

My Lord

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Campbell Pamphlet,

to

The Earl of Bute

Feb^r 27. 1763.

Ever since the signature of the preliminary articles of Peace, my thoughts have been employ'd to Discover by what means our Acquisitions in this Country might be turn'd to the greatest National Advantage; and I am now going to have the honour of communicating my ideas, sure of that indulgence from your Lordship, that true Candour & generosity, & some little Consideration for me have always obtain'd — A Soldier offering his Opinion on Affairs relative to Commerce would be unpardonable if it was not known that he was no less military on that account; and if the same objects should be set in different lights by him, from what Pamphleteers may do, he flatters himself that all will not be attributed to his ignorance, & interested views. I can only assure your Lordship, that the authors, who should be supposed well inform'd, have to my certain knowledge, shewn, that in many particulars they know nothing of the matter.

It is unverbally known here, that old France even before she lost Canada or Cape Breton, or her usurped possession of the Neutral Islands, was not able to supply her Colonies with the necessaries of life, the Superfluities of Luxury or the very requisites to cultivate & Manufacture their produce, their Wants were however not perceived till the year 1727 when severe edicts were promulgated, against foreign Commerce; but their necessities were too urgent for the Inhabitants to be stop'd by Confiscations, Fines Dishonour or even the Gallies, from carrying on

Earl of Bute

2^d a contraband Trade, and most of the Chiefs who have
Commanded here, have wink'd at it, either from finding
their personal interest, or the necessity of making their
Governments subsist by it. — From these incidents
the foundation of the most extensive Trade of St^e
Ustacius was laid, and improv'd from the Circumstances
of ^{the} times to that height, as to have imported more Sugars
into Europe during the last 14 years thro a barren
Rock, than the most fertile Colony of all the Antilles
— It is of less consequence in times of peace, yet
still does a great deal of Business, tho ill situated
(at all times) from being a great way to Leeward of all
the French windward Islands, and of course the Traders
much exposed to their Guarda Costas in peace & our
Numerous Cruizers in war; Nevertheless the
French were obliged to run all these risks to
Supply their necessities

The loss of the neutral Islands where our
Merchants used to meet the French & traffick
with them, by their becoming subject to the British
Acts of Parliament must still support Ustacius
which supports the French Colonies, by depriving
us of the share of illiite trade we had by their
means; unless, we will establish a Free Port
under certain restrictions at Dominique; an
Island ^{situated} production only of Cotton, Coffee & Cacao
but situated within seven leagues of both Gua-
deloupe & Martinique, and still nearer to the
Saints & Marigalante which would favour an
illiite Trade with the former; this Island has
several good anchoring places whose different
aspects would favour Trade with the above mentio-
ned places. And there is Prince Ruperts Bay
^{for his Majesty's ships} to wood water or Carreen in, & to assemble

our Fleets with Safety and Convenience

The Establishment of a Free Port can only be obtained by Act of Parliament, as I apprehend it is contrary to those Acts of Trade which wisdom first dictated & experience since confirmed to be the Chief Support of the wealth & power of Great Britain. But with all deference to these Laws, they must be subject to change, or adapt new forms as the fluctuation of Commerce may make necessary. They have undoubtedly prescribed good Rules if well follow'd, to secure the Trade of all our Colonies to the Mother Country, but they have made no provision for a free Port, and such a thing is manifestly necessary at this time, not only to continue the Trade we are actually in possession of, but to extend it still farther.

The first good effects that may be expected from this Establishment, is the decay, if not the Desertion of St. Ustadius, for a Situation for Trade more favourable with equal National Advantages for it, in most Articles, & Superior ones in others, must certainly attract it to Dominique; That event would encrease the demand of home Manufactures even from our own Colonies, for it is in vain to deny, that they draw many Articles in an illicit manner from thence; And it will send the French to us if permitted, & compel them if restrain'd as formerly from all Communication with Foreigners, which in time of peace must procure us great Advantages & in war still greater. For, by allowing Dominique still to Traffic with the French in any subsequent War their whole produce will center with us, as with the Dutch; Individuals will be enrich'd & the Revenue augmented by the importation of all their produce into Europe. In short we shall reap the advantages of all their Islands without Conquering

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conquering them, and if we should have any such view
we have only to stop our hands at Dominique and
their necessities must throw them into the arms of the
first Invader. But conquests in these climates
without a determined resolution to annex to the
Crown, are both exceeding expensive of men & money
and hurtful to the National Interest.

If the French should be sensible of these Advan-
tages in War, & prohibit all communication with
us, they must expose their defenceless Trade to our
Craizers, or their Fleets to ours, if they should think
of protecting it; If S^t Uslatius should revive
in consequence of such a Resolution we are only
where we were; the most profitable use is made
in the mean time of our unfertile Island and Peace
must restore it to its former flourishing condition.

These are the principal reasons that have
occurred to a military Capacity for establishing a Free
Port at Dominique, and the following outlines might
be first drawn, leaving it to experience or Superior
knowledge to improve upon them.

1st
That goods of all sorts from any part of the
world might be imported duty free, provided they
come in British Bottoms: This is the General
Principle of a free port, and the restriction tends
to augment our Navigation.

2^d
The Vessels of all West India Colonies should have
free egress and regress to and from Dominique
provided that they purchase with money or pay
produce

produce for what they buy. In short tho it will be advantageous to us, if they only sell the commodities of their respective settlements, yet they should be encouraged, and if it will not hurt Trade, obliged to carry away goods or provisions in payment of what they brought or in part.

3^d

No communication must be permitted between Dominico & our other Islands or nothing but the common freights to go from thence to North America; To prevent any illegal importations into these Colonies which might lessen the demand of home Manufactures - but the other Islands having more goods upon hand than they can sell, may import them into Dominico, and their Vessels go away in Ballast, or with provisions unless shipping should be wanting when they might load any of the enumerated Commodities under the usual restrictions

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All exportations of West India produce for Europe obtain'd by this new kind of Trade, shall pay such a duty as may be necessary, with a proportionable tax upon the Planters of the Island to defray the extraordinary pay of all contingencies attending the Garrison & keeping up the Fortifications - It shall be received in Europe as British property under the usual Limitations & on paying the same duties - 5th

A most rigorous prohibition should be published against North American vessels -

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trafficking directly with the French Islands. But they should be encouraged as much as possible to bring their usual Cargos to Dominica, which will attract commerce there, & fix the dependence of the French Islands upon that Free Port for Subsistence &c. &c.

For the Government & Military Governor seems necessary in so exposed a Situation to chuse good Posts, secure them well & keep up a little Discipline and the use of Arms among the Inhabitants; He might have a Council of twelve of the principal Settlers to assist & advise him, and receive Appeals from the Inferior Jurisdictions of one Chief Judge & four Judges of Things French and as many of Common Pleas; a Court of Complaints might be establish'd to settle trifles to a limited Sum without Appeal. The Laws of Antigua or St. Kitts collected in one Volume might be adopted at first - and the Governor & Council propose such alterations to the board of Trade as may be afterwards found necessary - A Council of Trade (of which any of that of the Governor might be a Member) should be erected to attend to the Commercial Intrests of the Colony, the Governor to be president, & to judge in a Summary manner of all Disputes between British Subjects & foreigners according to the strictest rules of equity & Justice. The Militia of each Parish being form'd into a Company their Captain should be the Justice of Peace & Representative when necessary to

regulate the ways & means of raising upon the Colony the money necessary to defray its contingent expenses

The Advantage that would most particularly accrue to Great Britain from the execution of this plan would be the continuance of our African Trade, in the very extensive manner we now enjoy it. If the French should renew their connections on the Coast of Africa, which they seem to intimate by their Nesti-
tation of Goré we can nevertheless undersell them near ten per cent; The current price of New Negroes before the Reduction of these Islands was from 16 to 1800 liure viz from £80 to £90 of our Currency it is now at £60 or £65 and may be well afforded at £40 & £45: Slaves purchased with trifles of our own Manufactures, sold to our Neigh-
bours for their produce, for ready money will soon be gone, and that imported into Great Britain, and paying duty there cannot but be a considerable Object to a Commercial & indebted Nation.

India goods in general we can sell cheaper than the French and as good, by 20 per cent, a no small encouragement of our East India Company.

Printed Linneens and Cottons of fine particu-
larly we can afford at an easier rate than either French or Dutch. The former have but lately introduced that manufacture & the latter ^{Spain} make only such coarse Cloathes as are not good enough for the fair Creolles, or even their Servants who imitate their Mistresses.

Naval Stores & Sail Cloath we can undersell

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the French in. They are generally supply'd with the latter from the Dutch, but their Trade being abolish'd here that article may be also profitable to us —

Provisions from Ireland form the last tho not the least article from Europe, and a prohibition to sell that ^{them} to foreigners would cramp their Trade in general, augment our Navigation by making us always the carriers, enrich us by being the Venders, & in this instance cement the above plan in the most solid manner —

The loss of Canada & Cape Briton with a limited Fishery must only augment the wants of the French Islands formerly ill supplied, & oblige them now to have recourse to North America for Horses, Rice & Lumber of all kinds, provisions & Salt Fish articles which encourage our Northern Colonies, enable them to pay for what they receive from Europe & which the French can not possibly dispence with.

To judge of the demand there may be for Salt beef & Fish, it is only necessary to premise a thing which should make every English West India Planter blush, viz: that the Code Noir absolutely prohibits the allowing ground, and one day of the week for their Slaves to maintain themselves by, and obliges the master to furnish each working Negroe with seven pounds weight & half of Manioc (Cassada) with two pounds of Salt beef or three pounds of Fish per week, and to the old & Children in proportion —

The Demand for Salt fish in Guadeloupe alone, and for the Slaves, at a most ^{only} moderate

moderate computation will amount to eighty three thousand two hundred quintals, and if they should serve Beef to a third less in weight. It is not unworthy remark that we generally speaking could undersel the French in these Islands about 30 per cent in Salt Fish.

All these Articles for Trade bought at the Cheapest & first hand or produced by our own industry, put on Shore at Dominica, within a few hours Sail of two powerful Colonies in want of every thing cannot fail to attract Trade. If a free Communication is allowed with foreigners, where can the Martiniquois & Guadeloupians furnish themselves so cheap and commodiously, and if it is prohibited is not the situation very favourable and the Advantages sufficient to induce them to continue the practise of Smuggling?

The Political Views of this proposal are chiefly to distress the French Trade, and render their Colonies dependent upon ours; but from thence Armaments might be made with a prospect of Advantage, for the Spanish Main, tho it must be Acknowledged Guarassou is much better situated to supply their wants to Windward; and going further to Leeward might interfere with the Jamaicans & therefore not to be proposed.

However something might be done in the dry goods & Checks, and we may receive payment in Cocoa from the Coast of Caracas - Such a plan of Trade was begun before the War broke out from Guadeloupe; The Spaniards brought Cocoa & Casia Fistula, Mules & live Stock & carried off by order half value of their Cargoe in British Manufactures. -

In Trade, as in other things, Discoveries

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and improvements are always made, so that I doubt not but even Dominico will become more Considerable than it was at first imagined; Time will shew that. If this Plan should have sufficient Solidity to merit your Lordships protection?

I beg leave to assure your Lordship that I have no interest in the proposal or views for myself. Peace made and Guadeloupe restored to France, I have but one favour to ask upon my return which is, that I may not be obliged to join my Regiment again as Lieutenant Colonel and return to the Drill. A little repose would seem necessary after about 22 years constant attendance upon my Duty and I could earnestly wish it to be so. But after embracing my family & settling my affairs, I shall be immediately ready to execute His Majestys Commands.

I beg pardon for troubling your Lordship with my projects, and leave to assure you, that I have the Honour to be with the utmost respect and Esteem

My Lord

Guadeloupe Feby 27 1763

Your Lordships
most obliged & obedient

Humble Servant

Camp^d Dalrymple