Plumb views British attitudes

Liberal thinkers supported American patriots

By Anthony Pappas

In the late 1760's and early 1770's many liberal thinkers in Great Britain sympathized with the American colonies in their attempts to procure a greater degree of freedom from the British Crown. Yet their influence on future events was slight. In a lecture in the Kingsley Little Theater, Prof. J. H. Plumb, of Cambridge University, described the various factors which shaped British attitudes toward the American Revolution. Quoting widely from dozens and letters of the day, Prof. Plumb showed the close correspondences in thought between British radicals and colonial patriots. The belief that colonization was for the sake of liberty was particularly prevalent. This was coupled with a great distaste for King George III and his cabinet. Many radical commentators called the government a tyranny and expressed the wish that the American colonies could strike a blow for freedom by removing the imperial yoke.

Business Interests

Many of these radical thinkers were representatives of the industrial forces that were emerging in Great Britain, according to Prof. Plumb. As such, they wanted a social revolution in England which would change the structure of society. They regarded the contemporary political system, with its attendant corruption and patronage as an obstacle to business activity.

However, lacking any sort of organization or leadership, the pro-American forces proved to be impotent once the rebellion was transformed into a war. The British radicals could not reconcile their patriotism with support for the American cause.

Nature Xenophobia

Once hostilities commenced, Prof. Plumb stated, the natural xenophobia in both nations was emphasized.

In America, radical sentiment exploited national feeling and the resultant replacement of the conservative New England merchants and Southern planters. In England, however, the conservative element utilized the war to associate advocacy of liberal ideas with a lack of patriotism.

Prof. Plumb pointed out a curious fact in connection with the diversionary forces that were emerging in Great Britain, according to Prof. Plumb. As such, they wanted a social revolution in England which would change the structure of society. They regarded the contemporary political system, with its attendant corruption and patronage as an obstacle to business activity.

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Didi Perry of Chattanooga, Tennessee, is this week's Techmen. She is librarian at the circulation desk in Hayden Library. This five-foot-three southern blonde graduated from Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, Virginia. "It's a well known school," she says. "Everyone I've ever met from Harvard knows all about it, but MIT men have never heard of it."

What did Didi come to Boston for? "Adventure," she answered. A year and a half ago she decided she wanted to give the man who worked at MIT a chance. Didi Perry

Diedi likes working at MIT because she has a chance to meet all sorts of people. She enjoys the chance to meet many people.

"I'm one of the few people who thinks Boston is interesting," she says. "There are concerts, plays, and other events, and I just love the winter sports like skiing and ice skating."

We would like to thank all those Students, Faculty, Fraternities, and Campus Activities who helped with the Intercollegiate Conference this past week. Without your aid the Conference would not have been possible.

Thank you, The Intercollegiate Conference Committee