Latter Day Tories Suggest U.S. and England Reunite: Passion for Pranks 'Dismay and Distress'
By JAMES T. WOOTEN Special to The New York Times
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PHILADELPHIA, July 19—When readers of The Pennsylvania Gazette, the University of Pennsylvania's monthly magazine for alumni, turned to the back cover of the latest issue, they got quite a surprise.

There, in black and white, was a full page of prose calling for an immediate reunion of the United States with England and concluding with a hearty "God Save The Queen!"

As at Lexington and Concord, the response was quick and clamorous.

"Treason!" cried one caller to the magazine's offices here, on the staid, old Ivy League campus.

"Cancel my subscription!" shouted another, who reminded the editors that Benjamin Franklin had helped to found the school.

"Just what is going on?" wrote an irate member of the John Birch Society.

Passion for Pranks

Meanwhile, in Richmond, two young men with a lifelong passion for pranks were thoroughly enjoying the fruits of their latest one.

"We were bored by the Bicentennial," John N. Ambrose said after confessing that he and David A. Gambill were the only members of something called "The Committee for Reunion with England," a nonprofit organization devoted to a complete revision of 18th-century history.

The whole Bicentennial celebration was so—so vainglorious," Mr. Ambrose, a 23-year-old graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and an advertising assistant, continued. "We decided to pop a few balloons".

So, pins in hand and tongues placed firmly in cheeks, he and Mr. Gambill, 24, a bank employe and graduate of the University of Virginia, became latter-day Tories. They created the "committee," wrote the back-cover advertisement setting forth its supposed principles, rented a post office box in Richmond and sat back to wait for the fun.

'Dismay and Distress'

Now, they're getting letters of support and money—from "closet loyalists," Mr. Ambrose said—to press their pursuit. They are getting some not-so-favorable responses, as well.

"As we approach the 200th anniversary of America's independence, we look with dismay and distress upon the many problems facing our country," Mr. Ambrose and Mr. Gambill say in their manifesto in The Gazette.

"The list is long and growing longer. We stop and ask why? What is the cause?"

With hardly a pause, the answer is provided:

"These innumerable crises are nothing less than the inevitable festering of a grievous mistake made 200 years ago: the American Revolution."

"Messrs. Gambill & Ambrose," as they signed the ad, argue that since slavery was abolished in the British Empire in 1807, there would have been no Civil War here, no Reconstruction and no Ku Klux Klan.

Moreover, without the American Revolution as a model, there would have been no French, Russian or Chinese Communists revolutions, they say. So they reason that Thomas Jefferson is to blame for Karl Marx and Mao Tse-tung.

"The real heros of that period were the American loyalists," they continue, "the Tories who could see what terrible things the Revolution would cause."

They propose, therefore, that all Tories be given back all confiscated land and property—with interest—and that the United States immediately petition Queen Elizabeth II and Parliament for forgiveness.

"Like the prodigal son, we will be welcomed back joyously," they predict. "Mother England is kind and just. If we apologize now and promise not to rebel any more, she will go easy on us."

As for the rebels and present American leaders, "there should be no fear that President Ford, the members of Congress or the Supreme Court will be sent to prison," the manifesto says.

But "there cannot be unconditional amnesty," it adds. "They have made mistakes and must pay a penalty," it says. "Perhaps a period of alternative service in the Bengal Lancers."

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