

tion of those in Congress, who feared that his revelations jeopardized the alliance with France, as well as of those who considered Paine entirely too radical and believed he should never have been appointed in the first place. Gouverneur Morris, archconservative, told Congress that it was unseemly that the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs should be held by "a mere adventurer *from England*, without fortune, without family or connexions, ignorant even of grammar."

Paine's resignation did not end the controversy over Silas Deane. For many months articles on the subject appeared daily in the Philadelphia press. Most of them were printed over pseudonyms, but it is known that Paine, Arthur Lee, Richard Henry Lee, and Timothy Matlock penned those denouncing Deane, while Deane, Robert Morris, Matthew Clarkson, William Duer, and Gouverneur Morris spoke for the opposition. As the war of words continued other issues emerged, though in many ways they were related to the general question at issue. Paine had entered the controversy over Deane not merely because he wished to save Congress money, but also because he felt that the type of profiteering disclosed by Deane's conduct was too general in the country and endangered the revolutionary cause. He developed this theme in articles to the press after his resignation, pointing particularly to Robert Morris whose firm held important public contracts while he was conducting congressional business, and who was associated with Silas Deane in personal as well as governmental transactions.<sup>5</sup> Paine publicly attacked Morris for his business associations with Deane, suggested that the State legislatures investigate such activities by all former and present delegates to Congress, and expressed the hope that the Pennsylvania legislature would take the lead.

It is clear, therefore, that what started out as a debate over the role of an American Commissioner to France had become a struggle between radicals and conservatives in Pennsylvania. Here the wealthy merchants and professional aristocrats had been organizing since early in 1777 to overthrow the democratic State Constitution which committed the cardinal sin of allowing the common people according to their number a voice in their government. But the friends of the Constitution—mechanics and small farmers—also were organized to defend their charter

<sup>5</sup> On one occasion Morris wrote to Deane, then in France: "It seems to me that the present oppert'y of improving our fortunes ought not to be lost, especially as the very means of doing it will contribute to the service of our country at the same time." See Thomas P. Abernathy, "Commercial Activities of Silas Deane in France," *American Historical Review*, vol. XXXIX, pp. 477-485.