

of the soldiery that it begins at length to be worn out, and we see in every line of the army the most serious features of mutiny and sedition." Paine did not forget this appeal after he finished reading. Leaving the assembly hall he drew out one thousand dollars due him on salary, sent five hundred dollars to Blair McClenaghan, a prominent merchant, and included a plea for the men of wealth to rally to aid the cause. "I feel the utmost concern," Paine wrote, "that the fairest cause that men ever engaged in, and with the fairest prospect of success should now be sunk so low, and that not from any new ability in the enemy but from a wilful neglect and decay of every species of public spirit in ourselves." He went on to point out that much financial assistance could not be expected from the artisans and small farmers, since it was "now hard time with many poor people." It remained, therefore, for the wealthy to fill the gap, which they should rush to do for "as it is the rich that will suffer most by the ravages of an Enemy it is not only duty but true policy to do something spirited." He hoped his five hundred dollars—"and if that is not sufficient I will add 500 more"—would inaugurate a movement to rescue the cause in this dark hour. He was willing to bury all past political differences and cooperate with any patriotic society "no matter who may complete it."⁷ Acting upon Paine's suggestion, several wealthy merchants and bankers in Philadelphia, with Robert Morris at their head, started the Bank of Pennsylvania to supply the army with provisions.

Undoubtedly Paine's action in this crisis marked a change in his attitude toward men like Morris whom he had publicly denounced only a few months before. It does not, however, mark, as some writers have asserted, the beginning of a conservative trend in Paine's thinking. The simple fact is that the author of *Common Sense* had enough common sense to realize that the American Revolution could not be successful unless all classes willing to support the war were united, and he did not exclude men of wealth from this unity. Paine fully appreciated what Washington had meant when he wrote that everything had to give way to the primary task of winning the war—factional disputes, class antagonisms, even personal quarrels. "The present situation of our public affairs," the commander-in-chief once observed, "affords abundant causes of distress, we should be very careful how we aggravate or multiply them, by private bickerings. . . . All little differences and animosities, calculated to increase the unavoidable evils of the times, should be for-

⁷ Thomas Paine *Mss.*, New York Historical Society.