



MADAME PÉAN (ANGÉLIQUE DES MÉLOIZES), THE
INTENDANT'S "GODDESS"

—From *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec pour 1928-1929*,
opposite page 18, from painting in the possession of the Marquis des
Meloizes.



THE EPOCH OF THE BELLE RIVIERE*

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The government of French Canada had two heads: the Governor, who was the military commander and the titular chief of the government; and the Intendant, whose complex functions included justice, police, finances, procurement of supplies, and even the support of the Church. The Intendant was first councillor and presiding officer of the Conseil Supérieur, and the courts and court officers were under his jurisdiction. He was in complete control of all financial matters; payments, sales and expenditures could be made only on his order.

François Bigot, the Intendant of New France from 1748 to the fall of the colony, was a major figure, equal in importance to, if not greater than, any of the five men who functioned as governor during his term of office. His abilities were very great, but—unfortunately for New France—they were directed toward his own personal enrichment. He and his intimates made up a clique which gained huge profits at the expense of the government and of the Canadian people. In its later manifestations, this clique or “ring” became known as “La Grande Société,” for it operated as a huge trade monopoly, although it may never have been formally organized as a business.

The French expedition of 1753 to occupy the Ohio country was significant not only in the history of New France and of Pennsylvania, but also in the career of François Bigot. In a brilliant passage of his *François Bigot, Administrateur français*, Dr. Guy Frégault presents the background, course, and result of this campaign in a new light, relating it to Bigot's career, and demonstrating its effect upon Canada. It is therefore with great pleasure that we present this translation of an excerpt from Doctor Frégault's two-volume biography, published in Montreal in 1948 as one of Les Etudes de l'Institut d'Histoire de l'Amérique française.

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*Guy Frégault, *François Bigot, Administrateur français* (2 volumes, Montreal, 1948), Volume II, pages 57-72; with the kind permission of the author. Translated by Donald H. Kent.

ANGE, MARQUIS DUQUESNE, on July 30, 1751,¹ entered the capital of New France, which received him with the "ordinary ceremonies."² It would be too much to see in these official demonstrations an expression of the real feelings of the Canadians. They were expecting and hoping for the appointment of their compatriot, the Marquis de Vaudreuil,³ for ten years Governor of Louisiana. They experienced a profound deception.⁴ After the death of La Jonquière, Bigot was deep in conjecture; he, too, was thinking of a Canadian candidate. On May 4, he confided to Gradis, "If M. de Maurepas had remained in office, M. de Vaudreuil . . . would come here as general. I do not know if that has been changed. We are impatiently waiting for ships from France."⁵ About the same time, Rouillé forwarded to Duquesne his appointment as Governor and Lieutenant General, as well as his instructions.⁶ Seemingly, it was La Galissonnière, then in very good standing at court, who had inspired the minister in the choice of the new representative of His Majesty.⁷ This man did not lack prestige. Grand-nephew of Ruyter's famous rival,⁸ he bore with pride the heritage of the great sailor's glory. Tall, well-built, gallant with the ladies, arrogant with everyone, impressed with his own importance, he showed himself exacting, hard, and overbearing, and made it apparent that he was born to command.⁹ These inclinations quickly made him unpopular.¹⁰ Some extracts from his correspondence throw a singular light upon his character. "I have had much satisfaction," he wrote one day, "in seeing all the Indians who have

¹ Bigot to Rouillé, October 10, 1752, Public Archives of Canada [PAC], Archives des Colonies [AC], Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 139. By an error, the author of the "Mémoire du Canada" dates the arrival of Duquesne "in the month of August," *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec* [RAPQ] (1924-1925), 102.

² [Courville] *Mémoires sur le Canada, depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760* (Quebec, 1873), 29.

³ Pierre de Rigaud, Marquis de Vaudreuil-Cavagnal, was to be Duquesne's successor and the last French governor of Canada (1755-1760). D. H. K.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Bigot to Gradis, May 4, 1752, PAC, Letters of François Bigot, n. p.

⁶ By the same occasion, Duquesne received a grant of 15,000 livres and an advance of 27,000 livres on his salary, Rouillé to Duquesne, May 11, 1752 AC, Series B, Volume 95, p. 203.

⁷ La Pause, "Mémoire et réflexions politiques et militaires sur la guerre du Canada depuis 1746 jusqu'à 1760," RAPQ (1933-1934), 148.

⁸ *Annuaire de la noblesse de France*, Volume 19 (1862), 158.

⁹ [Courville] *Mémoires sur le Canada, depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760*, 29, 57-58; "Mémoire du Canada," RAPQ (1924-1925), 102-103.

¹⁰ Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada* (Quebec, 1889), 162.

come down this year tremble before me.”¹¹ He prided himself on having brought the colony “to a pitch of perfect obedience and of regularity in the service,” even while recognizing that he had succeeded “in fulfilling all these objects only as the effect of fear.”¹² The Canadians scoffed behind his back,¹³ and he knew it. In an otherwise completely polite letter to Madame Péan he thundered, “I had flattered myself, Madame, that I should rid the colony of the envious scoundrels of whom it is composed . . . ; but those pests have as many lives as a cat, and an ever-venomous pen; for there have come back to me some horrors produced by them, in the few letters I have received. It would be a treat for me to discover such authors in order to make an example of them.”¹⁴

In the beginning, the intendant had only praise for his colleague.¹⁵ This man would be no King Log; from the first days he set about putting everything in good order and reforming the weaknesses “which an excessive liberality,” in Bigot’s opinion, had encouraged in Canada.¹⁶ The high magistrate was very glad of it. In the spring he had gone to Montreal.¹⁷ Although he had provided for everything to make his stay there agreeable—he had brought along Péan and his wife—the misery which prevailed in this part of the country, plundered by his requisitions, and the claims with which the people consequently overwhelmed him, had annoyed him to the point that he had precipitated his return to Quebec.¹⁸ The new “general” would not be in a mood to tolerate such inconvenient outcries.

Bigot, however, was full of attentions for him. Every year, in January, the governor was accustomed to go to Montreal, where various duties held him until the month of August, the time when he returned to the capital in order to reply to the dispatches from the Court. In 1753, Duquesne planned his trip for January 14. As

¹¹ Duquesne to Rouillé, October 27, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 35.

¹² Duquesne to Machault, October 10, 1754, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 279.

¹³ Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada*, 147.

¹⁴ Duquesne to Madame Péan [1754], in *Mémoire pour Péan*, July 7, 1762, PAC, Bibliothèque de l’Arsenal [BA], Archives de la Bastille, Volume 12145, p. 38v-39; *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan* (Paris, 1763), 72-73.

¹⁵ Bigot to Rouillé, October 10, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 139.

¹⁶ *Id. to id.*, October 12, 1752, *ibid.*, p. 152.

¹⁷ Bigot to Maurepas, May 15, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 105.

¹⁸ “La Correspondance de Mme Bégon,” RAPQ (1934-1935), 176.

this was his first major journey, the intendant proposed to accompany him as far as Pointe-aux-Trembles, to have a supper for him that evening, and serve him breakfast the next day. This was an agreeable excursion. To observe the proprieties of their station, the chiefs of the colony had themselves accompanied by attendants chosen with care. Duquesne surrounded himself with officers: Vergor, Péan, Marin, Saint-Ours, and others; Bigot took with him five military men and five charming women, among them Mesdames Péan and Marin. It was an honor much sought after to take part in the retinue of the administrators. "One might," noted Franquet, "consider this arrangement in imitation of the list which the King makes of the Seigneurs of the Court who are to take part in the journey to Marly." When the carriages of these gentlemen began to move, there was activity on all sides. The habitants were required to beat the roads and prepare relays; those who neglected to manifest in this manner their "attachment" to the depositories of authority and to their companions were thrown in prison; they had thought they would be excused from the duty, as they were convinced that the weather was too cold and unpleasant for the scheduled trip to be made. In the evening, they played cards for stakes as high as at the King's court. The next day, before undertaking the second day's march, Duquesne made Bigot promise to set out himself for Montreal on February 8. Then, the intendant proposed that his guests spend the day at Pointe-aux-Trembles. The games continued, and there was feasting as magnificent as in the Palace. All these fine folk took the road to Quebec on the afternoon of the 16th, and, when they reached the city, Madame Péan invited the company to a grand reception. They had amused themselves elegantly at the King's expense for three whole days.¹⁹

As had been agreed with his colleague, the intendant left for his destination of Montreal on February 8. Ordinarily, he did not undertake this trip until March, but preparations for the great campaign which his colleague was planning made him hasten his departure. Everybody had wished to accompany him. He limited his court to about fifteen persons, among whom shone Mesdames Péan, Marin, Daine, de Lotbinière and de Repentigny. In the morn-

¹⁹ Franquet, *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada*, 129, 141-145. "Nothing is stinted in this country, when the chiefs of the colony think of any trips or any movements. Everything is paid on a grand scale, and as they are the depositories of funds, expenses are not spared."

ing, the intendant would offer his guests tea, coffee, or chocolate. At noon, they would lunch for two full hours. Every evening, there would be a grand dinner, a grand gaming-party, and a grand supper. On February 11, they had just left Trois-Rivières when Duquesne appeared with Péan, Marin and Le Mercier. They acted as if the surprise had been delightful. Madame Marin, unwell, was resting alone, while the others were about to eat a bite and to have a game while waiting for supper; some malicious gossips affected to believe that the unexpected visit of Marin would allay the indisposition of his wife, but, alas! "it only made it worse." On February 13, the retinue of the chiefs entered Montreal. The days passed in social visits at the homes of the ladies, the officers, and the notables. Bigot's house became the rendezvous of *bons vivants*. Franquet observed with admiration: "Although his health is very delicate, he loves pleasure, is never so happy as when he can oblige. Every day he had 18 to 20 places set, evening and morning, laid the cloth six times while the general laid it once, and he would not have ceased having ladies of the city to dine and lavishing money on them, if the general, who did not intend to have any, had not induced him to call a halt. Against his will, he agreed to this arrangement. The ladies were no happier." At the beginning of March, the engineer Franquet had the bad taste to think of serious matters, and asked the governor and the intendant to inspect a site suitable for the erection of barracks: "One of the days, they were busy, and on others the weather was too bad for going out; finally, they could not find a moment to go there." He had also prepared a memoir on the posts of the upper country; Duquesne listened to it being read with a distracted ear, Bigot did not listen to it at all. He was really too busy. The higher functionaries shared their time between good dinners and big parties. Delighted with his sojourn, the intendant resolved not to go back to Quebec until the opening of navigation.²⁰

In the midst of the delights of Montreal, the administrators worked out the preparations for a rough military expedition. It was concerned with resuming the policy of La Galissonnière in the Ohio valley. Outlined in 1747,²¹ this policy became actual fact two

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 129 ff., 131, 132 ff., 135, 136 ff., 139, 147-152, 156 ff.

²¹ La Galissonnière to Maurepas, October 21, 1747, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 87-2, p. 200.

years later, when Céloron had accomplished the taking possession of the Belle Rivière. "If the English should establish themselves there," the mariner had reasoned, "it would give them entry to all our posts and would open the road to Mexico to them."²² The French and British coveted this region because they recognized its strategic importance. If the former controlled it, they would be in a position to concentrate there at a given point enough forces to open a breach, whenever they wished, in the frontiers of the English provinces.²³ If the latter should establish themselves there, they would threaten to cut off Louisiana from Canada.²⁴ Moreover, the Indians, and especially the Iroquois, had moved in such great number into the valley of the Ohio that it was appearing to be the center of gravity of the Indian population.²⁵ The colonial power which should destroy for its own benefit this unstable equilibrium would seize a considerable advantage over its rival. The stakes seemed to be worth the trouble. La Galissonnière had proved himself to be aggressive; the English appeared practical—their Ohio Company was granted a half million acres of land by London. Rouillé feared to see France outdistanced by Great Britain on the Belle Rivière. He enjoined La Jonquière to found an establishment there: "It can also," he explained, "be necessary to secure firmly the communication with Louisiana; and it could not help being very advantageous for the trade."²⁶ This double incentive did not move the Baron de Longueuil during the several months when he acted as chief executive,²⁷ but it did not fail to seduce the new governor.

Duquesne made a speedy decision. In October, 1752, Bigot announced to the minister that he was already working to equip the expeditionary force of more than 2,200 men which his colleague wished to put in the field the following spring; it would also be necessary for him to accumulate supplies for the construction of several forts and for stocking their magazines. The moment appeared ill chosen for the launching of an enterprise of this scope,

²² La Galissonnière to Rouillé, June 26, 1749, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 93, p. 140.

²³ *State of the British and French Colonies*, 3-5.

²⁴ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 17.

²⁵ Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe* (Boston, 1888), I, 63.

²⁶ Rouillé to La Jonquière, April 15, 1750, AC, Series B, Volume 91, p. 247v.

²⁷ Bigot to Rouillé, October 26, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 177.

since there was a shortage of food in Canada.²⁸ Also the intendant asked the mother country for an additional quantity of supplies. Duquesne wanted to move quickly and to profit by the feeling of fear which his arrival, so he believed, had spread among the Iroquois.²⁹ Some provisions the administrators likewise ordered at Louisbourg and they authorized the purchase of 6,000 quarts of flour and of Indian corn in New England.³⁰ The projected campaign could not suffer the slightest delay. Other motives impelled the two cronies not to haggle. Since autumn it was settled that Marin would be given command of the expedition because, wrote Bigot, of his "reputation of being the most feared and the most respected by the savage nations," and that he would have for his lieutenant Péan, because this man appeared just in time as "the most capable officer for dealing with details there was in the colony."³¹ These appointments, the second especially, had something suspicious about them. It is said that upon his arrival the gallant governor had "taken a fancy for a lovely lady," which had resulted, "according to custom," in sending the husband to an advantageous post of the upper country; while, for his part, Bigot did not lose the opportunity to remove to a distance, very seasonably, an excellent friend who was yet a little tiresome.³²

In fact, Péan was going to be the mainstay of the enterprise. In 1754, Duquesne would write to "the goddess"³³ of the intendant: "I leave you to believe, Madame, how much I shall exalt the work of my little Péan, since it is he who is the mainspring of this expedition."³⁴ In mid-April, the "kind husband" went to Lachine, from

²⁸ In 1752, a fifth of the inhabitants of the government of Quebec did not have any grain for their sowing. Bigot observed, however, that commerce was "extremely brilliant in Canada," that year. Commerce, he insisted, had doubled in comparison with the years before the war. *Mémoire pour Messire François Bigot* (Paris, 1763), I, 116, 120, 122.

²⁹ Bigot to Rouillé, October 26, 1752, *ibid.*, 184-186.

³⁰ Duquesne and Bigot to Raymond and Prévost, January 2, 1753, *Collection de manuscrits, contenant lettres, mémoires et autres documents historiques relatifs à l'histoire de la Nouvelle-France recueillis aux Archives de la Province de Québec ou copiés à l'étranger* (Quebec, 1883-1885), III, 513-514.

³¹ Bigot to Rouillé, October 26, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 183-184.

³² Pouchot, *Mémoires* (Yverdon, 1781), I, 8.

³³ "Mémoire du Canada," RAPQ (1924-1925), 188. [In the original, the word is "l'idole." D. K.]

³⁴ Duquesne to Mme. Péan, in *Mémoire pour Péan*, July 7, 1762, BA, Bastille, Volume 12145, p. 38v; *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 72. In the same letter, Duquesne calls Péan "votre gentil mary" [your kind husband].

which the convoys left for their destination at the posts of the upper country. The last days of April, the whole month of May, and a part of June found him busy in sending off the "brigades" of canoes and boats which were transporting the men and material mobilized for the campaign. He left Lachine himself, with the rearguard, on June 26.³⁵ Marin's mission was to erect a first fort at Presqu'île [now Erie], on Lake Erie, a second on the Rivière aux Boeufs [French Creek], and a third at the forks of the Ohio. After leaving garrisons in them, he was to descend with Péan the course of the river, subduing in his passage the Indian tribes or corrupting them with presents.³⁶ It was a gigantic task, which demanded exhausting efforts from the militia. Duquesne himself reported on it: "Of all the world only the Canadians," he avowed to the minister, "would be in condition to sleep in the open air and could carry on the immense work which this detachment has done to provide for the transport of goods."³⁷ The portages stretched out, interminable, bristling with obstacles. Each small boat had a load of from four to six thousand pounds,³⁸ which had to be transported on men's backs over a distance which sometimes was as much as six or seven leagues. On the Court's recommendation,³⁹ the Governor had taken rigorous measures to impose the severest discipline upon the militia.⁴⁰ The Canadians carried out their entire task; in July, a large number, exhausted, worn out with fever, were spitting blood.⁴¹ As much could not be said of the Frenchmen who accompanied them. Péan observed, in a contemptuous way: "The Frenchmen are carrying, but little, and try to make difficulties for themselves. The officers have to be always after them; they lie down on the portage, and they weep there, saying they are all sick—the irons are always full of them."⁴²

³⁵ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 18-20, 25.

³⁶ Péan cites lengthy extracts from the instructions he received from Duquesne, in *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 21-24. He underlines the fact that the distribution of presents constituted an "essential article of his instructions," *ibid.*, 24.

³⁷ Duquesne to Rouillé, November 2, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 40.

³⁸ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 20.

³⁹ Rouillé to La Jonquière, August 17, 1751, AC, Series B, Volume 93, p. 202v.

⁴⁰ Bigot to Rouillé, October 12, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 152.

⁴¹ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 26.

⁴² Péan to Duquesne, July 29, 1753, *ibid.*, 42.

From Quebec, the Governor sent the Court facile bulletins of victory: Péan had left Niagara on September 6; he would soon effect his junction with Marin in the lower part of the Rivière aux Boeufs; then the two officers would sweep the shores of the Ohio. "I have reason to hope," he wrote, "that in the course of this month (October, 1752), I shall be in a position to report to you on the details of this march."⁴³ This triumphal march did not take place. Now the messengers came in one after another, bearing bad news. On September 19, Péan wrote Duquesne that Marin was dying.⁴⁴ Rather than come to restore his health at Montreal, the old soldier with a "ferocious disposition" preferred to die "on the field of battle."⁴⁵ He fell on October 29.⁴⁶ Before succumbing, however, he had ordered Péan to take the sick men to Montreal and to go and report to the Governor on the expedition.⁴⁷ The sick men took in almost everyone. September had been terrible: wading in mud up to their knees, crushed under the burden of a task which "surpassed human strength," the Canadians collapsed with misery and exhaustion.⁴⁸ "The roads were covered with the sweat of our militia."⁴⁹ Of the 2,300 men which they had numbered on leaving Montreal, there remained not 800 in condition for service.⁵⁰ They had to march back and be satisfied to leave garrisons at Presqu'île, at Fort Le Boeuf, and at Venango, an Indian village from which Marin had had some English traders dislodged. Fort Duquesne [Pittsburgh], which was to command the Belle Rivière, would not be constructed until 1754.⁵¹ The militia returned to Montreal in November. The poor wretches were pitiable. After having reviewed them himself, the Governor declared: "There is no reason to doubt that if these exhausted men had been started to reach their destination, the Ohio River would have been littered with men dead from the fevers and pneumonia which were beginning to overcome this troop, and that evil-disposed Indians would not have failed to

⁴³ Duquesne to Rouillé, October 3, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 14.

⁴⁴ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 62; Duquesne to Rouillé, November 2, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 38-39.

⁴⁵ *Id. to id.*, October 7, 1754, *ibid.*, 262.

⁴⁶ *Id. to id.*, October 5, 1754, *ibid.*, 257.

⁴⁷ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 65.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 60 ff.; Pouchot, *Mémoires*, 11.

⁴⁹ *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 59.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 62.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

attack it, since it was composed solely of phantoms."⁵² Two years later, upon his arrival in Canada, Vaudreuil will write: "The establishment of the Belle Rivière is the direct cause of the ruin of the inhabitants; a greater number⁵³ of them died than we could lose in several years of war, and that (I cannot hide it from you) because they have been driven, without any of the considerations which humanity exacts, to carry on the portage bales and other goods which are of a sort very contrary to the good of the service."⁵⁴

Vaudreuil was alluding to the corruption which tainted the expedition of the Belle Rivière. As proud and haughty as he wanted to appear, Duquesne did not disdain a deal, and hardly neglected his interests.⁵⁵ Bigot had a passion for lucre and a genius for commerce. The two leaders could only profit by exchanging good deals and living in agreement; "thus," it was said, "they were partners in business."⁵⁶ As for Péan, the intendant's factotum, who was himself then in charge "of all the details which relate to supplies,"⁵⁷ it was significant that his precise duty was to look after the equipment of the men and the transport of goods. Before the campaign, agents had swept up everything they could find—pieces of silk and velvet, delicate wines, women's shoes made of damask; the King—that is, Bigot in the name of the King—bought everything at a high price. Was it not "essential" to distribute "presents" to the Indians? The Indians, it is true, had nothing to do with precious fabrics and fine shoes, but the officers and their wives, people with exquisite taste, would take care of that, "and some reports on con-

⁵² Duquesne to Rouillé, November 29, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 99, p. 43.

⁵³ "That caused nearly 400 men to perish either from scurvy or from their labor in carrying these goods on their backs," Pouchot, *Mémoires*, 11.

⁵⁴ Vaudreuil to Machault, October 30, 1753, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 100, p. 154. Vaudreuil in the last clause means that goods were carried for the benefit of the leaders, not for the good of the service.

⁵⁵ [Courville] *Mémoires sur le Canada, depuis 1749 jusqu'à 1760*, 58. Franquet had before his eyes the conduct of Duquesne when he wrote that the governors and the intendants conducted the administration "only in relation to their own interests and to the interests of those who are their advisers or creatures," *Voyages et mémoires sur le Canada*, 196 ff. We are therefore in the presence of two independent witnesses, who corroborate each other, as well as of Pouchot's judgment (see the following note); Pouchot, it is true, writes from hearsay, but he gives information drawn from a third source.

⁵⁶ Pouchot, *Mémoires*, I, 9.

⁵⁷ *Journal du Marquis de Montcalm*, in H. R. Casgrain, ed., *Collection des manuscrits du Maréchal de Lévis* (Montreal and Quebec, 1889-1895), VII, 219.

sumption covered all that."⁵⁸ Sordid profits sought without shame explain many of the aspects of this expedition.⁵⁹ It is from the beginning of "the epoch of the Belle Rivière," Montcalm will say, that thievery in Canada became "more common and more tolerated than in Lacedaemon."⁶⁰ Finally, this famous campaign will involve formidable consequences; it will be the cause of a bloody conflict, and the first shots of the Seven Years War will resound in the valley of the Ohio. The conqueror of Carillon (Ticonderoga) thus summarizes the escapade of the Belle Rivière and its disastrous results:

Peculation raises its mask; it knows no longer any limits; enterprises increase and multiply; a single concern absorbs the entire commerce, interior and exterior, the whole substance of a country which it devours; it plays with the lives of men. The inhabitants, enervated by excessive labors, used up their strength, their time, their youth, at a sheer loss to themselves; agriculture languished, the population diminished, war came, and it is the Grand Société which, by outrages useful solely to its own interests, gives the ambitious designs of the English⁶¹ the pretext for lighting the torch.⁶²

⁵⁸ Pouchot, *Mémoires*, I, 11-12. Bigot confirms that Péan distributed much goods to the Indians, *Mémoire pour Messire François Bigot*, I, 124. At the same period, the magazines of Beauséjour received some remarkable shipments, too: "A friend, a favorite of the intendant, sold the King damask, satin and a thousand other things of the sort. Surely the Acadians did not use these kinds of goods. These stuffs had been sent to Beauséjour, where a commander, a clerk took them at the King's expense, in order to send them back to Quebec or to Louisbourg, where they were sold much more dearly," "Mémoire du Canada," RAPQ (1924-1925), 112.

⁵⁹ La Pause, "Mémoire et réflexions politiques et militaires sur le guerre du Canada depuis 1746 jusqu'à 1760," RAPQ (1933-1934), 148.

⁶⁰ *Journal du Marquis de Montcalm*, loc. cit., VII, 485.

⁶¹ The English, La Pause confirms, "could not see tranquilly this establishment [on the Ohio] which could make them fear insurrections of these barbarians [Duquesne pursued exactly one aim—to make the Indians enter the orbit of French influence in order to turn them as a whole against the British], and even that, in the future when Canada and Louisiana were peopled and a communication had been established, we should seize their colonies with the aid of the Indians, without figuring on the great loss which we should cause in their fur trade." It was, to sum up, a demonstration of force on the part of a colony which was still too weak to create the elements of a durable power. "We have let them know everything they had to fear, and this motive, together with the great designs they have for their own colonies, has been the cause of our loss of Canada," La Pause, "Mémoires et réflexions politiques et militaires sur la guerre du Canada depuis 1746 jusqu'à 1760," RAPQ (1933-1934), 148-149. Bernis analyzed the French policy of the years from 1748 to 1755 in this way: "Eyes have been shut to the little acts of hostility committed by us against the English in America;

Launched and carried on in such circumstances, it is not astonishing that the operations were frightfully expensive. To tell the truth, Bigot had warned the minister of this since the autumn of 1752.⁶³ October 1, 1753, the costs of the campaign already mounted to more than two millions and a half, and this figure represented only the disbursements known at that moment. The total cost of the enterprise was to exceed four millions and a half. The intendant tried, naturally enough, to get rid of his responsibility; he had, he reported, made representations to his colleague, but the latter had taken no notice and replied "that it was the salvation of Canada, and that it could not be given up."⁶⁴ The preceding year, Bigot had welcomed Duquesne with enthusiasm. Now he changed his tune. He even permitted himself to attack the work of the Governor; in order to acquire and keep the mastery of the Belle Rivière, he wrote the minister, it would have been enough to permit everyone to trade there "gratis," and to grant those who should have carried on trading operations there some advantages which would have permitted them to sell their merchandise cheaply and thus to prevent effective competition by the English merchants; that would have been enough, he concluded, to maintain the Indians in the interests of France and to force the British to decamp.⁶⁵ He will return in 1754 to this idea "that, after full reflection, it would have perhaps been better to be satisfied with passing along the Belle Rivière and seizing the English traders, without establishing posts there and without making the great stir there which the expedition had produced."⁶⁶ Just the same, it was a little late to be thinking that.

we have inopportunately raised forts which have made them jealous; we have spent much money for the defence of our colonies, and that money has been ill used and dissipated," F. Masson, ed., *Mémoires et lettres de François-Joachim de Pierre cardinal de Bernis (1715-1758)* (Paris, 1903), I, 315. See Rouillé to Duquesne, May 31, 1754, AC, Series B, Volume 99, p. 204.

⁶² *Journal du Marquis de Montcalm, loc. cit.*, VII, 461-462.

⁶³ Bigot to Rouillé, October 10, 1752, AC, Series C 11 A, Volume 98, p. 140; *id.* to *id.*, October 26, 1752, *ibid.*, 184.

⁶⁴ *Mémoire pour Messire François Bigot*, I, 123 ff. This reply of Duquesne is completely credible; the Governor wrote to Péan, July 16, 1753, that a delay in the Ohio expedition would be "the death of the colony," *Mémoire pour Michel-Jean-Hugues Péan*, 37. Even if the intentions of the Marquis were excellent, the results of his escapade were none the less deplorable and it perpetrated frightful depredations. In 1758 Montcalm observed that Fort Duquesne "has cost immense sums" and "is worth nothing," *Journal du Marquis de Montcalm, loc. cit.*, VII, 332.

⁶⁵ *Mémoire pour Messire François Bigot*, I, 126.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 137.