

A portrait of Benjamin Franklin, an elderly man with long, wavy hair, wearing a white coat and a white cravat. He is looking slightly to the right of the viewer. The background is dark and indistinct.

**THE WORKS OF
BENJAMIN
FRANKLIN**

VOLUME 3: 1753 - 1763

The Works of Benjamin
Franklin

Volume 3

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

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**CORRESPONDENCE AND MISCELLANEOUS
WRITINGS
1735 - 1753**

CVII. TO WILLIAM SMITH

Philadelphia, 27 November, 1753.

Dear Sir:—

Having written to you fully, via Bristol, I have now little to add. Matters relating to the Academy remain *in statu quo*. The trustees would be glad to see a rector established there, but they dread entering into new engagements till they are got out of debt; and I have not yet got them wholly over to my opinion, that a good professor or teacher of the higher branches of learning would draw so many scholars as to pay great part, if not the whole, of his salary. Thus, unless the Proprietors of the province shall think fit to put the finishing hand to our institution, it must, I fear, wait some few years longer before it can arrive at that state of perfection which to me it seems now capable of; and all the pleasure I promised myself in seeing you settled among us vanishes into smoke. But good Mr. Collinson writes me word that no endeavours of his shall be wanting; and he hopes, with the Archbishop's assistance, to be able to prevail with our Proprietors. ^{Ref. 002} I pray God grant them success. My son presents his affectionate regards, with, dear Sir, yours, &c.,

B. Franklin.

CVIII. TO CADWALLADER COLDEN

Philadelphia, 6 December, 1753.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of the 19th past, with some remarks on my meteorological paper, for which I thank you and return some observations on those remarks, hoping by this friendly intercourse of sentiments and objections some advantage will arise, to the increase of true knowledge.

I sent you our treaty some time since. You will find very little in it; but I have hopes it will introduce a regulation of our Indian trade, by the government taking it in hand and furnishing the Indians with goods at the cheapest rate without aiming at profit, as is done by Massachusetts; by which means I think we must vastly undersell the French, and thereby attach the Indians more firmly to the British interest.

Mr. Collinson certainly received your answer to Kastner. I think one of his letters to me mentions it.

I send you herewith a copy of my paper on the *Increase of Mankind*; the only one I have, so must request you to return it. That on the *Air*, &c., is what you have already seen. The third mentioned to you by Mr. Collinson concerning the Germans, is scarcely worth sending. It will contain nothing new to you.

I congratulate you on Lord Halifax's approbation of your conduct in public affairs. From such a man the honor is great, and the satisfaction; but the approbation of your own mind is something more valuable in itself, and it is what I doubt not you will always enjoy.

I should like to see Pike's book some time or other, when you can conveniently send it. With great respect and esteem, I am, Sir, &c.,

B. Franklin.

CIX. TO JAMES BOWDOIN

Philadelphia, 13 December, 1753.

Dear Sir:—

I received your favor of the 12th ultimo, with the law of your province for regulating the Indian trade, for which I thank you, and for the remarks that accompany it, which clearly evince the usefulness of the law, and I hope will be sufficient to induce our Assembly to follow your example.

I have yet received no particulars of the unhappy gentleman's death at Petersburg, (whose fate I lament). One of the papers says that all the letters from thence confirm the account, and mentions his name (Professor Richmann), but nothing farther. No doubt we shall have a minute account of the accident with all its circumstances, in some of the magazines or the *Transactions of the Royal Society*.^{Ref. 003}

The observation you made of the sea water emitting more and less light in different tracts passed through by your boat is new, and your manner of accounting for it ingenious. It is indeed very possible that an extremely small animalcule, too small to be visible even by the best glasses, may yet give a visible light. I remember to have taken notice, in a drop of kennel water, magnified by the solar microscope to the bigness of a cart-wheel, there were numbers of visible animalcules of various sizes swimming about; but I was sure there were likewise some which I could not see, even with that magnifier, for the wake they made in swimming to and fro was very visible, though the body that made it was not so. Now if I could see the wake of an invisible animalcule, I imagine I might much more easily see its light if it were of the luminous kind. For how

small is the extent of a ship's wake, compared with that of the light of her lantern.

My barometer will not show the luminous appearance by agitating the mercury in the dark, but I think yours does. Please to try whether it will, when agitated, attract a fine thread hung near the top of the tube.

As to the answer to Nollet, if I were going on with it, I should be extremely glad of your peeping into it (as you say) now and then, that I might correct it by your advice. The materials in short hints have been long collected and methodized; they only want to be clothed with expression. But soon after my return from New England, I received the enclosed from Monsieur Dalibard, wherein he tells me that he is preparing an answer, not only to the Abbé, but to some others that have wrote against my doctrine, which will be published the beginning of this winter. This, with a good deal of business, and a little natural indolence, has made me neglect finishing my answer till I shall see what is done by him. Perhaps it may then appear unnecessary for me to do any thing farther in it. And will not one's vanity be more gratified in seeing one's adversary confuted by a disciple than even by one's self? I am, however, a little concerned for Dalibard, when I find by his letter that he has been so far imposed on by the Abbé's confident assertion that a charged bottle placed on an *electric per se* loses its electricity, as to attempt to account for it, when the thing is absolutely not fact. I have in answer wrote him my sentiments on that and some other particulars of the Abbé's book, which I hope will get to hand before his answer is published. Ref. 004

I am with the greatest esteem and regard,
Dear Sir, your most obliged humble servant,
B. Franklin.

CX. TO PETER COLLINSON

Philadelphia, 18 April, 1754.

Sir:—

Since September last, having been abroad on two long journeys and otherwise much engaged, I have made but few observations on the *positive* and *negative* state of electricity in the clouds. But Mr. Kinnersley kept his rod and bells in good order, and has made many.

Once this winter the bells rang a long time during a fall of snow, though no thunder was heard or lightning seen. Sometimes the flashes and cracks of the electric matter between bell and bell were so large and loud as to be heard all over the house; but by all his observations the clouds were constantly in a negative state, till about six weeks ago, when he found them once to change in a few minutes from the negative to the positive. About a fortnight after that he made another observation of the same kind, and last Monday afternoon, the wind blowing hard at southeast and veering round to northeast, with many thick, driving clouds, there were five or six successive changes from negative to positive, and from positive to negative, the bells stopping a minute or two between every change. Besides the methods mentioned in my paper of September last of discovering the electrical state of the clouds, the following may be used. When your bells are ringing, pass a rubbed tube by the edge of the bell, connected with your pointed rod; if the cloud is then in a negative state, the ringing will stop; if in a positive state, it will continue, and perhaps be quicker. Or suspend a very small cork ball by a fine silk thread, so that it may hang close to the edge of the rod-bell; then, whenever the bell is electrified, whether positively or negatively, the little ball will be repelled and continue at some distance from the bell. Have ready a

round-headed glass stopper of a decanter, rub it on your side till it is electrified, then present it to the cork ball. If the electricity in the ball is positive, it will be repelled from the glass stopper, as well as from the bell; if negative, it will fly to the stopper.

B. Franklin. *Ref. 005*

CXI. TO CADWALLADER COLDEN

Philadelphia, 30 August, 1754.

Dear Sir:—

I have now before me your favors of July 23d, and August 15th. I return Mr. Pike's *Philosophia Sacra*. His manner of philosophizing is much out of my way.

I am now about to proceed on my eastern journey, but hope to be at home in the winter, the best season for electrical experiments, when I will gladly make any you desire. In the mean time I should be glad if you would communicate the thoughts you mention, that I may consider them. If you please, direct them to me at Boston.

There must, I think, be some mistake in what you mention, of my having sent to Mr. Collinson the paper you wrote me on water-spouts. I have the original now by me, and cannot recollect that I ever copied it, or that I ever communicated the contents of it to Mr. Collinson or any one. Indeed, I have long had an intention of sending him all I have wrote, and all I have received from others on this curious subject, without mentioning names; but it is not yet done.

Our Assembly were not inclined to show any approbation of the plan of union; yet I suppose they will take no steps to oppose its being established by the government at home.

Popular elections have their inconveniences in some cases; but in establishing new forms of government, we cannot always obtain what we may think the best; for the prejudices of those concerned, if they cannot be removed, must be in some degree complied with. However, I am of opinion that when troops are to be raised in America, the officers appointed must be men they know and approve, or the levies will be made with more difficulty, and at much greater expense. Ref. 006

It is not to be expected that a Quaker Assembly will establish any but Quaker schools; nor will they ever agree to a tax for the payment of any clergy. It is intended by the Society, that the schoolmasters among the Germans shall teach English.

I am glad the representation is agreeable to your sentiments. The letter to Lord Halifax I suppose your son sends from New York.

Since my return I have received from Italy a book in quarto, entitled *Dell' Elettricismo Artificiale e Naturale, Libri Due, di Giovambattista Beccaria de' CC. RR. delle Scuole Pie*, printed at Turin, and dedicated to the King. The author professedly goes on my principles; he seems a master of method, and has reduced to systematic order the scattered experiments and positions delivered in my paper. At the end of the first book, there is a letter addressed to the Abbé Nollet, in which he answers some of the Abbé's principal objections. This letter being translated into French, I send you the translation for your perusal, and will send you the Italian book itself by some future opportunity, if you desire it. It pleases me the more, in that I find the author has been led by sundry observations and experiments, though different from mine, to the same strange conclusion, viz., *that some thunder-strokes are from the earth upwards*; in which I feared I should for some time have been singular.

With the greatest esteem and regard I am, dear Sir, &c.,
B. Franklin.

P. S.—Please to send me the French piece by the first opportunity, after you have perused it, directed to me at Boston.

CXII: PLAN OF UNION FOR THE COLONIES

In anticipation of unpleasant complications with France, the Lords of Trade directed commissioners to be appointed in several of the provinces, to assemble at Albany for the specific purpose of conciliating and attaching to them the Six Nations, whose alliance was of vital importance in case of a war with France. The commissioners met on the 19th of June, 1754. The colonies of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Maryland were represented by twenty-five commissioners or delegates. Franklin was the commissioner from Pennsylvania. Several days were spent in distributing presents and holding “talks” with the Indians. On the 24th of June the journal of the commissioners shows the following record:

“A motion was made that the commissioners deliver their opinion whether a union of all the colonies is not at present absolutely necessary for their security and defence. The question was accordingly put, and passed in the affirmative *unanimously*.

On a motion made, that a committee be appointed to prepare and receive plans or schemes for the union of the colonies, and to digest them into one general plan for the inspection of this Board; Resolved, that each government choose one of their own number to be of that committee. Accordingly were appointed Thomas Hutchinson for

Massachusetts, Theodore Atkinson for New Hampshire, William Pitkin for Connecticut, Stephen Hopkins for Rhode Island, William Smith for New York, Benjamin Franklin for Pennsylvania, and Benjamin Tasker for Maryland.”

It is a significant and curious fact that, with the exception of those from Massachusetts, none of the delegates had any instructions to discuss the question of a union of the colonies for mutual defence, or for any other purpose. Their instructions restricted them to the concerting of measures best calculated to secure the friendship of the Six Nations, and to resist the encroachment of the French and their allies. The Massachusetts commissioners were authorized to “enter into articles of union and confederation for the general defence of his Majesty’s subjects and interests in North America, *as well in time of peace as of war.*” Though not within the instructions of the commissioners, there are abundant reasons for believing that some plan of union was the subject of much more thought and discussion than the friendship of the Indians, a subject, however, which was not neglected. It certainly had been the uppermost thought in Franklin’s mind for some time. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* for May 9th, 1754, contains an account, evidently from his pen, of the capture by the French of Captain Trent’s party, who were erecting a fort (afterwards Fort Duquesne) at the fork of the Ohio. After narrating the particulars, and urging union to resist aggression, he adds: “The confidence of the French in this undertaking seems well grounded in the present disunited state of the British colonies, and the extreme difficulty of bringing so many different governments and assemblies to agree in any speedy and effectual measures for our common defence and security; while our enemies have the very great advantage of being under one direction, with one council, and one purse.” At the end of the article is a woodcut, in which is the figure of a snake, separated into parts, to each of which is affixed the initial of one of the colonies, and at

the bottom in large capital letters the motto, Join or Die. It is not surprising, therefore, that when Franklin arrived at Albany, he had in his pocket a “plan of union” which he had submitted to several influential friends in New York, and which received their approval. Several other plans were submitted to the committee, but his was approved of, and reported to the commissioners. Its various features were under discussion twelve days, and finally adopted, subject to the confirmation of Parliament, which was judged necessary to give such a union validity. Though the commissioners were nearly or quite unanimous in approving Franklin’s plan of union—Trumbull says the Connecticut delegates did not approve of it, though they did approve of the union,—it met with a very different reception from the colonial assemblies to whom it was submitted, while in England, it proved so unacceptable that the Board of Trade did not even recommend it to the notice of the king. Franklin says: “The Assemblies all thought there was too much *prerogative* in it, and in England it was thought to have too much of the *democratic*.” The home government had doubtless much the same reasons for discouraging such a union as the Roman emperors had for refusing to allow the servile population to be put in uniform; they did not care to give them such facilities for learning their own strength.

***Short Hints towards a Scheme for Uniting the
Northern Colonies***

A GOVERNOR-GENERAL

To be appointed by the King.
To be a military man.

To have a salary from the crown.

To have a negation on all acts of the Grand Council, and carry into execution whatever is agreed on by him and that Council.

GRAND COUNCIL

One member to be chosen by the Assembly of each of the smaller colonies, and two or more by each of the larger, in proportion to the sums they pay yearly into the general treasury.

MEMBERS' PAY

— shillings sterling per diem, during their sitting, and mileage for travelling expenses.

PLACE AND TIME OF MEETING

To meet — times in every year, at the capital of each colony, in course, unless particular circumstances and emergencies require more frequent meetings and alteration in the course of places. The governor-general to judge of those circumstances, &c., and call by his writs.

GENERAL TREASURY

Its fund, an excise on strong liquors, pretty equally drunk in the colonies, or duty on liquor imported, or — shillings on each license of a public house, or excise on superfluities, &c., &c. All which would pay in some proportion to the present wealth of each colony, and increase as that wealth increases, and prevent disputes about the inequality of quotas. To be collected in each colony and lodged in their treasury, to be ready for the payment of orders issuing from the governor-general and Grand Council jointly.

DUTY AND POWER OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND GRAND COUNCIL

To order all Indian treaties. Make all Indian purchases not within proprietary grants. Make and support new settlements by building forts, raising and paying soldiers to garrison the forts, defend the frontiers, and annoy the enemy. Equip guard-vessels to scour the coasts from privateers in time of war, and protect the trade, and every thing that shall be found necessary for the defence and support of the colonies in general, and increasing and extending their settlements, &c.

For the expense, they may draw on the fund in the treasury of any colony.

MANNER OF FORMING THIS UNION

The scheme being first well considered, corrected, and improved by the commissioners at Albany, to be sent home, and an act of Parliament obtained for establishing it. ^{Ref. 007}

Letter from James Alexander to Cadwallader Colden, Respecting the Above Hints

New York, [June] 9, 1754.

Dear Sir:

I had some conversation with Mr. Franklin and Mr. Peters ^{Ref. 008} as to the uniting the colonies, and the difficulties thereof, by effecting our liberties on the one hand, or being ineffectual on the other. Whereon Mr. Franklin promised to set down some hints of a scheme that he thought might do, which accordingly he sent to me to be transmitted to you, and it is enclosed.

To me it seems extremely well digested, and at first sight avoids many difficulties that had occurred to me.

Some difficulties still remain. For example, there cannot be found men tolerably well skilled in warlike affairs to be chosen for the Grand Council, and there is danger in communicating to them the schemes to be put in execution, for fear of a discovery to the enemy.

Whether this may not be in some measure remedied by a council of state of a few persons to be chosen by the Grand Council at their stated meetings, which council of state to be always attending the governor-general, and with him to digest beforehand all matters to be laid before the next Grand Council, and only the general, but not the particular, plans of operation.

That the governor-general and that council of state issue orders for the payment of moneys, so far as the Grand Council have beforehand agreed may be issued for any general plan to be executed. That the governor-general and council of state, at every meeting of the Grand Council, lay before them their accounts and transactions since the last meeting; at least so much of their transactions as is safe to be made public. This council of state to be something like that of the United Provinces, and the Grand Council to resemble the States-General.

That the capacity and ability of the persons to be chosen of the council of state and Grand Council be their only qualifications, whether members of the respective bodies that choose them or not. That the Grand Council, with the governor-general, have power to increase, but not to decrease, the duties laid by act of Parliament, and have power to issue bills of credit on emergencies, to be sunk by the increased funds, bearing a small interest, but not to be tenders. I am, dear Sir,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant,
James Alexander.

*Remarks on the Hints for a Scheme of Union, by
Cadwallader Colden*

GOVERNOR-GENERAL

It seems agreed on all hands that something is necessary to be done for uniting the colonies in their mutual defence, and it seems to be likewise agreed that it can only be done effectually by act of Parliament. For this reason I suppose that the necessary funds for carrying it into execution, in pursuance of the ends proposed by it, cannot be otherwise obtained. If it were thought that the Assemblies of the several colonies may agree to lay the same duties and apply them to the general defence and security of all the colonies, no need of an act of Parliament.

Quære: Which best for the colonies; by Parliament, or by the several Assemblies?

The King's ministers, so long since as the year 1723 or 1724, had thoughts of sending over a governor-general of all the colonies, and the Earl of Stair was proposed as a fit person. It is probable, the want of a suitable support of the dignity of that office prevented that scheme's being carried into execution, and that the ministry and people of England think that this charge ought to be borne by the colonies.

GRAND COUNCIL

Quære: Is the Grand Council, with the governor-general, to have a legislative authority? If only an executive power, objections may be made to their being elective. It would be in a great measure a change of the constitution, to which I suspect the crown will not consent. We see the inconveniences attending the present constitution, and remedies may be found without changing it, but we cannot foresee what may be the consequences of a change in it. If

the Grand Council be elected for a short time, steady measures cannot be pursued. If elected for a long time, and not removable by the crown, they may become dangerous. Are they to have a negative on the acts of the governor-general? It is to be considered that England will keep their colonies, so far as they can, dependent on them; and this view is to be preserved in all schemes to which the King's consent is necessary.

PLACE AND TIME OF MEETING

It may be thought dangerous to have fixed meetings of the Grand Council, and in all the colonies at certain times and places. It is a privilege which the Parliament has not, nor the Privy Council, and may be thought destructive of the constitution.

GENERAL TREASURY

Some estimate ought to be made of the produce which may be reasonably expected from the funds proposed to be raised by duties on liquors, &c., to see whether it will be sufficient for the ends proposed. This I think may be done from the custom-houses in the most considerable places for trade in the colonies.

MANNER OF FORMING THE UNION

No doubt any private person may, in the proper manner, make any proposals which he thinks for the public benefit; but, if they are to be made by the commissioners of the several colonies, who now meet at Albany, it may be presumed that they speak the sense of their constituents. What authority have they to do this? I know of none from either the Council or Assembly of New York.

However, these things may be properly talked of in conversation among the commissioners for further information, and in order to induce the several Assemblies to give proper powers to commissioners to meet afterwards for this purpose.

Reasons and Motives on which the Plan of Union was Formed

The commissioners from a number of the northern colonies being met at Albany, and considering the difficulties that have always attended the most necessary general measures for the common defence, or for the annoyance of the enemy, when they were to be carried through the several particular Assemblies of all the colonies: some Assemblies being before at variance with their governors or councils, and the several branches of the government not on terms of doing business with each other; others taking the opportunity, when their concurrence is wanted, to push for favorite laws, powers, or points, that they think could not at other times be obtained, and so creating disputes and quarrels; one Assembly waiting to see what another will do, being afraid of doing more than its share, or desirous of doing less, or refusing to do any thing, because its country is not at present so much exposed as others, or because another will reap more immediate advantage;—from one or other of which causes, the Assemblies of six out of seven colonies applied to had granted no assistance to Virginia, when lately invaded by the French, though purposely convened, and the importance of the occasion earnestly urged upon them;—considering, moreover, that one principal encouragement to the French in invading and insulting the British American dominions, was their knowledge of our disunited state, and of our weakness arising from such want of union; and that from hence different colonies were,

at different times, extremely harassed, and put to great expense both of blood and treasure, who would have remained in peace, if the enemy had had cause to fear the drawing on themselves the resentment and power of the whole;—the said commissioners, considering also the present encroachments of the French and the mischievous consequences that may be expected from them, if not opposed with our force, came to an unanimous resolution: *That a union of the colonies is absolutely necessary for their preservation.*

The manner of forming and establishing this union was the next point. When it was considered that the colonies were seldom all in equal danger at the same time, or equally near the danger, or equally sensible of it, that some of them had particular interests to manage, with which a union might interfere, and that they were extremely jealous of each other, it was thought impracticable to obtain a joint agreement of all the colonies to a union, in which the expense and burthen of defending any of them should be divided among them all; and if ever acts of Assembly in all the colonies could be obtained for that purpose, yet as any colony, on the least dissatisfaction, might repeal its own act, and thereby withdraw itself from the union, it would not be a stable one, or such as could be depended on, for if only one colony should, on any disgust, withdraw itself, others might think it unjust and unequal that they, by continuing in the union, should be at the expense of defending a colony which refused to bear its proportional part, and would therefore one after another withdraw, till the whole crumbled into its original parts. Therefore the commissioners came to another previous resolution, *That it was necessary the Union should be established by act of Parliament.*

They then proceeded to sketch out a *Plan of Union*, which they did in a plain and concise manner, just sufficient to show their sentiments of the kind of union that would best

suit the circumstances of the colonies, be most agreeable to the people, and most effectually promote his Majesty's service and the general interest of the British empire. This was respectfully sent to the Assemblies of the several colonies for their consideration, and to receive such alterations and improvements as they should think fit and necessary; after which it was proposed to be transmitted to England to be perfected, and the establishment of it there humbly solicited.

This was as much as the commissioners could do.

It was proposed by some of the commissioners to form the colonies into two or three distinct unions: but for these reasons that proposal was dropped even by those that made it, viz.:

1. In all cases where the strength of the whole was necessary to be used against the enemy, there would be the same difficulty in degree to bring the several unions to unite together as now the several colonies; and consequently the same delays on our part and advantage to the enemy.

2. Each union would separately be weaker than when joined by the whole, obliged to exert more force, be oppressed by the expense, and the enemy less deterred from attacking it.

3. Where particular colonies have *selfish views*, as New York, with regard to Indian trade and lands; or are less exposed, being covered by others, as New Jersey, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maryland; or have particular whims and prejudices against warlike measures in general, as Pennsylvania, where the Quakers predominate; such colonies would have more weight in a partial union, and be better able to oppose and obstruct the measures necessary for the general good, than where they are swallowed up in the general union.

4. The Indian trade would be better regulated by the union of the whole than by the partial unions. And as

Canada is chiefly supported by that trade, if it could be drawn into the hands of the English, as it might be if the Indians were supplied on moderate terms, and by honest traders appointed by and acting for the public; that alone would contribute greatly to the weakening of our enemies.

5. The establishing of new colonies westward on the Ohio and the Lakes,—a matter of considerable importance to the increase of British trade and power, to the breaking that of the French, and to the protection and security of our present colonies, would best be carried on by a joint union.

6. It was also thought that by the frequent meetings together of commissioners or representatives from all the colonies, the circumstances of the whole would be better known, and the good of the whole better provided for; and that the colonies would, by this connexion, learn to consider themselves, not as so many independent states, but as members of the same body; and thence be more ready to afford assistance and support to each other, and to make diversions in favor even of the most distant, and to join cordially in any expedition for the benefit of all against the common enemy.

These were the principal reasons and motives for forming the Plan of Union as it stands. To which may be added this, that as the union of the—[The remainder of this article was lost.]

Plan of Union Adopted by the Convention at Albany, with the Reasons and Motives for Each Article of the Plan ^{Ref. 009}

It is proposed that humble application be made for an act of Parliament of Great Britain, by virtue of which one general government may be formed in America, including all the said colonies, within and under which government each colony may retain its present constitution, except in the particulars wherein a change may be directed by the said act, as hereafter follows.

PRESIDENT-GENERAL AND GRAND COUNCIL

That the said general government be administered by a President-General, to be appointed and supported by the crown; and a Grand Council, to be chosen by the representatives of the people of the several colonies met in their respective Assemblies.

It was thought that it would be best the President-General should be supported as well as appointed by the crown, that so all disputes between him and the Grand Council concerning his salary might be prevented; as such disputes have been frequently of mischievous consequence in particular colonies, especially in time of public danger. The quit-rents of crown lands in America might in a short time be sufficient for this purpose. The choice of members for the Grand Council is placed in the House of Representatives of each government, in order to give the people a share in this new general government, as the crown has its share by the appointment of the President-General.

But it being proposed by the gentlemen of the council of New York, and some other counsellors among the

commissioners, to alter the plan in this particular, and to give the governors and council of the several provinces a share in the choice of the Grand Council, or at least a power of approving and confirming, or of disallowing, the choice made by the house of representatives, it was said:

“That the government or constitution, proposed to be formed by the plan, consists of two branches: a President-General appointed by the crown, and a council chosen by the people, or by the people’s representatives, which is the same thing.

That by a subsequent article, the council chosen by the people can effect nothing without the consent of the President-General appointed by the crown; the crown possesses therefore full one half of the power of this constitution.

That in the British constitution, the crown is supposed to possess but one third, the lords having their share.

That this constitution seemed rather more favorable for the crown.

That it is essential to English liberty, that the subject should not be taxed but by his own consent, or the consent of his elected representatives.

That taxes to be laid and levied by this proposed constitution will be proposed and agreed to by the representatives of the people, if the plan in this particular be preserved;

But if the proposed alteration should take place, it seemed as if matters may be so managed as that the crown shall finally have the appointment, not only of the President-General, but of a majority of the Grand Council; for seven out of eleven governors and councils are appointed by the crown;

And so the people in all the colonies would in effect be taxed by their governors.

It was therefore apprehended that such alterations of the plan would give great dissatisfaction, and that the colonies

could not be easy under such a power in governors, and such an infringement of what they take to be English liberty.

Besides, the giving a share in the choice of the Grand Council would not be equal with respect to all the colonies, as their constitutions differ. In some, both governor and council are appointed by the crown. In others, they are both appointed by the proprietors. In some, the people have a share in the choice of the council; in others, both government and council are wholly chosen by the people. But the House of Representatives is everywhere chosen by the people; and, therefore, placing the right of choosing the Grand Council in the representatives is equal with respect to all.

That the Grand Council is intended to represent all the several houses of representatives of the colonies, as a house of representatives doth the several towns or counties of a colony. Could all the people of a colony be consulted and unite in public measures, a house of representatives would be needless, and could all the Assemblies conveniently consult and unite in general measures, the Grand Council would be unnecessary.

That a House of Commons or the House of Representatives and the Grand Council are thus alike in their nature and intention. And as it would seem improper that the King or House of Lords should have a power of disallowing or appointing members of the House of Commons; so likewise, that a governor and council appointed by the Crown should have a power of disallowing or appointing members of the Grand Council, who, in this constitution, are to be the representatives of the people.

If the governors and councils, therefore, were to have a share in the choice of any that are to conduct this general government, it should seem more proper that they choose the President-General. But this being an office of great

trust and importance to the nation, it was thought better to be filled by the immediate appointment of the crown.

The power proposed to be given by the plan to the Grand Council is only a concentration of the powers of the several Assemblies in certain points for the general welfare; as the power of the President-General is, of the powers of the several governors in the same points.

And as the choice therefore of the Grand Council by the representatives of the people neither gives the people any new powers nor diminishes the power of the crown, it was thought and hoped the crown would not disapprove of it."

Upon the whole, the commissioners were of opinion that the choice was most properly placed in the representatives of the people.

ELECTION OF MEMBERS

That within —— months after the passing of such act, the House of Representatives that happens to be sitting within that time, or that shall be especially for that purpose convened, may and shall choose members for the Grand Council in the following proportion—that is to say:

<i>Massachusetts</i>	7
<i>Bay</i>	
<i>New</i>	2
<i>Hampshire</i>	
<i>Connecticut</i>	5
<i>Rhode Island</i>	2
<i>New York</i>	4
<i>New Jersey</i>	3
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	6
<i>Maryland</i>	4
<i>Virginia</i>	7

<i>North Carolina</i>	4
<i>South Carolina</i>	4
	48

It was thought that if the least colony was allowed more than two, and the others in proportion, the number would be very great, and the expense heavy; and that less than two would not be convenient, as a single person being by any accident prevented appearing at the meeting, the colony he ought to appear for would not be represented. That as the choice was not immediately popular, they would be generally men of good abilities for business, and men of reputation for integrity; and that forty-eight such men might be a number sufficient. But though it was thought reasonable that each colony should have a share in the representative body in some degree according to the proportion it contributed to the general treasury, yet the proportion of wealth or power of the colonies is not to be judged by the proportion here fixed; because it was at first agreed that the greatest colony should not have more than seven members, nor the least less than two; and the setting these proportions between these two extremes was not nicely attended to, as it would find itself, after the first election, from the sums brought into the treasury, as by a subsequent article.

PLACE OF FIRST MEETING

—who shall meet for the first time at the city of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania, being called by the President-General as soon as conveniently may be after his appointment.

Philadelphia was named as being nearer the centre of the colonies, where the commissioners would be well and cheaply accommodated. The high roads through the whole extent, are for the most part very good, in which forty or fifty miles a day may very well be, and frequently are, travelled. Great part of the way may likewise be gone by water. In summer time the passages are frequently performed in a week from Charleston to Philadelphia and New York; and from Rhode Island to New York, through the Sound, in two or three days; and from New York to Philadelphia, by water and land, in two days, by stage, boats, and wheel carriages that set out every other day. The journey from Charleston to Philadelphia may likewise be facilitated by boats running up Chesapeake Bay three hundred miles. But if the whole journey be performed on horseback, the most distant members, viz., the two from New Hampshire and from South Carolina, may probably render themselves at Philadelphia in fifteen to twenty days; the majority may be there in much less time.

NEW ELECTION

That there shall be a new election of the members of the Grand Council every three years; and on the death or resignation of any member, his place should be supplied by a new choice at the next sitting of the Assembly of the colony he represented.

Some colonies have annual assemblies, some continue during a governor's pleasure; three years was thought a reasonable medium, as affording a new member time to improve himself in the business, and to act after such improvement, and yet giving opportunities, frequently enough, to change him if he has misbehaved.

PROPORTION OF MEMBERS AFTER THE FIRST THREE YEARS

That after the first three years, when the proportion of money arising out of each colony to the general treasury can be known, the number of members to be chosen for each colony shall from time to time, in all ensuing elections, be regulated by that proportion, yet so as that the number to be chosen by any one province be not more than seven, nor less than two.

By a subsequent article it is proposed that the General Council shall lay and levy such general duties as to them may appear most equal and least burthensome, &c. Suppose, for instance, they lay a small duty or excise on some commodity imported into or made in the colonies, and pretty generally and equally used in all of them, as rum, perhaps, or wine; the yearly produce of this duty or excise, if fairly collected, would be in some colonies greater, in others less, as the colonies are greater or smaller. When the collector's accounts are brought in, the proportions will appear; and from them it is proposed to regulate the proportion of representatives to be chosen at the next general election, within the limits, however, of seven and two. These numbers may therefore vary in the course of years, as the colonies may in the growth and increase of people. And thus the quota of tax from each colony would naturally vary with its circumstances, thereby preventing all disputes and dissatisfaction about the just proportions due from each; which might otherwise produce pernicious consequences, and destroy the harmony and good agreement that ought to subsist between the several parts of the Union.

MEETINGS OF THE GRAND COUNCIL, AND CALL

That the Grand Council shall meet once in every year, and oftener if occasion require, at such time and place as they shall adjourn to at the last preceding meeting, or as they