5.5 A Loyalist Viewpoint, 1776

Charles Inglis

Thomas Paine's eloquent and inflammatory pamphlet *Common Sense*, published in January 1776, became an overnight best-seller. It sold 20,000 copies within a few months and raised the level of political rhetoric to new heights. But the Loyalist cause, too, had effective pamphleteers, and, like the advocates of rebellion, Loyalist writers employed both logic and emotionalism in their arguments. In this tract, written in direct response to *Common Sense*, an Anglican clergyman named Charles Inglis set forth the advantages of a quick reconciliation between the colonies and Great Britain.

Consider:

1. *To what degree Inglis used logic and emotionalism in his arguments;*
2. *Whether Inglis based his appeal on humanitarian grounds, and whether humanitarian appeals are an effective way to win converts to a cause;*
3. *The kinds of arguments that could be developed to counter Inglis's position.*

CHARLES INGLIS:

The True Interest of America

I THINK IT NO DIFFICULT MATTER to point out many advantages which will certainly attend our reconciliation and connection with Great Britain. . . .

By a reconciliation with Britain, a period would be put to the present calamitous war, by which so many lives have been lost, and so many more must be lost if it continues. . . .

By a reconciliation with Great Britain, peace—that fairest offspring and gift of heaven—will be restored. In one respect peace is like health—we do not sufficiently know its value but by its absence. . . .

Agriculture, commerce, and industry would resume their wonted vigor. . . .

SOURCE: Charles Inglis, "The True Interest of America," in The Annals of America, II: 1755–1783, Resistance and Revolution (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1968), 403–04, 406.

By a connection with Great Britain, our trade would still have the protection of the greatest naval power in the world. . . . Past experience shows that Britain is able to defend our commerce and our coasts; and we have no reason to doubt of her being able to do so for the future.

The protection of our trade, while connected with Britain, will not cost us a *fiftieth* part of what it must cost were we ourselves to raise a naval force sufficient for the purpose.

While connected with Great Britain, we have a bounty on almost every article of exportation; and we may be better supplied with goods by her than we could elsewhere. . . . The manufactures of Great Britain confessedly surpass any in the world, particularly those in every kind of metal, which we want most; and no country can afford linens and woolens of equal quality cheaper. . . .

These advantages are not imaginary but real. . . .

The Americans are properly Britons. They have the manners, habits, and ideas of Britons; and have been accustomed to a similar form of government. But Britons never could bear the extremes, either of monarchy or republicanism. Some of their kings have aimed at despotism, but always failed. Repeated efforts have been made toward democracy, and they equally failed. Once, indeed, republicanism triumphed over the constitution; the despotism of one person ensued; both were finally expelled. The inhabitants of Great Britain were quite anxious for the restoration of royalty in 1660, as they were for its expulsion in 1642, and for some succeeding years. If we may judge of future events by past transactions, in similar circumstances, this would most probably be the case of America were a republican form of government adopted in our present ferment. . . .

However distant humanity may wish the period, yet, in the rotation of human affairs, a period may arrive when (both countries being prepared for it) some terrible disaster, some dreadful convulsion in Great Britain may transfer the seat of empire to this Western Hemisphere—where the British constitution, like the Phoenix from its parent's ashes, shall rise with youthful vigor and shine with redoubled splendor.

But if America should now mistake her real interest . . . they will infallibly destroy this smiling prospect. They will dismember this happy country, make it a scene of blood and slaughter, and entail wretchedness and misery on millions yet unborn.