

possessions furnish a constant temptation. They cannot be sure that a virtuous prince will always fill the throne, and should a wicked or careless king concur with a wicked ministry in extracting the treasure and strength of your country, it is impossible to conceive to what variety and to what extremes of wretchedness you may under the present establishment be reduced."

It is worth noting, this reference to "*a virtuous king*." Was it one of the last efforts of expiring royalty, or really a refined irony? In another year the Congress spoke of George III. in language altogether unequivocal.

"We are informed (continues the address) that you have been already called upon to waste your lives in a contest with us. Should you by complying in this instance assent to your new establishment, and a war break out with France, your wealth and your sons may be sent to perish in expeditions against their islands in the West Indies. It cannot be presumed that these considerations have no weight with you, or that you are so lost to all sense of honour. We can never believe that the present race of Canadians are so degenerate as to possess neither the spirit, the gallantry, nor the courage of their ancestors. You certainly will not permit the infamy and disgrace of such pusillanimity to rest on your own heads, and the consequences of it on your children forever?

"We, for our parts, are determined to live free or not at all, and are resolved that posterity shall never reproach us with having brought slaves into the world.

"Permit us again to repeat that we are your friends, not your enemies, and be not imposed upon by those who may endeavour to create animosities. The taking of the fort and military stores at Ticonderoga and Crown Point, and the armed vessels on the lake, was dictated by the great law of self preservation. They were intended to annoy us and to cut off that friendly intercourse which has hitherto subsisted between you and us. We hope it has given you no uneasiness, and you may rely upon our assurance that the colonies will pursue no measures whatever but such as friendship and a regard for our mutual safety and interest may suggest.

"As our concern for your welfare entitles us to your friendship, we presume you will not by doing us injury reduce us to the disagreeable necessity of treating you as enemies.

"We yet entertain hopes of your uniting with us in the defense of our common liberty, and there is yet reason to believe that should we join in imploring the attention of our sovereign to the unmerited and unparalleled oppression of American subjects, he will at length be undeceived, and forbid a licentious ministry any longer to riot in the ruins of the rights of mankind."