
... The Gentlemen added, That we were more concern’d to continue the War till France was effectually reduc’d, than any of the other Allies, upon the following Considerations: I. The Affront which the French King had put upon the late King William, her present Majesty, and the whole British Nation, by owning the Pretender to be King of Great Britain and Ireland. This you know, continu’d the Gentlemen, is our own peculiar Case, wherein we are more immediately concern’d; and 'tis of the utmost consequence to us, since it endangers the utter Extirpation of our Religion and Liberty. Therefore give us leave to tell you, that your Party, by falling in with the French Plan of Peace, which leaves the House of Bourbon in possession of Spain and the West-Indies, have discover’d themselves to be as much Enemies to our Religion and Liberty, as the French and Spaniards.

I reply’d, that these were very uncharitable Suggestions, since care was taken by the Treaty to secure the Protestant Succession. They answer’d, That every one now was able to discover the Weakness of that Subterfuge, since the Pretender’s Friends were the most forward of any for the Peace, and conceiv’d the greatest Hopes from it, as indeed they had reafon; for if the House of Bourbon was left in such a State of Power, as was propos’d by the Treaty, it would be impossible for us to defend the Protestant Succession against the united Force of France and Spain abroad, and the Pretender’s Faction at home, which increase every day in Number as well as in Boldness, by the Encouragement they receiv’d from our Party. This, said they, you cannot deny, since you have not only broke with the Allies in general, who were engag’d by Interest to defend our Succession, but particularly with the Dutch, who by the Barrier-Treaty were more immediately concern’d to be Guaranties of it. We need not tell you, continu’d they, that your Party has rejected all Guarantees for the Peace in general, as well as for the Succession, and that they have likewise violated the Treaty of Union, which was the strongest Domestick Security we had for it. These things have been too lately transacted to be forgotten, and amount to a Demonstration, that however such honest Men as your self may be deluded by Pretences to the contrary, the Leaders of your Party are Enemies to the Hannover Family. Of this you can’t desire a plainer Instance than is given you by the Author of the *Conduct of the Allies,* who pleaded for the Necessity of altering that Succession; and instead of meeting with such a Rebuke as his Proposition deserve’d, his Book is hugg’d by all your Party.

I was at a loss what to reply, and would fain have shifted the Subject, but they would not let me; and insisted further, that the Eagerness of our Party for a War with the Dutch, and the repeated Advices we had from France of the Pretender’s being about to turn Protestant, in order to make him capable of the British Crown, were further Proofs of it.

Here I thought I had a Loop-hole to escape, and told’em I knew no body who writ more for a War against the Dutch than Daniel Foe, one of their own Party. This they entertain’d with a Scoff, and answer’d, It was evident that since the Change of the Ministry, that Scribler had chang’d his Conduct, and was visibly retain’d on our side; adding, that he was always a mercenary Tool, that they could prove he had taken Money on both sides, and that the Whigs did now universally disown him as much as
they did Ferguson and other infamous Tools, who were always the Disgrace of the Whig-Party, tho now some of the brightest Ornaments of ours. I was glad however, that I had diverted 'em from the Subject, and told them that by King Charles’s Succession to the Empire the State of the Case was alter’d; and that we were oblig’d to change our Measures in order to preserve the Ballance of Power in Europe, which would be as much in danger by the Exorbitant Power of the House of Austria, as ever it had been in by the House of Bourbon. They reply’d, That this was the very Argument urg’d by De Foe, which had been answer’d a hundred times without a possibility of Reply. Therefore they would insist no further upon it, but refer’d me to the foregoing Quotation from Dr. Davenant, who, they told me, was an Author of a great deal more weight than our new Convert Daniel. I ask’d them, whether they cou’d deny what I had said before, That our Interest had constantly been neglected by our Confederates in all former Treaties, and that therefore we had reason to take care of our selves in a new one. They reply’d. That my Assertion was wrong in point of Fact, for our Interest had been taken care of in former Treaties, and much more effectually than by any thing that yet appear’d in the present Treaty. To prove this, they quoted the sixth Article of the second Grand Alliance, by which it was stipulated, “That for the Benefit and Enlargement of the Navigation and Commerce of us and the Dutch, it should be lawful by common Advice for us to seize what Lands and Cities we could belonging to the Spanish Dominions in the Indies, and to retain what we should so take as our own.” This, said they, was a mighty Concession by the House of Austria, and laid a surer Foundation for the Enlargement of our Commerce than any thing granted us by the present Treaty with France: for you cannot be ignorant, continu’d they, that there is not one word of your South-Sea Trade in the French Proposals which her Majesty has communicated to the Parliament; but on the contrary, our Trade with Spain and the West-Indies seems to be restricted to the same Terms we enjoy’d it in the Reign of K. Charles II. of Spain; which comes very far short of the Sixth Article of the Second Grand Alliance above mention’d, which was stipulated on purpose to take off those Restrictions: for in that Reign we had no liberty to trade, to the Spanish West-Indies, and those who followed it by stealth did it at the hazard of their Men, Ships, and Cargoes being made Prize.

To this I reply’d. That they took no notice of the Assiento granted us by the present Treaty, and likewise that we are to have all the Advantages, Rights or Privileges, which have been or may be granted by Spain to any other Nation. They reply’d, The Assiento was nothing so considerable as our Party gave it out to be; for according to the best Computation, the Profit of that would not much exceed £20000 per annum and they believ’d 't'wou’d be found upon Inquiry, that our African Company and others that dealt in the Slave-Trade by way of Jamaica, did gain annually more than that. And as to our having the same Privileges that other Nations have or shall have with respect to the West-India Trade, they thought it so mean, that it was a direct Affront to propose it; for since we had distinguish’d our selves more than any other Nation in favour of the House of Bourbon, 'twas very ungrateful for them to put us upon a level with other Nations with respect to the advantageous Trade to the West-Indies.

I then insisted upon their granting us Gibraltar, the Island of Minorca, St. Christopher’s, Hudson’s Bay and Straits, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia. They answer’d, That as to those Places in North America they were our own before, and claimed as such by King William in his Declaration of War; so that we were not
oblig’d to the French for restoring us our own, when they were not in a condition to keep it longer: and that the Cession of those Places ought not only to have been insisted upon, but we should also have had Reparation for Damages; and the French, for the Security of our Plantations in that part of the World, shou’d have been oblig’d to surrender their Settlements on Mississippi River, &c. Then as to Gibraltar and Port-Mahon, they told me, that Spain and France being united in Interest, it would be in their power when they pleas’d, either to make those Settlements a Burden instead of a Profit to us by the Expence of Garisons and Convoys, or to take them from us, in order to engross the Trade of the Mediterranean, which France has so long aim’d at, and has so many superior Advantages by her Situation to pursue …