

Draft  
Abdica-  
tion

I cannot at the most serious, as well as most painful moment of My Life, go out of this Great Assembly, without communicating to You My Intentions, not asking Your Advice.

The first time I appeared as Your Sovereign in this place now above twenty two Years, I had the pleasing hope that being born among You, I might have proved the happy Instrument of conciliating all Parties and thus collecting to the service of the State the most respectable and most able Persons this Kingdom produced. Of this object I have never lost sight, though sad experience now teaches Me that selfish Views ~~are so~~ prevalent that they have smothered the spirit of public Virtues, attachment to the Country, which ought to warm the breast of every Individual who enjoys the advantages of this excellent Constitution, and the want of which sentiment has prevented that unanimity which must have rendered Britain invulnerable though attacked by the most Powerful Combinations.

My own Inclination to alleviate the Distresses of my People, added to the Change of sentiments of one branch of the Legislature which rendered the real object of the War impracticable, made Me undertake

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the arduous task of obtaining the Blessings of Peace,  
rendered indeed more difficult by the Resolutions above  
alluded to. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge the  
candour with which the Courts of France and Spain  
have conducted themselves during the Negotiation  
of the Preliminary Articles, which greatly accelerated  
this desirable Work.

Circumstances have since arisen that might  
make those Courts more doubtful of the stability of  
the Councils of this Country, in forming the Definitive  
Treaties. I have therefore again attempted to collect  
the most efficient Men of all Parties <sup>who</sup> that under  
My Inspection <sup>might with dispatch and confidence</sup> the completion of Peace might be  
speedily and effectually concluded. But this  
Patriotic attempt has proved unsuccessful by the  
obstinaey of a powerful party that has long publicly  
manifested a resolution not to aid in the service  
of <sup>the Empire, unless the whole exclusive management</sup> this Country; but if employed to raise the  
exclusive management of this Country, and who  
of Affairs is thrown <sup>entirely</sup> into its hands, <sup>and</sup> <sup>some</sup> <sup>which</sup> it has not  
has on again declined any assistance but a greater  
on this Occasion <sup>departs</sup>, at the same time  
to its own ambitious views. And the want of  
Zeal prevents others from standing forth at this  
critical conjuncture; <sup>My obedience to the Oath I took at</sup> to become the tool of a Party  
neither My Duty to the Nation I hold among You  
my Commission prevents my exceeding the powers vested in  
me, or submitting to be a Cypher in the transaction



of any self created bond,

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nor to my own Character will permit

I must therefore to end a conflict which certainly puts a stop to every wheel of Government make a final Decision, and that I think myself compelled to do in this Assembly of the whole Legislature.

A long Experience and a serious attention to the strange Events that have successively arisen, has gradually prepared My mind to expect the time when I should be no longer of Utility to this Empire, that hour is now come, I am therefore resolved to resign My Crown and all the Dominions appertaining to it to the Prince of Wales my Eldest Son and Lawful Successor and to retire to the care of My Electoral Dominions the Original Patrimony of my Ancestors. For which purpose I shall draw up and sign an Instrument to which I shall affix my Private Seal. I trust this Personal Sacrifice will awaken the various parties to a sense of their Duty and that they will join in the support and Assistance of the Young Successor.

You may depend on my arduous attention to Educate My ~~other~~ Children in the Paths of Religion, Virtue and every other good Principle that may render them

if



if ever called in any Line, to the Service of Great Britain,  
not unworthy of the kindness they may hereafter meet with  
from a People whom collectively I shall ever Love.

May that All Wise Providence who can direct  
the inmost thoughts as well as Actions of Men  
give My Son and Successor not only every assistance  
in guiding his Conduct, but restore that sense of  
Religious and Moral Duties in this Kingdom  
to the want of which every Evil that has arisen  
owes its source; and may I to the latest hour  
of my Life, though now resolved forever to  
quit this Island, have the Comfort of hearing  
that the Endeavours of My Son, though they  
cannot be more sincere than Mine have  
been for the Prosperity of Great Britain, may  
be Crowned with better Success.

1702

James Oglethorpe  
1702