraged from its actions in the last war and will have difficulty paying this debt down through additional taxes or new loans. This document is of particular interest as a contemporaneous account of the affects that a credit crisis could have in the 18th century.

The British armed forces, particularly the Royal Navy, are deemed to be overextended and in need of additional investment (which the state finances cannot provide). While certain aspects are lauded, in particular the strong officer corps of the Royal Navy, the primary focus of this section is on the lack of recruitable men. The navy, in particular, can only grow to an armed state by cannibalizing the merchant marine, which would cause a devastating blow to England's finances. In addition, the number of troops and ships that were in use were insufficient to defend many colonial outposts if the English homeland was to be protected, suggesting that a coordinated war with several fronts would be best for France and her Spanish allies.

This is followed by a discussion of the disposition of the British colonies. The discussion of the Americas concludes that Americans will be unwilling and unable to take sides in any future war between England and France and Spain, as the colonies are financially tied to the latter two powers and would see no advantage in the cessation of trade. The discussion of the East India Company is also particularly interesting and contains a detailed plan for Indo-French alliances to be formed and how French influence could grow on the subcontinent.



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The document ends on a hopeful note, saying that France is currently in a good place to fight if war cannot be avoided. Importantly, it is in a much better place to fight than in 1753. The document concludes:

England has an overpopulation of ten million inhabitants, weakened commerce, and a declining credit affected by the enormity of its history. Its engagements can no longer envelope Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and it cannot flatter itself to bring victory everywhere as it did in the last war.

Translation of Full Text

Memorandum on England's Means to support a War.

In an earlier memorandum, we laid out the political situation in England and the reasons and probabilities that appear to prove that, in 1771, the country had no plans to fight a war against the Two Crowns [France and Spain]. The same domestic circumstances make us think that the situation of the King and his ministers has not changed. Two, large events have combined to suggest that she will continue to desire peace. The first is the bankruptcy of the East India Company, the diminution of her trade, and the lack of power in which she finds herself faced with her engagements in Europe, under the safety of her government.

The second event, no less important, is those of the new troubles that have arrived in the North American colonies of which the implications, whatever the immediate cause (Page 2) of these large consternations, can only be very dangerous for the nation and very worrying for the Ministry.

If the recent embarrassments of the government and the domestic situation of England of last three years might reassure us regarding her intentions, we cannot be without worry during the continuing establishment of the largest navy that has ever existed in a time of peace, which has been maintained for four years. One last reflection [see next paragraph] will confirm the danger that results from this state of armed peace that we see in the English Navy and would allow us to judge if it is possible to trust the intentions of the King and the Ministries and to be assured of the fancies of a nation that is so often dragged into war by the passions of those that hope to govern it.

England in the past century has sustained four large wars, of which only two (those of 1688 and 1701) were (Page 3) wars that they were forced into and wars founded upon political



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interests. The wars of 1739 and 1755 were only brought about by ambitious factions against the true interests of the King and the established ministers. George II, a firm-handed prince who knew well the nation that he would have to govern, saw himself twice forced to sacrifice his ministers, his principals, and his personnel interest to the agitation of parties that gained power only by plunging their country into war.

[Regarding the War of Jenkin's Ear] Robert Walpole, a most favored and all-powerful minister, fell in 1739 because of [his actions during] the wise Convention of Pardo [see the 1739 Treaty] that he had the courage to [participate in] to prevent a rupture with Spain.

England stayed armed after this Convention and was dragged [into war] by a violent opposition [party] sustained by the cries of the merchants of the City of London. The King was forced to abandon his ministry and we saw the start of a war that subsequent circumstances then enlarged.

[Regarding the Seven Years'/French and Indian War] The question, frivolous in its principles, of the limits of Acadia, became serious in 1755 only by the bad faith and the opportunism of the Bureau of the Plantations, and grew even more so (Page 4) by the ambition of the Duke of Cumberland and of Charles Fox who seized upon the matter. They pushed King George II step by step and forced him to act against his own intentions, against the opinion and the interest of his ministers in a war in which the eventual successes seem so surprising when we consider the unraveling of the English Navy and the (unfortunately) ignored [by France] weaknesses of this power in all the parts of the world. Britain's success was only due to this ignorance, the inaction of France, and above all, the ruthless plan that Charles Fox proposed to intercept and take our merchant vessels in time of full peace in order to stop the progress of our armaments. Despite the enormous loss of our navy's elite, our successes in America and the conquest of Minorca proved what we could have done if our efforts were better directed and better supported, and, above all, if we had profited from the initial consternation that ruled in England and in the British Counsels. The first setbacks that England faced plunged its people and its administration into confusion. We saw incertitude reign in the their planning and terror reign in their spirits, and the different parties (Page 5) who disputed the government grew and increased the disorder until the point at which the arrival of Mr. Pitt, whose courage relieved the embattled nation, sustained the country shortly thereafter with victories as ruinous [for the French] as unexpected.



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England was not armed at the moment when she determined to engage in the first hostilities in 1755; she rushed without reason, without interest, in a war which she could not foresee the consequences, and which she had not prepared the means with which to fight.

England is today armed, but it is very likely that nothing has changed in the disposition of her navy and her squadrons. Whatever thoughts we are forced to think about her intentions, it is certain that she has prepared herself various measures and has the means of renewing the disastrous hostilities in all parts of the world. We need thus to fear that the same passions that have twice led this power into war will only bring more sorrow. It remains for us to examine the means that England might have and will deploy to sustain a war (Page 6) against the joined efforts of our Two Crowns. This discussion will make us judge in advance whether England would be in a state of taking on offensive efforts by land and by sea; or if she would be forced by her current situation to enclose herself in a maritime war in which the nature of the duration would be subordinate to the resources that are left to her.

The unfortunate events of the last war did not have their source uniquely in the faults of the campaigns poorly combined and poorly executed. Two premier and principal causes contributed to the success of England. The first was the disunion between the Two Crowns which England knew only too well how to exploit; the second was the speed at which France first and Spain long after were dragged into a war that they had not planned or coordinated.

Spain, in the last war, stayed inactive while France exhausted herself through useless efforts. Thus, Spain did not profit from precious time to vigorously prepare (Page 7) the means to render herself a mediator between the two warring powers, of which one was her natural ally and the other her secret enemy. The failed conquest of Portugal, the capture of Havana (the most important place in the Spanish Colonies), the loss of an entire fleet that was in [Havana], all showed the decrepit state that her fleets and land forces were in. The treaty that unites them now has rectified the first cause of their misfortunes in the last war, and the sage planning which now presides in the counsels of the two monarchs will allow them to avoid a surprise on the part of a power which seems to be preparing the means [to engage in a war].

If it is important to know the make-up of the English forces; it is indispensable to start by calculating the resources that she will need to make to put them in use and how much time she will need to sustain these resources against the united forces that she will have to face (Page 8).



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It is only by a succession of precise research that we can begin to understand the true situation of that powerful but not invincible nation and that we investigate her large - but not inexhaustive - credit. All objects assembled in this memoir have been treated in detail in the diplomatic dispatches cited in the margins that we incorporate in order to develop a point of view on each subject that leads to incontestable conclusions.

Finances

(See Dispatch No 60, 1769, First of December).

The revenue of England in peacetime nets to about 10,200,000 pounds sterling including the 400,000 of the profit of the East India Company that is currently suspended [due to their bankruptcy] and would certainly cease in a time of war.

(See Dispatch No 91, 1771, Tenth of May).

We saw the unraveling of the state of employment and the debt redemption fund that these ordinary revenues are absorbed annually into the budget in a time of peace. This is done first by the accounting of the national debt, second by the civil employee list, and third by the current services (Page 9) of the year. There is only a surplus from the debt redemption fund of 500,000 or 600,000 sterling applicable to the extraordinary expenses of a war. It results from this position that the augmentation of the fourth shilling on the tax of land would only remit England [in case of war] to the level of her ordinary revenue in times of peace following the truncation of payments from the fund of the East India Company. England would then have to find extraordinary means to pay [for the war] in new taxes or in new loans.

It appears impossible to levy extraordinary taxes on the people when we consider the enormous weight that affects the manufacturers and farmworkers. Only the farmers and landowners appear to be currently sustaining and enriching their wealth; the farmworkers and consumers can only suffice to pay for provisions if the current state of fictional riches maintains their rapidity of circulation; but we will soon see to what these riches reduce to and whether they will not disappear due to abuse.

We have seen that the government only gains a net product of (Page 10) 10,200,000 sterling year on year, but the people of England are taxed at a rate of between twelve and thirteen million sterling including the tax on the poor and other costs that are necessary to be included.



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It is on a population of seven million that this immense weight is born, as Ireland and Scotland barely carry this burden. We are astonished that this levy of money is so high when when it is the opinion of merchants and bankers the most well-informed that the total amount of money in circulation is not more than fifteen or sixteen million sterling. It is because of the beautiful machinery of the state of finances [in England] that the economy has sustained itself at present and that it continues to function with ease in all times of peace and war.

Credit is given by three intermediary lenders, the state, the Bank and (Page 11) the East India Company (two large intermediary creditors), and finally the bankers, traders, manufacturers, and even the rich farmers. All these intermediaries see revenue not from labor but from the primitive credit of the state, and if the state were to miss [payments], the big wheel that makes everything turn would stop in an instant, the whole edifice would crumble, and all the intermediary creditors would find suspensions. The state of suspension would destroy everything. How would they be able to tax twelve or thirteen million sterling on a people with a fiat wealth of sixteen million sterling? The "fictional wealth" not considered, it would take all concrete money in circulation to satisfy the needs of the state, the commerce, and the individual.

It appears that, following this bankruptcy is impossible in England, as even a partial bankruptcy would affect the majority of the revenues of the government and the population of the peoples. But, it seems equally impossible to augment the current taxes or to create new ones, as all the objects (Page 12) susceptible to taxation are exhausted. Borrowing is the only way to sustain a war, but the same difficulties will revitalize themselves under another form. Neither the nation nor foreigners will have enough confidence in the state to give considerable capital without guarantees. It was for continuing this illusion that the government has been making reimbursements that [their debtors] have not realized the true purposes of. The reimbursed capitalists see only the value of their reimbursements and see the mass of the debt grew on one side but diminish on the other. Meanwhile, there exists, despite the apparent confidence of the nation, a malaise that manifests itself (Page 13) by a withdrawal of funds at the most minor appearance of trouble. This worry, founded on a vague knowledge of the situation of finances, would degenerate quickly into a total lack of credit if we would morcel out these considerable borrowings into the debt repayment fund. This is the only hope of the financiers of the state. Limited borrowing would suffice to cover the expenses of a maritime war conducted with patience and economy; but not cover to enormous enterprises like those that we saw embarrass this power during the last war. With difficulty, those who would



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govern a worried nation would want to diffuse these other projects. At the same time, they would have to satisfy the country with success. (See Dispatch No 40 of the 7 October 1768 and No 46 of the 21 October 1768). We have seen, that, during the last war, the costs mounted to 6,480,000 pounds sterling year on year and we could calculate, without leaving to chance, that a lesser sum would not be sufficient to sustain the attacks of the Two Crowns against (Page 14) the navy and the establishments of Great Britain.

If, by the greatest efforts, England would be able to sustain a maritime war without running major risks, it would be evident that it would be impossible to sustain at the same time the costs of a continental war without plunging itself into a ruinous certitude.

(See Dispatch No 91, 1771, Tenth of May.)

The state of the accounting of costs of the last war for land only have shown that England had spent, year on year, 7,764,619 pounds sterling. She would not again find, even with the biggest success, the resources needed to face the loans that would demand creditors because, effectively, the means no longer exist and England's credit is exhausted. The nation sustains itself on prestige that would crumble at the start of any war. The low general state of funds would cause general malaise to be known. The price of borrowing would necessarily be related to the lack of funds and if they were to fall to sixty percent they would be reduced to 5,000 sterling (Page 15) of engagements for the three [percent] that they would receive. The experience of the two last years of the war demonstrated this truth that was recognized by Georges Greuvill (the best Minister of Finance that this power has had for a long time), England was pushed to justify the administration of finances to the eyes of a nation that made known the pecuniary needs without, which its other needs would not be serviced.

Navy

(See Dispatch No 74, 1771, Eighth of February.)

The maritime forces of England, [are initially] so imposing with an apparent number of more than 138 ships of the line, 10 ships of 50 canons that serve only to protect convoys, 82 frigates with 24 and 44 canons, and fleets of corvettes and other small ships with 10 to 19 canons. This mass of ships of all capabilities would be very formidable if they were in a good state, (Page 16) especially if there were a sufficient number of sailors to man them, but we have seen after precise verifications that a high proportion of the ships are not functioning and not in any



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state to sail. This leaves only a nominal force. England has worked tirelessly to build and repair vessels that were out of shape, but even with all these forced expenses, they have managed to complete only 80 ships of the line in shape to hold the sea. We saw that the number of ships from the Admiralty in 1770 grow to 315 but that they were reduced in the year 1771 by 2 or 3 ships; we will see them decline by significantly more if reforms are not soon made and more replacements arrive. The last project, finished in 1771 by the Admiralty and approved by Lord North, was to bring the number of ships of the line from 90 to 100 ships with 64 canons and to maintain these establishments without augmentation or reduction. As part of the same project, they propose to sustain the number of frigates at 70, with a proportional number of corvettes. It is very likely that this plan (Page 17) was followed and will not be abandoned. It remains for us to examine the use which England has made of this number of ships in a time of peace and whether it would be sufficient in a time of war to assure her the necessary superiority to satisfy the protection of her commerce, the defense of her establishments, and to, at the same time, execute offensive efforts against the two crowns.

England in the last four years has maintained 20,000 sailors that have to fulfill two purposes: the first is to man the 18 ships of the line that guard the ports of Portsmouth, Plymouth, Chatham, and Sheerness, as well as man half-complements that we estimate at three hundred men per guard ships.

The second object which these sailors have to fulfill is to carry to a standard of war the ships, frigates, and corvettes that are stationed outside [of these aforementioned ports] in different fleets.

It can be shown that 20,000 sailors are not sufficient to fulfill these two objects. The fleets in India and all the other major fleets effectively carry their full war complements (Page 18); we have had to be informed exactly of their force and assure ourselves regularly of the number of sailors they carry. The only fleet that is composed of multiple ships of the line is the Indian fleet, England's other fleets are composed only of a single ship of the line, carrying the commanding admiral. We must note that their composition, which England does so much to try to keep secret, is calculated so as to best stop our merchant ships. These many light ships that drag little water are the best for this design. The recent experience shown by England is that they have only managed to completely man 25 ships of the line following eight months of the most favorable seasons for recruiting sailors, and have manned a proportional number of frigates. It is recognized and proved by the fact that the reunited efforts of the most violent



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impressments and the considerable gratifications accorded by the government, they were only able to recruit 6000 sailors (Page 19) per month, in the most favorable times of the year when most commerce returns to port, and 3000 to 4000 in other times. In this number are counted vagabonds who had never previously been at sea and who nevertheless count a large number of these recruits. The experienced sailors always look to get out of impressment and prefer service in merchant vessels that is always more advantageous. We can conclude with certitude that, at the outbreak of war, the quality of the sailors would be poor during the first two campaigns. At the start of such a war, England would only be able to make use of five squadrons; of which three would protect the Channel and voyage through the Mediterranean; the two others would be needed to defend their possessions in the East and West Indies, and she would most definitely not leave her coastline and capital without defense. In calculating her efforts during the first year, the most liberal estimate would be that she could not recruit more than 50,000 sailors with which she would need to arm these five squadrons of the utmost necessity; without counting (Page 20) the ships needed to protect her coastline and commerce. We have reason to think that the number of sailors would grow year on year until it would reach 70 or 80,000, but it does not seem possible for the number to surpass this level.

We must not hide from ourselves the fact that, even if the forces of Great Britain are not as numerous as we had thought them to be, they are still important and notable because of the abilities of their commanding officers. We can ascribe this to the situation that these islanders are forced to face and are accustomed to, and to the belief that they are alone responsible for the growth of the Empire. To these advantages are joined the ability and the promptitude of services provided by the navy and the well-provisioned nature of the ships, particularly when it comes to supplying materiel.

In this memorandum, we must content ourselves to discuss the English forces without discussing those we might have to oppose them. (Page 21).

Merchant Marine

(See Dispatch No 62, 1769, Eighth of December and No 35, 1770, of the 19th of September.)

The military marine would only be able to draw the required sailors from the merchant marine, thus we have sought to assure ourselves of this force. The most liberal estimation in 1770 concluded that England had 110,000 sailors. The diminution by two-fifths that she



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suffered during the last war shows two important lessons. The first is that England has not quite the number of sailors that exaggerated estimates would have you think, the second, no less interesting, is that a naval war can enrich individuals and put more money in the City, but overall a nation that depends on commerce would weaken itself by pirating two-fifths of the sailors needed for national naval merchant ships. We have seen foreign merchant navigation grow to a proportion larger than that it held during the last war and, consequently, the profit the nation will lose will be higher. This depiction of the enormous consummation of sailors would make known the pain (Page 22) that a naval war would entail even if it was accompanied by the largest of successes; furthermore, the population would be scared to see that, even if in the last war only 1,512 of 133,708 died by arms, many more sailors were destroyed by sicknesses and desertions that accompany long periods at sea. (See Dispatch No 74 from the 8th of February, 1771).

The Land Armies of Great Britain

England, without counting domestic militias, has for its defense only an army of 17,000 men in England; 15,000 in Ireland, and 10,000 stationed in establishments further away, excepting Asia of which defense is ceded to the East India Company, which has more men than the combined armies of Great Britain.

(See Dispatch No 63, 1770, Ninth of November.)

In Europe

England's first efforts at the outbreak of a war would be to ensure the safety of her coasts and her capital which is only an army's march of six days [from the coast]. We would see her assemble between Portsmouth and London all the forces that she could by removing the garrisons from Scotland and Ireland. This last kingdom, however, cannot be entirely abandoned; we saw an army of 5000 left during the last war. The defense of Gibraltar and Minorca require at least 5000 men (Page 24) for each of these places, Jersey and Guernesey employ at least 4000 more, if they were to fully protect it. These islands are needed for the repair of merchant vessels and are very annoying to our own commerce and would become a hindrance to England should we were to take them at the start of a war, in an expedition that would be not too difficult or expensive.

In America



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(See Dispatch No 53, 1770, Ninth of November.)

The rich possessions of Barbados and of Jamaica are only defended by the sicknesses that ravage their climates. England, in 1770, had only 1736 [men] in the islands of St. Vincent, Jamaica, Antigua, and Grenada. There were lacking [at the time] a fifth of these feeble garrisons.

([Again] See Dispatch No 53, 1770, Ninth of November.)

The continent of America, even in peacetime, requires a corps of six thousand men, which we see (at moments like these) as quite insufficient for containing a population of 3,500,000 inhabitants spread over one thousand leagues of coastline (Page 25). The situation of these peoples has completely changed since France no longer possesses Canada, and since England has, in vain, tried to assert arbitrary taxes on the colonies. This means that the colonists would take only an indirect party to a war between England and the Two Crowns. The colonists are too aware of their own interests and will hesitate on the role they will play; they will hesitate to, as in the last war, maintain an army of 25,000 men and be even less keen to loan money to help England's enterprises.

The provinces of New England would want to profit from their circumstances and would search to establish smuggling commerce with our islands and the Spanish Colonies. New York and Pennsylvania, by their location, would necessarily become the furnishers of the war effort. England would not dare to oppose itself to the enriching of the American merchants who have accustomed themselves to searching everywhere (Page 26) for the best prices for their products, and the colonists would not allow themselves to succumb to the yoke of the Navigation Acts in a time of peace.

England would be forced to fund, by itself, all the preparations in North America that it would have to make for the war effort against our colonies and the Spanish Colonies in the New World.

The ports of Halifax and Boston would become the bases for the English squadrons that England would send to try to establish naval superiority. It would take three or four years to establish this, assuming that France and Spain are not able to distract English forces elsewhere.



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English America would require its own detailed memorandum to make known the current situation relative to London and the consequences of the actions that appear to be undertaken (Page 27) and that have existed for the last ten years. The imprudent measures that the different ministers have embraced appear inexplicable when one realizes the spirits that these resolutions have imparted. These measures have often acted contrary to the interests of a nation supposedly so enlightened but still commanded by her passions.

England's impolitic treatment of Americans can accelerate the revolution that is bound to happen naturally, but slowly, by the unstoppable progress and strength of the population. England could maybe go back on its course and preserve some sort of jurisdiction or supremacy [in the American colonies] to maintain the benefits of trade, but this control will not be able to be exclusive or oppressive against peoples who love liberty and who realize their strength. A similarity of language, manners, laws, and mores are the invisible ties (Page 28) that England could make use of, but if she wants to maintain by force her empire in America, she will have to loosen the laws of trade that have been tightened and which harm Americans; as she did with the abandonment of taxes (except that on tea that will finish like the others). If England wants to maintain her yoke on the Americans, she could do this temporarily but would accelerate the revolution that will one day separate the colonies from the homeland. The American colonies give to England an augmentation of real riches that contributes to a considerable part of England's income and supports its trade infrastructure.

Africa

(See Dispatch No 54, 1770, Ninth of November.)

English establishments on the African coasts are in such a state of weakness and ruin (to the point that we would have reason to doubt the truthfulness of our information) if it were not for the existence of the report made to the Admiralty on the 21st of January, 1770 by Captain Conyn, commander of the Phoenix, entrusted with making an inspection [of these forts]. We obtained a copy from one of the twelve states that were involved in this report, and it detailed the weaknesses of garrisons and forts. [The English] Parliament has thus accorded about 20,000 pounds sterling, per annum, to the Committee of the African Company.

All these establishments are defended only by a vessel of 50 canons and a frigate of 44 [canons] and never has England, even in times of war, maintained a squadron [for the



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protection of her African colonies]. The ease with which, in the event of a war, we could destroy all the forts and establishments that assure England's treaties with locals should reach the attention of the minister (Page 30). We would only run into difficulties in Senegal, not by the armed forces there but by the natural obstacles that would have to be overcome. In the aforementioned report, we even have the outline of the plan that was used in the last war to wrest Senegal from our control and the forces used in this expedition.

Asia

The immense riches and possessions of the East India Company present a matter as stunning as they are imposing. A Company that in 1753 was bankrupt and indebted by 9 million sterlings above its total holdings of merchandise and capital, by raising its dividend that it had the courage to risk, has become, in only a few years, absolute master of the most valuable portion of the Indian peninsula (Page 31). The Company has gained territorial holdings larger than the three kingdoms that compose Great Britain. It is not by wisdom or wealth that this happened, but by the audacity and greed of a single man, compounded with luck and our own errors. Lord Clyde, son of a merchant, first arrived in a lowly position in the Company. He furnished supplies and ammunition to the army during a war, and soon became the commander in chief of this effort. His courage of spirit in the least hopeful circumstances and love of gold allowed victories in that country where the art of modern warfare is still unknown. That general and all those who he commanded were able to pursue these riches following our destruction in the region.

We discuss these details not because they are interesting, but (Page 32) because they provide an additional point of view that we should keep in mind for our future in India.

The unhappiness of all the Indian Princes and the oppression that the East India Company maintains seems to announce the coming of a new revolution that could be favorable to us and facilitate the overthrow of English power in India as quickly as it came. The fact that a single employee of the company, without experience or knowledge of military arts, became master of India with a handful of undisciplined Europeans; commanding a small corps of 12,000 sepoys, proves how easily empires in Asia can be overthrown. (See Dispatch No 2, 1769, Thirtieth of June; No 6 7th of July, No 11th; 21st of July, No 36; 29th of September, all the same year). Recently, the mercenary Lydralikan has formed himself an empire on the Malabar coast and brought terror to the gates of Madras and have forced the English to sign a hideous treaty.



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To judge the instability of the East India Company, it serves to look at their financial edifices with foundations in Europe, where we have recently seen their loans crumble. The vices inherent to the Company's constitution are prognostic of certain destruction. The charter that governs the Company was designed for a commercial enterprise, not for a conquering power that holds large armies in a continent that has its own political system as complicated as that of Great Britain or Europe. The evils and dangers that result from this constitution have become well known in the last eight years, but the nature of the government will not allow for a change to be brought to the company while the charter that expires in 1780 remains in effect. While waiting for this, the company will subsist as it always had with all her vices and inconveniences, and we will have to make our calculations according to her current consistence and the knowledge of her current strengths and weaknesses (Page 34).

The force of the East India Company is no longer in her commerce, but fully in her territorial possessions. Three citadels, Calcutta in Bengal, Madras on the Coromandel, and Bombay on the Malabar coast, are three points of pressure that have been menaced by Indian Princes who may contribute to destroying the English Power if they form a well-governed alliance.

The Company has to protect itself from this danger by maintaining, in times of peace, a corps of six thousand Europeans, with thirty-five thousand in times of war, to maintain against the poorly-organized attacks from Asian powers. These forces would be insufficient to counter these attacks if the disunion that the English exploit did not exist (Page 35). Against the Nawabs [sovereign rulers of Indian states], all the possible cruelties have been employed by the General Cylve, by governors, and by employees of the East India Company against these Indian Princes and their subjects. All these horrors have been revealed to the English Parliament, all the crimes committed have been reported in the Chamber of Commons and they have still gone unpunished. While the English name brings hatred to the Indians, the success of English armies and the terror it inspires in people mean that the Indian Princes are not in a place to undertake sieges of the fortress of Calcutta and Madras. However, Calcutta, which has recently been refortified, would only rank as a second-tier fortress in Europe. It was very expensive to build and has two major flaws in her construction: the first being (Page 36) the spacing of her gates, which would require at least 6,000 men to defend, and the inability to defend the black city which is where all the riches are concentrated.

Madras, through redevelopment, has become a respectable fortress, although she has the same default as Calcutta in leaving the black city at the mercy of a victorious army. However,



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even without besieging one or the other, the Indian Princes might be able to blockade the English. If they were to make themselves masters of the countryside, they could stop the revenue of the East India Company and lessen the number of sepoys and Europeans that they could hire. The concerted effort needed to reunite the Indian princes could only happen through the injunction of a European power. France, through the possessions of Mauritia and Isle Bourbon (Page 37) and the weak colony of Pondicherry would become natural rally points for the Indian Princes. We would therefore see the brunt of English power directed at these possessions. The two hundred ships that serve the purposes of Indian commerce would allow the East India Company the means to transport a detachment of European troops and a proportional number of Sepoys to start a war before we would be able to realize it, and an expedition against these two islands is seen as the key to English absolute mastery of India, if it were to succeed. It is evident that the squadron she maintains at a large cost in the past four years in India, which serves little object in times of peace, has as its only object to undertake this expedition against our islands (Page 38).

The fixing of fortifications in Pondichery and a sufficient garrison to shelter this place from attack would save us from the first danger that is presented to the Isle de France and Isle Bourbon. We will see soon that our alliance is pursued by the Indian Princes who are so jealous of the English power, and the governors of Madras and Calcutta would not be able mount an expedition against us, as this would leave them open to invasion [by the Indian Princes]. The sending of three regiments to Isle de France in 1770 inspired such terror in the English, as we can tell in the changing of the tone of the consulates of Madras and Calcutta in Pondichery. This is particularly noticeable in the advances of Hydralican (?), which had been negligible for four years. His talent, audacity, and successes (Page 39) against the English could make an alliance with him very advantageous for weakening the precarious strengths of the British in India. [In conclusion,] these immense territorial possession [in India] are not like those in America as they do not give an augmentation of real power. England contributes little to the augmentation of manufacturing or the population [in India], but India, in turn, provide a considerable flow of resources of which it is possible to stop the source.

Conclusion

If the keeping of the peace depended only on the king [of England] and the interests of his ministers, we could be assured of its duration. However, sad experience has proved to us that we cannot foresee nor calculate the effects of the passions and the thirst for power [of



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politicians] that do not match the interests of England or the dangers to which she would be exposed to in case of a war. We can only consider peace with England as precarious, although it has lasted for four years and may continue to due so for the same number of years (Page 40), if there are no great internal changes in that monarchy. The anticipated dissolution of Parliament, and the composition of the Parliament that will succeed her, will necessarily lead to new combinations; it will be interesting to follow these affairs to judge whether the opposition will take power after four years. The party that wins the election will be preoccupied with keeping power. The nation, the ministry, and the opposition will lose sight of foreign affairs, and will only be occupied with trying their power; and we would have to wait during the course of the entire year to see whether the parties will rally; and peace would become still more uncertain, especially if there is a rebellion within the ministry following a parliamentary election (Page 41).

The party that supports war would be very daring given the condition of English finances. We are now sure that England would be able to sustain a war only through the use of onerous loans even if it limits itself to war at sea. We have estimated the cost of such a war at five million sterling; and her already weak credit would barely suffice for a first land campaign, and she would finish by alienating diverse parties responsible for her revenue. This is confirmed by the following fact0.

England, in 1753, following only five years of peace, lowered interest rates to three percent. This reduction in rate was voluntarily introduced by a concerted operation between M Pelham (with the help of Sir Barnard), who assured himself of enough subscriptions (Page 42) to reimburse the capitalists who were not happy with the reduction. The success that followed showed their wisdom, and they lifted a heavy burden but capitalists were very unhappy with the matter, seeing the reduction in rates hurting their capital.

England's current situation is very different. Peace has lasted for twelve years. The government has made 8 million sterling in payments during this time and but needs to make many more. Annuity funds are about a quarter to two-fifths below their initial value and they will fall even further at the onset of war.

The effective strength of the English Navy is at 80 ships of the line, 60 frigates and as many corvettes; this is to be brought to 100 ships of the line [in event of war], 80 frigates and as many corvettes, but for the first year (Page 43) she would only be able to get 40 to 50



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thousand sailors; in 1755 she only got 29,268 (see Dispatch No 46 from the 21st October 1768). By following the statistics from the last war, we would be able to know the progress of the current war, and we know that England won't be able to obtain more than 80,000 sailors. We need to acknowledge these numbers in political discussions so we can reduce uncertainties.

France, without making huge efforts, could bring her navy to 70 ships of the line and Spain to 60, and the two crowns do not require as many frigates as England does.

France has around 60,000 sailors, with 20,000 more in Spain (who pretends to have 40,000), with this the Two Crowns would have the superiority in numbers and at least an equal number of vessels, considering that a quarter of English sailors are of low experience and another quarter are without any experience. France and Spain would have an important advantage in their systems that allow for the training of sailors. (Page 44).

All troops in the British Empire count only 42,000 men. England, to put itself in a defensive state, brought its army to 82,182 men in 1756 (See Dispatch No 52 from the 8th of December 1768). In the first year of a coming war, before her garrisons were augmented, her now-increased possessions in all parts of the world would not everywhere be sheltered from the concerted attacks of the Two Crowns. The defense of the capital and English ports would require the use of a large part of the land army, especially after the garrisons of Gibraltar and Minorca were doubled.

The English establishments on the African coast offer, by their weakness and dispersion (Page 45) an easy conquest, and their assured destruction should not require more than four months of expeditions.

The current forces of England in Asia appear very impressive at first glance, but the circumstances in India render them less so. The secret disposition of the Indian Princes puts the English possessions in danger. The three [English] states, separated and extending over a country that ranges from the Ganges to the Cocoamandal and Malabar coastlines, cannot hope, with an army of 6,000 poorly disciplined Europeans, to sustain their positions against Indian powers. Any failure would be followed by bigger failures and lead to the loss of many Sepoys that the East India Company would no longer be able to support. Is it really possible to believe that six thousand Europeans can cover six thousand leagues and a population of 15



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million inhabitants subject to oppressive and revolting treatment?

England can only lose India and our position can only become more favorable, perhaps less because of the potential acquisitions but also because of the losses England would sustain. A victorious campaign in India would lead to a fatal strike against England that four campaigns in Europe would not match. The halting of trade in this part of the world alone would reduce the government income by one-fifth, affecting both customs and excise duties.

Another advantage of our situation seems to suggest that our first efforts should be directed towards Asia, as France can only gain friends in Europe through ruinous subsidies that the state of her finance cannot support, but in India she is assured to see her troops subsidized by Indian Princes who would pay for all the munitions of war that she would be able to furnish so as to employ them against their enemy.

We must assure the safety of the Isles de France and Isles Bourbon which would become arsenals of all types. (Page 47)

The preservation of Pondichery, our only point of pressure, becomes every day more important, as this memorandum outlines just how important India is to our government. The expenses that these two objects require would be well compensated by the savings in the event of war with England. The duration of a war would depend, in large part, on the appearance of a revolution in Asia and on the general discredit of the state of England's finances.

England has an overpopulation of ten million inhabitants, weakened commerce, and a declining credit affected by the enormity of its history. Its engagements can no longer envelope Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and it cannot flatter itself to bring victory everywhere as it did in the last war.

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