

Edmund burke: french revolution

[History](#), [French Revolution](#)



Edmund Burke demonstrates in his Conciliation speech that he is a well versed orator. He appears to be quite the moralist, as well as maintaining an air of arrogance at times. My initial thought is that he is a staunch supporter of the Colonists. As I continued to review his speech, I began to think he may just be attempting to dissuade any effort of war by the Colonists, seeking greater revenue for England. Burke seems to be playing to the honorable egos of the House of Commons as he states, "... ennoble the flights of the highest genius, and obtain pardon for the efforts of the meanest understanding. This is surely an attempt to gain favor by putting at the forefront of thought to the men who passed the various Acts, they are able to recant while maintaining some sort of personal honor and dignity. By using himself and his thoughts as an example of the difficulty of the idea, he brings forth the question of how intelligent men of the time can reject reason. Interesting though is Burke's proposition of peace. As I understand it, he is simply proposing peace in the truest sense. No conditions, no complications, based simply on each man's own understanding of peace. Burke's proposal of offering peace, removing any types or forms of conflict, the Colonies will once again gain trust in the Crown. He claims that trust through peace, removing any hindrance, loyalty to the British government can be recovered. Interesting enough, Burke states, " Let the Colonists always keep the idea of civil rights associated with your government ..." The use of the word idea and its meaning must be correct, as Burke is very intelligent and careful with his words. This is an attempt to gain approval by speaking to the egos of the members of Parliament.

If the Colonists believe their civil rights are being honored, regardless if it is true or not, allegiance to the crown will remain solid. Liberty and freedom are the rights the Colonists want. If the Colonists believe England is providing liberty, the colonies will be freely bound to England forever. Burke implores that for the Colonists to have the freedom, Parliament must give up its interest. With this revenue will freely return to England. This must have been quite an ironic thought for the members of the House of Commons, surrender to win.

Surely Burke was right. Prior to the Act of Navigation, the colonies considered themselves British subjects and freely traded with the Mother Country. With the implementation of The Act, England reverted from a parent-child, superior-subordinate relationship to that of master and slave. The Colonists immigrated to America for a new found freedom, not to be bound by England. As English subjects, Colonists only wanted to be treated as equals to the country men in the Motherland, participating in freedom.

Burke shows great insight when he states that papers, notices, clauses do not make the government. It is a feeling of communal participation that provides life and vitality to men. When Burke states, “ It is the spirit of the English Constitution which, infused through the mighty mass, pervades, feeds, unites, invigorates, vivifies every part of the Empire, even down to the minutest member,” he demonstrates a basic understanding of human need. The need to feel dignity, to feel alive, to feel esteem, and most of all to feel free.

As Burke ends his conciliation speech it seems as if he changes course and begins to speak to the arrogance of the Parliament members. Surely none of the members of the House would like to think of themselves as arrogant and pompous. Decisions based upon arrogance and ego would cause failure. They represent the people, humbly of course. He informs that his idea of conciliation would only seem chimerical to those “ far from being qualified,” to be in charge of an empire such as England. None of the Lords of the House would like to think of themselves as non-qualified for the positions.

A higher calling is needed. Not the idea within the minds of men, the elevated minds of men as called on by providence. Burke is bringing religion into the thought process, as men of the church would make a morally right decision. It is difficult to fully understand the personality and temperament of Edmund Burke reading his speech on Conciliation of America. Burke presents himself in a myriad of different personas. He is humble, yet arrogant. He seems to be looking out for the best interests of the Colonists from a moral standpoint.

Although, while reading, it appears that he also is looking out for the best interests of England. Especially towards the end of his speech when he states, “ Let us get an American revenue as we have got an American empire. ” This tends to make the reader think that he may have been looking out for the interests only of England, his ideas the most feasible way to reach the end result. Regardless of the motive, if the ideas of Edmund Burke were implemented the course of history would certainly have been different.