

Our Man Hoppe

The Great
1776 Cover-Up

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THE NOTED Oxford scholar, E. G. Crumbleigh Crackers, is putting the finishing touches on an historical work of tremendous importance. He has tentatively entitled it: "King George III & The American Revolutionary Scandal."

The work completely exonerates the much-maligned George III from any culpability in the scandal whatsoever. In fact, he was never once told that the Revolution was going on.

Relying heavily on 18th century tape recordings recently discovered in the basement of Windsor Castle, as well as subsequent testimony by royal advisers before Lord Ervin's Inquiry Commission, The Hon. Mr. Crackers was able to reconstruct the whole unbelievable story.

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THE HEART of the matter, he concludes, was the heroic efforts of the royal advisers in keeping news of the Revolution from the King. They did so, they said, because the King found revolutions revolting and they feared he might lose his head.

Besides, they told the Ervin Commission, the King had "more important things to think about."

They were aided in their deception by the fact King George despised newspapers and read only the sports pages and social notes.

Even so, matters almost came to a head during a conference in the Oval Room at Windsor in November of 1781. Present were the King, his most trusted old friend, Duke Mitchell (better known as "The Iron Duke") and his two German cousins, the Princes Haldeman and Ehrlichman. A transcript of the tape follows:

The King: Sit down, gentlemen. I see by The Tattler that General Cornwallis is in Yorktown. What the devil is he doing over there?

Prince Haldeman: Oh, he's just attending a ceremony, Sire, at the pressing invitation of your loyal American subjects.

The King: Speak directly into the flower vase. It's getting hard of hearing. Ceremony, eh? These Americans and their parties. I seem to recall something about a tea party in Boston . . .

Duke Mitchell (hastily): It was just a third-rate tea party, Your Highness. I can assure you that no one in the Palace was involved.

The King: And what about this hill called Bunker? Something about "fire" and "whites of . . ."

Prince Ehrlichman: Eggs, Sire. And a lovely brunch it was, too. Can't make an omelet without breaking eggs, ha, ha.

The King: Another thing. I've noticed pages scurrying about carrying sacks of hundred-quid notes from my Royal Treasury . . .

Duke Mitchell: Oh, that's your humanitarian contribution to indigent prisoners and their families, none of whom we've ever heard of.

The King: Well, that's certainly nice of us. But tell me the truth: is there something going on I should know about?

Duke Mitchell (quickly): Yes, Sire. Your Windsor Redskins have a new bowler who can really zap the old pill and . . .

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THE REST of the tape deals with "sticky wickets," "batting centuries" and the other important things the King had to think about.

And while it's all fascinating, The Hon. Mr. Crackers doubts he will publish his work. "If the British people and particularly the Queen ever find out we've lost the American Colonies," he says, "there'll be jolly hell to pay."

"Besides," he adds, "we have more important things to think about."