H. M.
Memo.
Feb. 11
1766

The late variety of opinions that have been reported to be mine on the Stamp Act, makes it very eligible that I should whilst fresh in my memory put it on paper the whole of my conduct during this very arduous transaction.

From the first conversations on the best mode of restoring order & obedience in the American Colonys, I thought the modifying the Stamp Act, the wisest & most efficacious manner of proceeding; 1st because any part remaining sufficiently ascertained the Right of the Mother Country to tax its Colony, next that it would shew a desire to redress any just grievances; but if the unhappy Factions that divide this Country would not permit this in my opinion equitable plan to be followed I thought Repealing infinitely more eligible than Enforcing, which could only tend to wider the breach between this Country & America; my language to all ever continued pointing out my wish of Modification; on Friday 6th of February D Rockingham said to me that now the two parties meant to push for Repeal, or Enforce, I immediately answered in that case I was for the

former; he asked my permission to say so; which I freely gave; on Monday 9th of February; I saw Ld Strange & opened to him my opinion to the following effect; that Modification was my constant but if the different parties were to wish to come into that; I clearly declared for Repeal, instead of Enforcing; He said he agreed in both cases with me; but said it was currently reported that in all cases I was for the Repeal; I therefore authorized him to declare to whoever declared that to be my idea, the very words I now acquainted him with; On Tuesday 10th Ld Rockingham came to express his sorrow that he stood accused of having falsely stated my opinion; but on discussing it over, I found Ld Strange had most correctly reported what I had said, nay that he had assured Ld Rockingham his name had never been made use of; yet this Ld Desired I would see Ld Strange, & tell him what had passed on the Friday; this I accordingly did on Wednesday 11th because I never would chuse to leave any man unjustly accused on my account;

Dr. Strange, & I agreed on Meeting entirely in our accounts; I stated to him what had passed on the Friday; He very exactly saw that my answer was calculated to the propositions then before the H. could not be with either truth or candour supposed to exclude my constant opinion of Modification which I had constantly before & since dwelt on;

Dr Rockingham had produced a note of mine on the Friday night, wherein He thought I shew'd a wish for the Repeal; but it must appear to whoever reads it with impartiality that what I saw on the Affair is merely a reflection arising from the great Majority that Day; I have therefore put up a copy of it with this, & also the note I gave Dr. Rockingham by way of memorandum of what passed on the Friday which entirely must exculpate my conduct in this unpleasant affair.

My opinion on the
most prudent method of
acting on the Stamp Act
is that repeal is in consequence
Gilmury. 1766