

Thomas Pryor both of the city of Philadelphia to be disposed of by them in any public service or private charity. After this I printed six thousand at my own expense and directed Mr. Bradford to sell them at the price of the printing and paper. It may, perhaps, be said, that as I had made a dangerous step, it was my interest to make it as little so as possible by promoting by every means, the success of the principle on which my own safety rested, but this would be an uncandid way of accounting for public spirit and conduct."¹⁰

Yet for all his public spirit and conduct he faced a desperate future. "I cannot help viewing my situation as singularly inconvenient," he frankly informed Congress. "Trade I do not understand. Land I have none, or what is equal to none. I have exiled myself from one country without making a home of another; and I cannot help sometimes asking myself, what am I better off than a refugee, and that of the most extraordinary kind, a refugee from the country I have obliged and served, to that which can owe me no good will."

Paine's enemies in Congress were still too powerful and the memorial was buried. Fortunately, two states came to his aid. Pennsylvania gave him £500 in cash, and New York presented him with a confiscated Loyalist farm at New Rochelle, the last grant being recommended because "his literary works, and those especially under the signature of *Common Sense*, and the *Crisis*, inspired the citizens of this state with unanimity, confirmed their confidence in the rectitude of their cause, and have ultimately contributed to the freedom, sovereignty, and independence of the United States." He remained on his farm and in the village of Bordentown, New Jersey until 1787, devoting most of his time to inventions such as an iron bridge without piers, and a smokeless candle. These were years when he could truly say, "the natural bent of my mind was to science."

Yet he could not remain entirely aloof from the political scene. Independence did not overnight usher in the era of national prosperity Paine had predicted in *Common Sense*. A few men, to be sure, made money through speculation and investments, but the mass of the small farmers and city mechanics found it difficult to make ends meet. The dumping of British goods on the American market caused a serious

¹⁰ "A Representation of the Services of Thomas Paine, 1783," *Mss.*, New York Historical Society. The entire memorial appears in the second volume of the present edition of Paine's writings.