THE POLITICAL CAREER OF

CHARLES SPENCER,

THIRD EARL OF SUNDERLAND

1695-1722

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DECLARATION

This thesis is the product of independent and original research. It is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at any university.

G M Townend

For my Mother and Father

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ABSTRACT

This work is the first major study of the political career of Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland. It covers the period from his entry into the House of Commons in 1695 to his death in 1722. As an M.P. Lord Spencer, as Sunderland was then known, was a committed Whig in his political beliefs, but at the same time his conduct was influenced by the attitudes and example of his father. The hold that the second Earl of Sunderland had over his son was not strong and Spencer was soon increasingly associated with the leaders of the 'Whig Junto'. In 1702, when he succeeded as third Earl, Sunderland's standing was such that he was eagerly welcomed into the leadership of the Junto. Sunderland was staunch and aggressive in his Whiggery and this, together with his Marlborough family connection, led to his playing a prominent part in helping the Junto renew their political fortunes between 1702 and 1705. The extent of Sunderland's success can be judged by his being sent as a special envoy to Vienna in 1705 and his appointment as Secretary of State the following year. As Secretary Sunderland was determined to prosecute the war against France with vigour but he achieved no outstanding success abroad. At home, however, he played the leading role in helping the Junto to gain control of the administration. The Whig dominated ministry was not built upon strong foundations and within a year it had collapsed despite Sunderland's unceasing industry to maintain its existence. From 1710 to 1714 Sunderland was in opposition yet this did not prevent him doing all he could to safeguard the Protestant Succession. His fierce commitment to the House of Hanover rather disturbed the new monarch and his ministers and as a result Sunderland did not obtain the office he sought under the new dynasty. Sunderland, as a result of his experience in opposition, was a much shrewder and subtle politician and was able to win the

confidence of the King, his German courtiers and a number of prominent English politicians. He secured a decisive influence in the government but he was still threatened by powerful and dangerous rivals in the Whig party. It was his attempt to diminish their authority and to establish his own ascendancy which produced the Whig schism in 1717. As Prime Minister from 1717 onwards Sunderland had to establish his government on firm foundations. In this he was largely successful but he was unable to dominate the House of Commons and this failure forced him to come to terms with his Whig opponents. In 1720 and 1721 the South Sea Bubble and the loss of his leading associates severely undermined his authority and gave his rivals an opportunity to challenge his power. Sunderland, however, recovered and after marshalling his forces it seemed likely that he would have recovered his former influence, but before the outcome of the 1722 election was known he was dead.

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations have been used in the text.

B.L.	British Library
Add. Ms.	Additional manuscript
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
S.P.	State Papers
S.R.O.	Scottish Record Office
A.E.C.P.A.	Archives du Minestère des Affaires Etrangères, Correspondance Politique Angleterre
N.L.S.	National Library of Scotland
N.S.	New Style
L.J.	Journals of the House of Lords
C.J.	Journals of the House of Commons
H.M.C.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
D.N.B.	Dictionary of National Biography
G.E.C.	The Complete Peerage, ed. G.E.C[ockayne].
B.I.H.R.	Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research
H.L.Q.	The Huntington Library Quarterly
H.J.	The Historical Journal
E.H.R.	English Historical Review
S.H.R.	Scottish Historical Review
J.B.S.	Journal of British Studies
J.S.A.H.R.	Journal of the Society of Army Historical Research
C.H.J.	Cambridge Historical Journal
Ec.H.R.	Economic History Review
I.H.S.	Irish Historical Studies
T.R.H.S.	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society

J.M.H.	Journal of Modern History
T.C.W.A.A.S.	Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society
Holmes, British Politics	G.S. Holmes, British Politics in the Age of Anne (London, 1967)
Speck, Tory and Whig	W.A. Speck, Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701-1715 (London, 1970)
Feiling, Tory Party	Keith Feiling, A History of the Tory Party 1640-1714 (Oxford, 1924)
McInnes, Robert Harley	A. McInnes, Robert Harley, Puritan Politician (London, 1970)
Gregg, Queen Anne	E. Gregg, Queen Anne (London, 1980)
Hill, Parliamentary Parties	B.W. Hill, The Growth of Parliamentary Parties 1689-1742 (London, 1976)
Churchill, Marlborough	W.S. Churchill, Marlborough His Life and Times (4 vols., London 1933-1938)
Tindal Hart, William Lloyd	A. Tindal Hart, William Lloyd 1627-1717 (London, 1952)
Turberville, House of Lords	A.S. Turberville, The House of Lords in the XVIIIth Century (Oxford, 1927)
Sachse, Lord Somers	W.L. Sachse, Lord Somers: A Political Portrait (Manchester, 1975)
Horwitz, Revolution Politicks	H. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks: The career of Daniel Finch Second Earl of Nottingham, 1647-1730 (Cambridge, 1968)
Lever, Godolphin	Tresham Lever, Godolphin His Life and Times (London, 1952)
Dickinson, Bolingbroke	H.T. Dickinson, Bolingbroke (London, 1970)
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Riley, England and Scotland	P.W.J. Riley, The Union of England and Scotland (Manchester, 1978)
Riley, English Ministers	P.W.J. Riley, The English Ministers and Scotland 1707-1727 (London, 1964)
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Hatton, Diplomatic Relations	Ragnhild Hatton, Diplomatic Relations between Great Britain and the Dutch Republic 1714-1721 (London, 1950)
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Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy	Linda Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714-1760 (Cambridge 1982)
Michael, Hanoverian Dynasty	W. Michael, England under George I: The beginnings of the Hanoverian Dynasty (New York, 1970)
Michael, Quadruple Alliance	W. Michael, England under George I: The Quadruple Alliance (New York, 1970)
Newman, Stanhopes of Chevening	A. Newman, The Stanhopes of Chevening (London, 1969)
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Sykes, William Wake	N. Sykes, William Wake Archbishop of Canterbury 1657-1737 (2 vols., Cambridge, 1957)

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Nulle, Pelham Holles	S.H. Nulle, Thomas Pelham Holles Duke of Newcastle. His early Political Career 1693-1724 (Pennsylvania, 1931)
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Trench, George II	Charles Chevenix Trench, George II (London, 1973)
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Nicolson Diary	The Diary of William Nicolson, Bishop of Carlisle. Microfilm at the Institute of Historical Research
Luttrell, Historical Relation	Narcissus Luttrell, A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs (6 vols., Oxford, 1857)
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Hoff, Marlborough - Heinsius Correspondence	B. van 'T Hoff, The Correspondence 1701-1711 of John Churchill First Duke of Marlborough and Anthonie Heinsius Grand Pensionary of Holland (The Hague, 1951)
Murray, Marlborough Dispatches	The Letters and Dispatches of John Churchill First Duke of Marlborough, ed. Sir George Murray (5 vols., London, 1845)
Coxe, Memoirs of Marlborough	W. Coxe, Memoirs of John Duke of Marlborough, Bohn edition (London, 1908)

Coxe, Walpole	W. Coxe, Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford (3 vols., London, 1798)
Cobbett	William Cobbett, The Parliamentary History of England (36 vols., 1806-1820)
Burnet	Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time (6 vols., Oxford, 1823)
Cartwright, Wentworth Papers	The Wentworth Papers, ed. J.J. Cartwright (London, 1883)
Graham, Addison Letters	The Letters of Joseph Addison, ed. Walter Graham (Oxford, 1941)
Miscellaneous State Papers	Miscellaneous State Papers From 1501 to 1726 (2 vols., London, 1778)
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Cowper, Diary	The Diary of Mary Countess Cowper 1714-1720, ed. C.S. Spencer Cowper (London, 1865)
C.S.P.D.	Calendar of State Papers Domestic
Dickinson, Lord Peterborough	H.T. Dickinson, 'The recall of Lord Peterborough', J.S.A.H.R., XLVii (1969), 175-187
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A NOTE ON DATES

In the late seventeenth-century Britain's calendar was ten days behind that used in most European countries and the gap widened to eleven days at the turn of the eighteenth-century. In this work all dates are given in the Old Style except where the New Style is indicated or both dates are used, e.g. $\frac{9}{20}$ March 1705. The new year is taken as beginning on 1 January and not 25 March.

PREFACE

Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland was one of the most prominent early-eighteenth-century politicians who was at the centre of political life for twenty-seven years. His career spanned three reigns. Under William III he was M.P. for Tiverton in Devon from 1695 to 1702. With the accession of Queen Anne Spencer succeeded his father as third Earl, became one of the leaders of the celebrated Whig Junto and was Secretary of State for the South between 1706 and 1710. It was in the reign of George I, however, that Sunderland reached the height of his power and influence. He held office successively as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Privy Seal, Secretary of State for the North, Lord President of the Council, First Lord of the Treasury, and Groom of the Stole. He was the closest confident and advisor of George I and from 1717 to 1722 he was Prime Minister. Surprisingly, however, apart from H.L. Snyder's 1963 University of California Ph.D. Thesis, which only covered the years 1706 to 1710, there has been no serious study of Sunderland's political career. This work is intended to provide such a study.

It is intended to provide a comprehensive picture of Sunderland's political activities from his entry into the House of Commons in 1695 to his death in April 1722. In this respect the main focus of this work will be with the political conflict at Court and in the Houses of Parliament. An analysis of Sunderland's entire political career is a major undertaking and as a result it has been necessary to neglect certain aspects of his life which could only have been covered within the framework of an extensive biographical treatment. There has been no attempt to examine Sunderland's private life and his personal relationships except in the instance of his connection with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough which had important political consequences. Similarly, Sunderland's activities as a bibliophile

have been excluded from this study. No attempt has been made to examine the duties and significance of the various offices which Sunderland held, particularly under George I. There has been some analysis of the office of Secretary of State, but even here the present work has only been concerned with Sunderland's handling of the direction and implementation of foreign policy. What discussion there has been of the office of Secretary of State relies heavily on the work of Henry Snyder and Mark Thomson.

The work has been organised on a thematic and chronological basis with each chapter dealing with a specific period of Sunderland's political career. For example Chapter Six covers the period when Sunderland and the Whigs were in opposition from 1710 to 1714. The bulk of the primary material available for the years 1706 to 1710 meant that Sunderland's activity in domestic politics for these years and his tenure as Secretary of State would have to be dealt with separately. These aspects are covered in Chapters Three and Four.

During the course of my research I have profited from the advice and assistance of other scholars. My greatest debt is to my supervisor Professor Harry Dickinson. It was he who suggested that I should study Sunderland and my work has benefited immeasurably from his constant advice, criticism, and encouragement. I would like to thank Dr. Eveline Cruickshanks for her help and assistance in providing transcripts and allowing me access to material at the History of Parliament Trust. Dr. David Hayton also gave me valuable advice on Ireland, provided me with transcripts and allowed me to read his own work prior to publication. I owe a similar debt to Mr. Clyve Jones of the Institute of Historical Research who gave me references to material I would otherwise have missed as well as placing a microfilm of Bishop William Nicolson's diaries at my disposal. Finally I would like to thank all the librarians and archivists who assisted my inquiries, particularly those at the British Library. The faults and errors contained in this work are entirely my own responsibility.

CHAPTER ONE: POLITICAL APPRENTICESHIP 1695-1702

'My Lord Spencer's character both for sobriety and for all qualification in a young man that are so rarely found in this age are acknowledged by all people.'

From the very beginning Lord Spencer's political attitude was characterised by a combination of principle and expediency which was to persist throughout his career. His entry into Parliament in 1695 was the inevitable outcome of belonging to a family which had been at the centre of English politics for almost thirty years. The atmosphere of the Spencer household was heavy with political intrigue and manipulation and, given these circumstances, Lord Spencer's passionate interest in the pursuit of power was a natural development. His father, Robert, second Earl of Sunderland, was perhaps the most notorious politician in late-seventeenth-century England. Pragmatic and flexible in his beliefs Sunderland nevertheless had proved an indispensable servant to three successive monarchs and he was bound to be an important influence on Spencer's conduct during his early years in Parliament. It was his father's attempt to reach an agreement with the more independently minded Whig M.P.'s which helps to explain Spencer's apparent espousal of a more country oriented Whiggery in 1696 and 1697 and which no doubt contributed to the belief held by some contemporaries that he was an out and out Republican. It was unlikely, however, that Spencer would be content merely to follow the lead provided by his father indefinitely. Though both men were extremely ambitious circumstances and differences of temperament produced a contrasting political outlook. Sunderland had risen to power in a cynical and individualistic age but by the time his son entered politics affairs of state were increasingly dominated by the struggle for authority between the Whig and Tory parties. Consequently,

young politicians who were both ambitious and capable were found, more and more, in either of these two parties depending on how they viewed the great issues of the day. It was clear to Lord Spencer that this was almost certainly the only way he could hope to fulfil his aspirations. Furthermore, whereas his father had displayed an almost total indifference to principle Lord Spencer began his political career with a number of principles to which he was to adhere for the rest of his life. He had little sympathy with the xenophobic Country Whiggery with its hostility to prerogative and standing armies, and which was such a powerful force in the House of Commons at this time. Spencer's conception of Whiggery was very close to that held by the newly emerging Whig Junto of Somers, Wharton, Montagu, and Russell which gave a positive and vital aspect to Whig principles and enabled Whig ideology to accommodate the desire to hold and utilise political power. Spencer, with his belief in the fundamental unity of European Protestantism, his hostility to France and his approval of William III's foreign policy together with his support for the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover was clearly ideal material as far as the Junto were concerned. Significantly, Spencer was also personally acquainted with Wharton and Montagu and was on very close terms with Somers. It was this familiarity which helped to reinforce Spencer's political intimacy with the Whig leadership. From 1698 onwards it was Spencer's association with the Junto rather than the attitude of his father which is of greater significance in his future development. By the time Spencer succeeded as third Earl of Sunderland in 1702 his allegiance to the Junto, his political beliefs and his power and influence as a peer in his own right, as well as his family relationship with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, meant that it was only natural that he should become the fifth member of the Whig Junto.

By the summer of 1695 both the Earl of Sunderland and the Junto felt that it was necessary to dissolve Parliament and to hold a general election.[1] Electioneering had already begun prior to the dissolution in October 1695[2] and prominent among those working industriously to secure their return was Charles, Lord Spencer, the son and heir of the Earl of Sunderland. Sunderland was trying to get Lord Spencer chosen as a Knight of the Shire for Northampton where the Spencer interest was located.[3] Unfortunately, the county, though subject to the influence of the Montagu's and the Mordaunt's, was traditionally Tory in outlook and the electors were unlikely to support a Whig candidate particularly one whose father was intimately associated with leading Whig politicians.[4] Lord Spencer's difficulties were increased by personal animosities amongst the candidates and in August Sir Justinian Isham, a prominent local Tory was informed:

> Mr. Cartwright... having got the start of my Lord Spencer in making his interest and my Lord not willing to set his pocket at stake has fully laid aside his intention of trying for a parliament man; and being justly nettled at Mr. Parkhurst's usage of him, as also convinced of Mr. Cartwright's resolution to go through with the matter, and opposing Parkhurst (who continues to make interest for himself) desires all his friends to vote for Sir St. Andrew St. John and Mr. Cartwright. Presumingly speaking I believe he has no great opinion of the latter, but of the low men of the west he is adjudged the least evil.[5]

Because of the difficulties attendant upon an expensive and formidable campaign Lord Spencer chose a much less arduous route into the House of Commons. He stood for Henry Guy's pocket borough of Hedon in Yorkshire as well as the borough of Tiverton in Devon.[6] There seems to have been little doubt that Spencer would be elected for at least one of these seats for he does not appear to have been greatly preoccupied with appealing to the constituents. At the end of August 1695 he was to be found visiting his father-in-law, the Duke of Newcastle, at Welbeck[7] and in early October he was at Althorp

when the King, together with leading politicians, visited his father.[8] Spencer was returned for both Tiverton and Hedon and he chose to sit for the former borough.[9] Thomas Bere was also chosen at Tiverton and the fact that he was a staunch Junto Whig would appear to suggest that Tiverton was a safe Junto seat and that Spencer's candidature was approved by the Junto.[10]

Lord Spencer was one of the hundred and seventy-four M.P.'s who had not sat in the previous Parliament and the new House of Commons was to prove a cause of anxiety for the ministry as they were unable to manage the chamber. The problem which faced the administration was the emergence of a powerful opposition group in the Commons centered upon independent Whigs like Paul Foley and Robert Harley together with Tory M.P.'s such as Clarges, Gwyn, Musgrave, and Seymour. This new Country party was xenophobic, it disliked standing armies and high taxation, it was hostile to placemen and financial corruption and was opposed to the idea of a general excise. The Whig and Tory groups which composed this alliance had been moving towards each other from 1691 onwards and by 1695 with Robert Harley at its head it was able to challenge the government in the Commons. The success of this Country party greatly impressed the Earl of Sunderland and he was now eager to bring the Country Whigs into the government in order to strengthen the King's administration. It was the influence of his father which explains Lord Spencer's flirtation with the opposition in 1696 and 1697.[11]

The discomfort of the ministry was heightened by the intractable problems which had to be faced when Parliament met. There were severe financial difficulties which were complicated by the deterioration of the coinage, the war effort was threatened by a shortage of soldiers and seamen, and the state of trade required immediate attention. In December both Houses of Parliament began to inquire into the trade of the nation and on 12 December the question of a Parliamentary Council of Trade was raised in a Commons committee of the Whole House. The administration, caught off balance by the incompleteness of its own

plans for a Royal Council of Trade, had to agree to proceed with a bill for a Parliamentary Council, but it was able to adjourn the committee.[12] The committee resumed its consideration on 2 January 1696 and though nothing was settled as to the powers of the Council it was agreed by 175 votes to 174 that the members of the Council should be chosen by Parliament. Sunderland supported the idea of a Parliamentary Council of Trade and Lord Spencer voted with the majority.[13] The committee met again on 20 January 1696 when the ministry introduced two wrecking motions; Wharton suggested that M.P.'s should not be eligible to sit on the Council and all those selected to serve on it should have to take the Abjuration Oath. Though agreed to by the committee these two resolutions were thrown out when they were reported to the House eleven days later. Lord Spencer favoured rejecting the first amendment but he was among those who wanted to accept the second.[14] Before the House proceeded any further on this subject it was announced that there had been a plot to murder the King which was to coincide with an invasion from France. This news helped to rally support to the administration.

The whole course of the session had emphasised the strength of the opposition in the Commons. Paul Foley had been elected Speaker of the House, the ministry's recoinage proposals were severely mauled while approval had been given to a scheme for a Land Bank and a Parliamentary Qualifications bill was introduced in February 1696.[15] On 24 February William informed Parliament that he had received information of an assassination attempt and an attempted invasion from France. Both Lords and Commons immediately agreed to an 'Association' which would designate William 'a rightful and lawful king'.[16] Peers and M.P.'s were obliged either to sign this document or to make explicit their refusal to do so. The Junto clearly sought to exploit the situation to divide the opposition Whigs from their Tory allies, but Harley, aided by Musgrave, was able to persuade most Country Tories to sign the 'Association'. In the Lords, however, nineteen peers led by Nottingham refused to subscribe. The initiative now

lay with the administration. In April 1696 a bill was passed to secure both the King and government while the recoinage proposals and the Land Bank project were modified to suit the taste of the ministry. The King was able to procure some supply for the Civil List and to veto the Parliamentary Qualifications bill; nothing more was heard of the Parliamentary Council of Trade.[17] There is little evidence of Lord Spencer's activity after January 1696. He signed the 'Association',[18] but on 2 March the Commons ordered 'that the Lord Spencer have leave to go into the country for the recovery of his health'.[19] The nature of his illness is unknown but it does not appear to have been either prolonged or severe for at the beginning of May Spencer was dining at Lambeth Palace with the Archbishop of Canterbury and John Evelyn.[20] Five days earlier the King had brought the parliamentary session to an end, but the summer of 1696 was to be dominated by issues which had been prominent during its course.

The first difficulty was the deepening of the financial crisis which had beset the government the previous year. The inadequacy of the measures to implement the recoinage of 1695 resulted in a shortage of money which threatened the conduct of military operations on the continent. It was only when the Bank of England made £200,000 available in August 1696 that the short term crisis was overcome.[21] The government also had to face the aftermath of the assassination conspiracy. Sir John Fenwick, who had been a General under James II, was arrested in June 1696 for his part in the affair and proceeded to make a number of declarations which implicated prominent politicians, including Shrewsbury, Russell, Marlborough and Godolphin, in the attempt to murder the King. The Junto were determined to vindicate Shrewsbury and Russell while punishing Fenwick at the same time. As a result of the flight of one of the principal witnesses against Fenwick it would be impossible to convict him in a Court of Law so the Junto decided to prosecute him by means of a bill of Attainder which merely had to be approved by both Houses of Parliament. Sunderland, though he had favoured prosecuting Fenwick, was unwilling to countenance such

a proceeding. He felt it would divert attention from important parliamentary business but he was also concerned lest the inquest should extend to him and his own rather dubious connection with Lord Arran. Lord Spencer was to be directly involved in his father's attempt to sabotage the prosecution.[22]

The Junto were not prepared to give way and the Attainder was introduced into the Commons on 6 November 1696. The strength of the opposition was soon evident but the bill was committed on 17 November by 182 votes to 118. Three days later 'my Lord Spencer made a very unadvised motion... about excluding the Lords spiritual out of the bill'.[23] The motion was defeated, but had it passed it could have resulted in the defeat of the Attainder for the Bishops played an important part in its passage through the House of Lords. On 22 November the bill was read for the third time and was approved by 189 votes to 156 and sent up to the Lords. The hostility it aroused in the House was so great that it only passed by 68 votes to 61 on 23 December 1696. Fenwick was beheaded on Tower Hill on 28 January 1697.[24] The Attainder of Fenwick was not the only occasion on which Lord Spencer identified himself with the opposition to the ministry.

When Parliament had met in October 1696 Sunderland, whose relations with the Junto were now deteriorating rapidly, was backing Harley and Foley in their struggle with the Junto for control of the Commons.[25] On 26 November 'the Lord Spencer, according to order presented to the House a Bill for examining, taking, and stating the public accounts of the Kingdom'.[26] The Commission of Accounts was one of the most important weapons employed by the Country opposition in its struggle with the ministry. Originally designed to inquire into governmental expenditure it assumed a more political character when its inquiries were continually frustrated by the executive. By February 1697, however, the Commission was in danger of being manipulated by the administration and to prevent this the bill was thrown out by 148 votes to 115 on 15 February.[27] It would appear that it was Spencer's

association with the Country opposition at this time which helps to account for the belief that he was a Republican.

A reference to Spencer's alleged controversial views is to be found in the writings of Jonathan Swift during Queen Anne's reign when Spencer had succeeded as Earl of Sunderland. Swift commented:

> It seems to have been this gentleman's fortune, to have learned his divinity from his uncle and his politics from his tutor. It may be thought a blemish in his character, that he hath much fallen from the height of those republican principles with which he began; for in his father's lifetime, while he was a member of the House of Commons, he would often, among his familiar friends, refuse the title of Lord (as he hath done to myself), swear he would never be called otherwise than Charles Spencer, and hoped to see the day when there should not be a peer in England.[28]

The reliability of Swift's opinion concerning any member of the Junto, whom he blamed for the failure of his clerical pretensions in 1709, is open to serious doubt yet Swift met Spencer's father on occasion during the 1690's and it may be that he was also acquainted with Lord Spencer who may have uttered some ill-considered remark.[29] If so it would not have been untypical as Arthur Onslow remarked that Lord Spencer 'came early into business, and before his father's death, was then in the House of Commons but made no advantageous impression of himself there, from a disagreeable impetuosity and ungraceful manner of speaking'.[30] The only other references to Spencer's Republicanism were made by foreigners. The French envoy in London remarked in 1714 that Sunderland, as Spencer then was, 'pourtant montre quelque fois des sentimens de Republicain'[31] and Bonet the Prussian resident also commented on Spencer's republicanism in 1699 as did the Imperial minister Count Wratislaw in 1705. Subsequently, Wratislaw admitted he had misjudged Sunderland and it seems that in Europe the Whigs in general were regarded as Republicans.[32] Whatever the origin of this belief about Spencer the available evidence leaves little doubt that it was unmerited. Spencer's political beliefs were

almost identical to those held by the Junto and it is only the influence of his father which accounts for his conduct in 1696 and 1697 yet even at this time Spencer's sympathy with the Junto is clear.

Spencer had already indicated his support for William by signing the 'Association' in 1696 and the following year backed proposals for a General Naturalization bill which anticipates his favourable disposition to foreign Protestants which was apparent under Queen Anne. On 21 December 1696 he was named as a member of the committee to which the bill to naturalize the sons of the Earl of Athlone was referred.[33] More significantly in February 1697 a General Naturalization bill was introduced into the Commons by two Junto Whigs Goodwin Wharton and Sir Henry Hobart.[34] The opponents of the bill argued it would produce a flood of impoverished immigrants who would threaten the domestic textile trades. On 2 March it was moved to commit the bill but upon the division it was rejected by 168 votes to 127 with Lord Spencer and Hobart acting as tellers for the minority.[35] From now on Spencer's support for the Junto was to become clearer and clearer as the influence of his father declined.

Throughout 1697 the connection between Sunderland and the Junto had become increasingly strained. Following the prorogation of Parliament in April Montagu became First Lord of the Treasury, Somers was made Lord Chancellor and Russell was named as First Lord of the Admiralty and Treasurer of the Navy. The King, unfortunately, could not be persuaded to create Wharton Lord Deputy in Ireland.[36] The most remarkable appointment of all was that of Sunderland as Lord Chamberlain which surprised most people including the Junto.[37] Sunderland and Somers were continually bickering over a number of issues ranging from the instalment of John Methuen, one of Sunderland's adherents, as Irish Lord Chancellor to a major financial scandal involving Guy Palmes an associate of Somers.[38] The chief point of contention was the desire of the Duke of Shrewsbury to retire as Secretary of State. Orford, as Russell now was, Wharton and Somers were trying to turn Shrewsbury against Sunderland but with no success though at the same time the Duke was persuaded to retain the Seals as Secretary of State. On 1 December 1697 the other Secretary,

Sir William Trumbull, resigned and Sunderland had James Vernon appointed as his successor. The Junto had wanted Wharton to replace Trumbull but they had been outmanoeuvred by Sunderland and, despite their frustration, could do little but acquiesce in the change. Sunderland, however, came under attack in the House of Commons and with the Junto unwilling to assist him and the threat of an impeachment growing Sunderland's nerve broke and he resigned at the end of December 1697. The King had little sympathy with the Junto and blamed them for Sunderland's withdrawal and as a result they were left exposed politically. Their vulnerability and Sunderland's recovering his nerve in January 1698 led to an attempted reconciliation between Sunderland and Somers.[39] Lord Spencer was very eager to heal the breach between the Whig leaders and his father but his rash behaviour early in the year helped to jeopardize the outcome of this attempt.

In 1684 the Earl of Clancarty had married the thirteen year old Lady Elizabeth Spencer. Clancarty, an attainted Jacobite, had been captured at the siege of Cork in September 1690 and imprisoned in the Tower of London while his wife, their marriage never having been consumated, lived with her parents. In 1694 Clancarty escaped from the Tower and turned up at the exiled court at St. Germain where he was created a Gentleman of the Bedchamber and given a military command. In December 1697 he returned to London and sent for his wife. On Saturday 1 January 1698 Clancarty:

> came... to Lord Sunderland's house (my Lord and Lady being gone to the country) and asking to speak with Lady Clancarty's woman, was by her carried up to the young lady's chamber... but the porter of the house upon recollection knowing the Earl of Clancarty, he sent to Lord Spencer to acquaint him with it, and his Lordship giving immediate notice thereof to the Secretary of State, who found him [Clancarty] in bed with his Lady, and brought him to Whitehall. He was kept that night upon the guard and the next day was committed to Newgate, being outlawed for treason, and attainted by an Act of Parliament that passed the last sessions in Ireland. This was the first time the Earl of Clancarty bedded his Lady.[40]

Lord Spencer had shown little consideration for the feelings of his sister and the whole family had been put in an extremely embarrassing predicament. The affair was also to assume a political significance for it served to undermine the negotiations between Sunderland and the Junto in which Lord Spencer was acting as an intermediary.[41]

The approaches to Somers on Sunderland's behalf were being made by Spencer and Overton and they tried to explain the reasons for Sunderland's resignation as Lord Chamberlain. Somers informed Shrewsbury:

> Since I have been so long on this subject, I will add this, that my Lord Sp[encer], Overt[on] and others, who are his [Sunderland] confidents, all say, that Dunc[ombe], G[uy], and Tr[evor], did so perpetually alarm him, with stories of his being delivered up by the Whigs, in order to engage him to change his side, and these stories were aggravated in such a fiery manner, by my Lord P[eterborough]; that the physic was too strong, and operated quite contrary to their design; so that he durst not stay the time of turning out others, but shifted away himself.[42]

In order to settle the Clancarty scandal Sunderland remained out of London in early January 1698, but at the same time a group of M.P.'s, Charles Duncombe, John Methuen, Sir William Trumbull and Robert Molesworth, who were regarded as his creatures, attacked Montagu with accusations of fraudulent endorsement of exchequer bills. Sunderland denied responsibility for this assault and he ordered Henry Guy, who apparently instigated the whole thing, to desist. Sunderland also kept up his contact with the Junto in the hope that despite this setback an accommodation could be achieved.[43]

James Vernon remarked:

> I hear by my Lord Spencer, that Mr. Overton was with Mr. Montague this morning, and that he found him very well disposed towards an accommodation, and expressed himself as if the event of that day would be of consequence, and that it would be much easier if Duncombe were well mortified. That part is now done to purpose, and 'tis certain the party will be more considerable by it, and some of those my Lord Sunderland might have an inclination for, he will be ashamed of.[44]

A rapprochement between Sunderland and the Junto depended upon punishing those who had attacked Montagu and Lord Spencer was determined to do his utmost to achieve this end.

Montagu easily demonstrated that he was innocent of financial mismanagement and he then sought revenge in a blistering attack on Charles Duncombe. On 25 January Duncombe was committed to the Tower and at the beginning of February he was expelled from the Commons and a bill of Pains and Penalties was brought in against him. The bill was committed on 14 February and sent up to the Lords at the end of the month.[45] During the debates in the lower House it was observed that 'my Lord Spencer showed a great deal of warmth for Mr. Montague and nobody in the House is more violent against Duncombe'.[46] Duncombe's bill met fierce opposition in the House of Lords and on 7 March 1698 the peers requested a conference with the Commons upon the subject-matter of the bill. Lord Spencer was named as one of the Commons' managers at the conference. The Lords declared that they wanted an explanation of the charges against Duncombe. After considering the report of the conference on 9 March a committee was appointed, including Spencer, to give an account of the reasons for prosecuting Duncombe which was to be presented to the Lords.[47] The following day Lord Hartington reported the committee's statement to the House:

> This report was debated paragraph by paragraph. It was again endeavoured to leave out the word confession. What was most insisted on was whether Mr. Duncomb told D'Acosta he might write other people's names as well as his own; many said they did not hear these words, but others positively affirmed it, viz.: Mr. Methuen, Mr. Hore, Lord William Pawlet and Lord Spencer, and the others being but a doubtful denial, it was determined it should stand. However there was a division upon it, which was carried by 90 against 68.[48]

The Commons' statement was delivered to the Lords on 11 March and four days later the peers rejected the bill against Duncombe by 48 votes to 47.[49] The Commons immediately appointed a committee, including Lord Spencer, to examine the Journals of the House of Lords

and to present an account of their proceedings.[50] After this report had been delivered Spencer was named on a further committee to search for precedents for the Lords discharging Duncombe from confinement in the Tower.[51] Lord Hartington reported from this committee on 22 March 1698 and after consideration it was resolved that the order to release Duncombe was a breach of the privileges of the House of Commons and that he should be taken into the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms. On 31 March the Commons ordered that Duncombe should again be remanded to the Tower where he was to remain until the end of the session.[52] Spencer was eager to bring about a reconciliation between the Junto and his father and his support for Montagu and his hostility to Duncombe clearly indicates this increasing disposition towards the Junto. This process was facilitated by his personal acquaintance with Montagu, Somers, and Wharton and his association with them was to grow during the next Parliament while his father remained at Althorp for much of the time.[53]

The King's disenchantment with his Whig ministers was such that the Junto fought the 1698 election without the backing of the Crown. This, together with the continuing tensions between the Junto and the more independently minded Whig M.P.'s, allowed the opposition to secure control of the Commons.[54] Lord Spencer was again returned for Tiverton along with Thomas Bere.[55] The inability of the administration to manage the House of Commons was not immediately apparent and they were able to obtain the Speakership for Sir Thomas Littleton. After the King's speech had been read in the House of Lords the Commons were directed to return to their own chamber and choose a Speaker: 'accordingly they went back, and the Marquis of Hartington moved, that Sir Thomas Littleton might fill the chair, and was seconded by the Lord Spencer; and after near two hours debate, the question was put whether he should be speaker or not; yeas 242, noes 135'.[56] Spencer and Hartington then conducted Littleton to the chair where he desired to be excused this responsibility but eventually gave way to the demands of the House.[57] From now on the tide ran against the ministry and they were to prove particularly vulnerable on the question of the

standing army. Lord Spencer, however, was determined to show that he would support the Junto through thick and thin and that he now had no sympathy with Country Whig attitudes.

The division between Court and Country Whigs reached its height over the question of the size of the standing army and no other issue could bind backbench Whig and Tory M.P.'s so closely together.[58] William was greatly concerned at the continuing ambitions of Louis XIV of France and to deal with this threat he wanted to retain as large a standing army as possible, but the Commons were unwilling to continue to maintain a large army after the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697.[59] On 14 December 1698 the King's speech was under consideration when Lord Spencer indicated his approval of William's foreign policy by moving that a supply should be granted to the King.[60] Spencer's motion was laid aside and it was agreed to examine the state of the nation in relation to the army. Lists of the troops in England and Ireland were delivered to the House on 16 December and Harley moved to reduce the army in England to 7,000 men which was accepted without a division. The following day it was resolved that these troops should only include native Englishmen. The House went into committee upon the Disbanding bill on 4 January 1699 and the divisions in the Whig party hampered the administration's attempts to defeat the measure. The only change made was that Scots and Irishmen were to be allowed to be of the 7,000 men. The final reading of the bill took place on 18 January. It had already been predicted that Lord Spencer would oppose disbanding[61] and when the bill was approved by 231 votes to 154 Lord Spencer was in the minority.[62] It was then sent up to the Lords where it was agreed to without amendment and though Somers persuaded William not to carry out his threat to leave the kingdom the King left no doubt of his displeasure at the passage of the Disbanding act when he came to the Lords to accept it on 1 February.[63] Lord Spencer was included in the committee to address thanks to the King for his speech.[64] The defeat over the army was a major setback for the government and it set the tone for an unpleasant year.

The administration was censured in the Commons for mismanagement and corruption at the Admiralty and an inquiry began which assumed the character of a personal attack on Orford. The ministry was unable to carry a proposal to include 300 marines in the seamen who were to be provided for the fleet and the King could not persuade the Commons to allow him to retain his Dutch Guards in England. A Place bill was introduced into the House and the Old East India Company tried to undermine the gains their rivals had made the previous year. Fortunately the Junto were able to withstand most of these attacks, but little progress had been made in supply when a very unsatisfactory session was brought to an end in May 1699. The situation worsened as the ministry began to disintegrate. Shrewsbury had resigned as Secretary of State in December 1698 while Orford, nettled by the attack on the navy, stood down as First Lord of the Admiralty and Treasurer of the Navy. Likewise Montagu gave up the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer preferring the post of Auditor of the Exchequer. These alterations saw the introduction of Jersey, Pembroke, and Lonsdale into the government and though nominally Tories they were primarily loyal servants of the King. As a result of these difficulties Shrewsbury had been trying to bring about a reconciliation with Sunderland but the attempt broke down because of Shrewsbury's ill-health. Sunderland was to have more success with the attempt to marry Lord Spencer to Anne Churchill the daughter of the Earl and Countess of Marlborough.[65]

Lord Spencer's first wife, Lady Arabella Cavendish, had died of smallpox in June 1698[66] and, with rather indecent haste, the following month Lady Sunderland approached the Marlboroughs with a proposal for a marriage between Spencer and Anne Churchill. Though Sarah Marlborough favoured the match her husband did not approve of Spencer and there seemed little chance of success despite the discussions continuing. Sarah kept in contact with Lord and Lady Sunderland through Godolphin and Mrs. Jael Boscawen and by September 1699 Marlborough had given way to his wife. There were numerous reports that an agreement had been reached and the news was confirmed on 26 September.[67] In

December 1699 Sunderland came up to London to complete the formalities of the marriage[68] and he assured the Marlboroughs that Spencer 'will be governed in every thing public and private by Lord Marlborough'.[69] Sunderland was obviously out of touch for by now it was clear that Spencer would only be governed by his own inclinations which were by this time synonymous with those of the Junto. Significantly, when Lord Spencer had come up to London in September 1699, when his engagement had been announced, he immediately waited upon Somers. Vernon told Shrewsbury: 'I hear today that my Lord Chancellor [Somers] has admitted of some visits... my Lord Spencer was with him, and he asked very obligingly about his father's health, and kept up a discourse about him, which he did not do the last time my Lord came from Althorp'.[70] The marriage took place on 2 January 1700 and Princess Anne, despite disapproving of the match because of her hostility to the Spencer family, contributed £5,000 to the bride's dowry and made her a Lady of the Bedchamber.[71] Spencer's connection with the Marlboroughs was to be of the utmost importance in the next reign.

Following his son's marriage Sunderland remained in London at the request of the King to try and come to terms with Robert Harley in order to establish a new administration. The Junto were clearly on the defensive. At the beginning of the parliamentary session in November 1699 a number of attacks were launched against Somers. He was criticised for the piracy of Captain Kidd who had held a commission under the Great Seal, the grant of royal lands, and the alterations which had been made in the County commissions. The pressure was kept up after the Christmas recess and the major issue before the Commons was a bill to resume the grants of forfeited estates in Ireland which the King had given to his favourites. The bill was sent up to the Lords on 2 April 1699 and when the Lords, encouraged by William, amended this measure a dispute broke out between them and the Commons who were unwilling to accept any alterations. Lord Spencer was a member of the committee which drew up the Commons' reasons for opposing the Lords' amendment and was a manager at the

conferences with the Upper House.[72] A major crisis was avoided when the King and the peers gave way on 10 April. Somers, who disapproved of the attempt to block the Resumption bill in the Lords was dismissed by the King on 27 April following the end of the session. The removal of Somers ended the Junto's connection with the Court and a new ministry would have to be formed.[73]

The King again turned to Sunderland who wanted to bring Somers back into the ministry but the former Lord Chancellor would not agree to this plan.[74] The death of Princess Anne's son, the Duke of Gloucester in July 1700 meant that a strong government would be necessary in order to settle the succession. Sunderland now favoured a Tory administration led by Harley and Godolphin. In the summer and autumn of 1700 Sunderland was in contact with Harley and it was Harley's assurances which convinced William of the feasibility of a ministerial reconstruction. In November 1700 Tankerville became Lord Privy Seal and Sir Charles Hedges Secretary of State. The following month Godolphin was declared First Lord of the Treasury, Rochester was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and it was understood that Harley was to be Speaker of the House of Commons. On 17 December the King dissolved Parliament. Though the Tories made significant advances in the North and West of England they did not obtain the sweeping gains they expected and considering recent events the Junto did remarkably well.[75] In September 1700 it was observed that 'Lord Spencer has been at Tiverton to secure his interest there'[76] and the following day Spencer wrote to the Duke of Newcastle 'I am but just come to town from my western journey'.[77] His efforts proved to be successful for he and Bere were again elected at Tiverton.[78] The new Parliament was to show the extent of Lord Spencer's loyalty to the Junto for he remained committed to them even in adversity.

The session began on 10 February 1701 and the King made it plain that he favoured Harley for the speakership of the Commons. William directed Sir Thomas Littleton not to oppose Harley yet Lord Spencer and other Whigs were not prepared to yield without a fight. Sir Edward Seymour nominated Harley and he was seconded by Leveson Gower.

Lord Hartington proposed Sir Richard Onslow and he was supported by Lord Spencer, but Harley was elected by 249 votes to 125.[79] The influence of the Earl of Sunderland on his son was clearly declining and L'Hermitage remarked of Harley: 'On le dit aussi amy du Comte de Sunderland, quoy-que my Lord Spencer, son fils, luy voulut donner l'exclusion, mais le manege et les maximes de ce pays icy estant diferentes de beaucoup d'autres on n'en est pas surpris'.[80] With Harley in a position to dominate the House the new ministry could turn to the question of the succession an issue which gave Spencer a further opportunity to demonstrate where his loyalties lay.

In his speech at the opening of Parliament William had urged that immediate provision should be made to settle the Protestant Succession. On 20 February Harley advised the Commons to turn its attention to this question and six days later, upon Lord Hartington's motion, it was agreed to take up the matter in committee on 1 March 1701. On this day two resolutions were approved. The first specified that the Crown should devolve on the next Protestant line after William, Anne, and their heirs. The second declared that further provision should be made for the securities and liberties of the people. Then 'Lord Spencer moved to name the person (viz.) the Duchess of Hanover and her issue but it was thought improper till these resolutions were reported to the House and agreed to'.[81] The additional safeguards were drawn up in committee in early March. They included: resolutions that all important affairs of state should be transacted by the Privy Council with the members signing their advice; the exclusion of placemen and pensioners from the House of Commons; foreigners were barred from the royal service, both Houses of Parliament, and could not receive royal grants; the kingdom was not to go to war except in defence of land attached to the English Crown and the monarch was not to go abroad without the consent of Parliament. The resolutions 'combined hitherto unsuccessful Country proposals.., with restrictions that reflected the experiences of William's reign and the precedents provided by the marriage contract between Mary Tudor and Philip II of Spain'.[82] Lord Spencer was unlikely to have approved these terms.

The question of a successor was considered on 11 March and John Verney reported:

> We have this day finished our considerations that relate to the succession and have declared the succession to the Duchess Dowager of Hanover and her issue. My Lord Spencer did at the first attempt to nominate her but was stopped till there was a further declaration of the rights of the people. Which being over Sir John Bowles nominated her and introduced it with a very handsome speech. Sir Rowland Gwyn seconded him and so the question passed unanimously and without a debate and my Lord Spencer was disappointed of the merit of the action.[83]

All the resolutions were approved, with minor alterations, the following day and by 22 May the bill had been approved by Parliament without amendment.[84] With the Act of Settlement passed the House turned its attention to foreign affairs.

William had requested Parliament to consider the state of affairs in Europe and had recommended the fitting out of a strong fleet together with provision for the debts and deficiencies remaining from the last war. In reply the peers addressed the King to lay before them all treaties concluded since the Peace of Ryswick. The treaties were delivered on 12 March and among them was the Second Partition Treaty of 1700 though not the First Partition Treaty of 1698. The partition treaties stemmed from William's desire to solve the problem of who was to succeed Charles II as King of Spain and the fate of the vast Spanish Empire without a major European war. Negotiations had started early in 1698 with Louis XIV and in order to facilitate a solution the King had sought the opinion of Somers, Montagu, Vernon, and Orford. They had agreed to fix the Great Seal to the projected treaty before it was completed and without the approval of Parliament in order to help the King. The First Partition Treaty was concluded in September 1698 and under its terms the Electoral Prince of Bavaria was to succeed Charles II. The Prince's death in February 1699 meant a further agreement would be necessary and this resulted in the

Second Partition Treaty of 1700 which was approved after consideration by the English ministers.[85] The second treaty was attacked in the Lords and on 21 March the Lower House addressed William 'to lay before his Majesty the ill consequences of the Treaty of Partition to this Kingdom and the Peace of Europe'.[86] Lord Spencer was named in the committee to draw up the address.[87] Three days later the Commons took up the Lords findings on the treaty and though Portland was impeached for his part in the treaty Somers managed to escape censure. The affair took on a new dimension when Portland, under examination by the Commons, revealed the existence of the First Partition Treaty of 1698.[88]

On 8 April the Commons requested William to lay before them the First Partition Treaty and related documents along with the correspondence between Vernon and Portland. Four days later Lord Spencer was included in the committee to translate the letters of Vernon and Portland.[89] These communications were read on 14 April and the same day it was resolved, by 198 votes to 188, to impeach Somers for ratifying the treaty. Orford and Montagu, who was now Lord Halifax, were also impeached for their involvement. The articles against Orford and Somers were sent up to the Lords in May but the Commons, conscious that the upper House was unlikely to convict the Whig leaders, became involved in a series of disputes with the Lords over procedure and prerogatives. The issue was finally settled in June when Somers was acquitted and the charges against Orford and Halifax were dismissed.[90] Lord Spencer is unlikely to have witnessed the final stages of this dispute for on 21 May he was once again given leave to retire into the country to recover his health.[91] When Spencer returned to London at the end of the year the balance of politics had shifted back towards the Junto.

The impeachments of Somers, Orford, and Halifax illustrated the unwillingness of the Commons to support William's foreign policy and as no definite steps for the defence of Europe could be made without Parliament's approval the King was forced to wait on events. By the summer of 1701 Sunderland, alarmed at the myopia of the administration

he had helped to create, was in touch with Somers and both men were scandalised by Parliament's attitude towards affairs on the continent. Sunderland advised William to consult Somers and to dissolve Parliament. After hesitating the King at last approached Somers through Galway in October 1701 and when Louis XIV recognized James III as King of England William granted Somers' request for a dissolution in November.[92]

The election brought the Whig and Tory parties to a position of near equality in the Commons.[93] Lord Spencer, as usual, was elected at Tiverton.[94] Spencer was also engaged in a careful analysis of the returns of M.P.'s in order to establish the gains made by the Whigs. His calculations show that the Whigs made fifty-two gains and suffered twenty-three reverses which gave them a net gain of twenty-nine. Recent research has confirmed that Spencer's estimate was almost correct as the Whigs appear to have made thirty-two gains rather than twenty-nine.[95] On 17 December the King declared that he supported Sir Thomas Littleton in the election for Speaker and a fortnight later he instructed them to make their decision: 'Lord Spencer acquainted the House, that, their first business being to choose their Speaker, they ought to make a choice of a person of experience in Parliamentary affairs, and of zeal for his country. And, as such, proposed, that Sir Thomas Littleton, who had been formerly Speaker, might be Speaker again.' Spencer was seconded by John Smith, but the Earl of Dysart proposed Harley who was elected by 216 votes to 212.[96] The contest for the speakership had shown that the two parties were closely balanced in the Commons and this situation was to continue into the new year.

At the beginning of January 1702 the King delivered a long and eloquent speech, drawn up by Somers, and both Houses voted strong addresses of support. Lord Spencer was named in the Commons' committee to draw up the address of thanks and was also included in the committee of privileges and elections.[97] Sir Rowland Gwynn reported from the latter committee on 27 January upon the petition of

Irby Montagu against the election of John Comyns for the borough of Malden in Essex. The committee resolved that Comyns, a Tory, was duly elected and the House agreed to this resolution by 226 votes to 208 with Lord Spencer and Sir Walter Yonge acting as tellers for the minority. It was then agreed that Montagu's agent, William Coe, was guilty of bribery and corrupt practices and he was ordered to be taken into the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms.[98]

There was virtual unanimity in the voting of supplies and ways and means but there were fierce party disputes over the Abjuration bill and the report of the Maidstone election while an attempt to revive the impeachments of the previous year came to nothing. The initiative switched from Whig to Tory and then back again and the proposals for a union with Scotland received a favourable response from the Lords and the Whigs in the Commons. A riding accident suffered by the King was not regarded as serious, but as a result of the complications which developed William died on Sunday morning 8 March 1702. Lord Spencer was named in the Commons committee of condolence and congratulation and their address was presented to the new Queen the following day.[99] Queen Anne's inclination towards the Tories and her devotion to the Church of England was reflected in the appointments which followed her accession. Sir Charles Hedges and the Earl of Nottingham became Secretaries of State, Godolphin Lord Treasurer, Marlborough Captain-General, Sir Edward Seymour Comptroller, the Earl of Jersey was named as Lord Chamberlain, Normanby was created Lord Privy Seal while Rochester retained the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. The leaders of the Junto were struck from the rolls of the Privy Council.[100] Lord Spencer, however, once again demonstrated that his loyalty to the Junto was unshakeable and that politically he and his father now had little in common.

On 18 April 1702 the Commons were debating Irish petitions when Henry St. John and Sir John Bolles reflected upon Sunderland for which Bolles was rebuked by Harley:

> My Lord Spencer stood up and said that that gent. [Bolles] had often reflected upon his father, but that he never thought anybody minded what he said and that therefore he was not worth the answering, but now since he had named him he thought himself obliged to say something in his vindication. He said he must own that his father when he was minister of state had committed some faults and so had all those before and since him that he knew of that had been in those great stations, but this he could say for him that he always loved England, valued his native country and never betrayed its interest to France: and that he believed the worst fault his father had was that he could not go into any comply with the councils of those men that had been for forty years last past been selling us to France.[101]

The mildness of Lord Spencer's defence was probably due to his desire to vindicate his father personally, but it left no doubt as to the differences between them politically.

The early months of the new reign were overshadowed by the impending war with France. On 2 May Seymour informed the Commons that the Queen had directed him to lay before them a convention agreed between England, the Dutch Republic, and the Emperor concerning the declaration of war on France and Spain. Lord Spencer was included in the committee to draw up the address of thanks which was agreed to and ordered to be presented by the whole House.[102] A motion was then made to restrict the grant of commissions in the army to officers of English parentage but it was defeated by 94 votes to 91 'Then Mr. Walpole moved to address the Queen that no officer in the army should pay anything for renewing their commissions. The Lord Spencer and I [Sir Richard Cocks] seconded it. Sir Christopher Musgrave said it was reasonable as to the half pay officers but no for the other. I gave the reason for it the charge of their equippage. The question was put and carried.'[103] Two days later war was declared and on 25 May Parliament was dissolved and the Tories had the full backing of the Crown in the election.[104]

For the first time Lord Spencer stood as a candidate in Northamptonshire. He was already campaigning in April and he and Sir St. Andrew St. John challenged the two incumbent Tory M.P.'s Cartwright and Isham.[105] Spencer was supported by his father and Lord Montagu[106] but his most pressing advocate was probably his mother-in-law who was extremely solicitous on his behalf as her letter to Lady Bathurst reveals. Sarah wrote:

> Tis with some trouble that I write to you, dear Lady Bathurst, upon this occasion, because I fear it may be uneasy to Sir Benjamin, who perhaps is engaged, or may not have inclinations to do what I am to desire, which is to assist my Lord Spencer with his interest in Northamptonshire, who designs to stand with Sir (something that I cannot remember) St. John to be Knight of the Shire. You know the relation I have to Lord Spencer who I do really think is upon the whole matter a man of honour and has a great many good things in him, but I know very well that he has never yet been what Sir Benjamin likes in the House of Commons, and that made me begin this letter with a very just apology, for I can't think it reasonable to constrain Sir Benjamin in his choice, nor I can't I [sic] deny anything I can do to serve one I love so well as I do my Lord Spencer. I will therefore leave this matter to you, who can judge what is fit to be done in anything much better than I, and desire only when you are at leisure, some answer for me to give to my Lord Spencer.[107]

A close relationship had obviously developed between Spencer and Sarah Marlborough and it was to be even more important in the following years. Despite all these efforts Lord Spencer and Sir St. Andrew St. John were unable to oust the Tory M.P.'s.[108] To rub salt into the wound the Tories also carried the election for the town of Northampton and 'this may have sent Lord Spencer home very melancholy'.[109] Spencer's list for the election only deals with twelve constituencies[110] and it may be that he gave up his calculations when it became apparent that the Tories were going to win with a large majority.[111] The defeat at Northamptonshire was not personally

significant as far as Spencer was concerned for, upon his father's death on 28 September at Althorp, he had succeeded as third Earl of Sunderland.[112]

Though he had entered Parliament as a Whig in 1695 Lord Spencer's conduct was obviously heavily influenced by his father's inclinations towards the opposition Whigs in the House of Commons. Initially, Spencer was willing to follow his father's lead and fall in with this group. Yet it was plain that he had little sympathy with Country Whig beliefs, particularly when this group of Whigs was ready to co-operate with the Tories, and that his views had much more in common with the attitudes of the leaders of the Whig Junto. There was an obvious conflict between personal and political loyalties and furthermore for a man who was both extremely able and incredibly ambitious, as Lord Spencer was, supporting the Junto seemed to offer the best hope of fulfilling his political aspirations. Lord Spencer's desire to reconcile this conflict probably explains the zeal with which he tried to renew the alliance between his father and the Junto in 1698. When this attempt failed and his father retired to Althorp Spencer made it clear that his chief loyalty was to the Junto and he continued to work industriously on their behalf in the lean years at the end of William's and the beginning of Anne's reign. It was this devotion combined with his political beliefs, personal friendship with the Junto, and his important family connection with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough which encouraged the Junto to admit Spencer into their inner council when he succeeded as Earl of Sunderland in September 1702.

CHAPTER TWO: FROM JUNTO LORD TO SECRETARY OF STATE 1702-1706

'the great reputation your Lordship's behaviour hath everywhere brought to the Queen's service and to your country'

The accession of Queen Anne to the throne had forced the Junto on to the defensive. The new monarch, in terms of personalities and politics, was bitterly opposed to the Whig leadership while the more extreme elements of the Tory party were determined to exploit the favourable turn of events to proscribe the Whigs and to consolidate their own advantage. The situation facing the Junto was not, however, completely without hope. The new administration was based upon a fragile alliance between moderately inclined men such as Marlborough, Godolphin and Harley together with more thorough-going Tories including Nottingham, Rochester and Seymour. Divisions in policy soon began to emerge within the government and the Junto, basing their strength upon their majority in the House of Lords, were determined to use every opportunity to drive a wedge between the moderates and their more zealous High Tory adherents and to offer themselves as alternative partners in a coalition with the Court interest. If the Junto had any doubts about Sunderland's admission to the Whig leadership they were soon dispelled. Sunderland quickly mastered the procedures and practices of the House of Lords and was soon acquainted with the political affiliations of its membership. Utilising this knowledge Sunderland made a decisive contribution to the struggle in the Lords. On every important issue which came before the House from the defeat of the Occasional Conformity bills to the inquiry into the 'Scotch Plot' Sunderland acted as the driving force behind the Junto effort inspiring his colleagues with his youthful zeal, diligence, application, industry and commitment. Sunderland was eager to use

every occasion to demonstrate his devotion to Whig ideals in both Church and State and to emphasise his allegiance to the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover even if it meant alienating the Queen. His contribution on behalf of the Junto was such that when they were in a position to force major concessions from the Court Sunderland was put forward as their candidate for the post of Secretary of State. Though the Queen's hostility to Sunderland had been fuelled by his conduct during these years the support which he and the Junto were able to obtain from Godolphin, Marlborough, and the Duchess of Marlborough was sufficient to overcome the Queen's opposition and force him into office.

I RESISTANCE AND RENEWAL 1702 to 1705

'All honest men who wish well to their Country'

Sunderland's admission into the ranks of the Junto leadership put him at the head of a group of 'Whigs who represented by far the most important element in the party after the Glorious Revolution'.[1] During King William's reign the Junto had been chiefly associated with four outstanding figures. Sir John Somers, later Lord Somers, had been the most prominent member of the Junto during these years and was to serve in a similar role for much of Queen Anne's reign. Somers was an outstanding lawyer and perhaps the most important intellectual in the Whig party; attributes which he combined with personal virtue and political responsibility. Charles Montagu, Lord Halifax, was a man of a different order. He was vain, irascible, restless and ambitious but was also an outstanding debater both in the Commons and the House of Lords and was an acknowledged master of financial administration. The most attractive member of the Junto leadership was Thomas, Lord Wharton. Personally Wharton was almost certainly the most vivid and colourful character of his age and though his conduct was often immoral he was in many ways a man of principle averse

to power and favour purely for their own sake. He was a master of electoral politics in which his courage and resilience doubtless played an important part. Edward Russell, Earl of Orford, took little part in parliamentary politics by 1702 though his personal following in the Commons was invaluable to the Whigs. His reputation far outshone his contribution to the Junto for he was related to the famous Whig martyr, Lord William Russell, he had signed the invitation to William of Orange in 1688, and had defeated the French navy at La Hogue in 1692.[2] These then were the men who were to be Sunderland's closest associates for the next twelve years. The Junto:

> As individuals... were an oddly-assorted bunch. They were cemented together into the most effective political combination of their day neither by kinship nor by compatability of character and temperament, but simply by the strength of the principles which they shared, the compelling force of their mutual quest for power, and a sense of loyalty to each other which in the circumstances of the time was astonishing.[3]

The first years of the new reign were to reveal the strength and dogged perseverance of both Sunderland and the Junto.

The more extreme Tories were hopeful that the support of the Crown would enable them to purge the administration of Whig office-holders, reduce the political influence of the Dissenters, and to bring the Junto to account. Anne, however, like her two closest confidents Marlborough and Godolphin, together with the third member of the Triumvirate Robert Harley, was disposed towards moderation in domestic politics wanting to concentrate on the war against France. These priorities were not shared by the High Tories led by Rochester and Nottingham who wished to establish a Tory ascendancy at home and who also disliked Marlborough's war strategy which involved large-scale military operations against France on the continent. Rochester quickly expressed his opposition to the conduct of the war, even going so far as to oppose the actual declaration of hostilities in May 1702.

Marlborough, angered by Rochester's obstructiveness, suggested in August that he should be sent to Ireland to take up his duties as Lord Lieutenant. The administration was already under strain and further tension seemed likely when Parliament met in October. Encouraged by their success in the election, which had given them a majority of about 133 in the House of Commons, the Tories were preparing to take the offensive.[4]

At the beginning of the session Sunderland was engaged in the work of the committees in the House of Lords which provided an opportunity of acquainting himself with the routine of the House and its membership. Sunderland was a member of the committee appointed to congratulate the Queen's husband, Prince George of Denmark, upon his recovery from a prolonged and dangerous asthmatic attack.[5] Sunderland was also a member of the committee[6] which addressed the Queen not to dismiss William Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester as Almoner, which had been requested by the House of Commons, upon the complaint of Tory M.P., Sir John Packington, because of Lloyd's attempts to prevent him being elected to Parliament. The Queen agreed to this request and as a result the Lords resolved that no 'Lord of this House ought to suffer any sort of punishment, by any proceedings of the House of Commons, otherwise than according to the known and ancient rules and methods of Parliament'.[7] The Lords did achieve some success for the Commons contented themselves with Lloyd's dismissal and did not proceed any further in the matter.[8] This dispute between the two Houses was to set the pattern for the remainder of the parliament's lifetime and at the centre of the conflict was the struggle over the Occasional Conformity bill in which Sunderland was to play a decisive part.

The Occasional Conformity bill was the most cherished measure of the High Tories. Alarmed as they were at the threat posed to the authority of the Church of England by Protestant Dissent the Tory zealots were intent upon striking at the very basis of the Dissenters' political influence. The proposed legislation was designed to remove the anamolies of the Test and Corporation Acts which allowed

Dissenters to take the sacrament according to the rites of the Church, thereby qualifying themselves to hold office, and thereafter to revert to their own Chapels. Transgressors were to be subject to stiff financial penalties and the loss of office. Despite having the approval of the Queen the measure only served to exacerbate the divisions in the government for Marlborough and Godolphin both saw it as unnecessary and deliberately provocative. They realised, however, that they would have to approve the bill to avoid estranging their Tory allies.[9]

The bill easily passed the Commons in November and was brought up to the Lords on 2 December 1702. Rather than rejecting it outright the Whigs added a series of amendments which they hoped would prove unacceptable to the Commons. These included altering the schedule of fines to be imposed and an instruction that prayers should be given for the Queen and the Dowager Electress of Hanover in all private assemblies. The bill, with the alterations, was sent back to the Commons from the Lords on 9 December:

> Immediately a debate began [in the House of Lords] (much heated [by] the E[arl] of Sunderland's affirming that the Commons were just now considering how to tack this [the Occasional Conformity bill] to a money bill) which brought in a division of the house, 51 against 47 and ended in the following order: "that the annexing any clause or clauses to a bill of aid or supply, the matter of which is foreign to and different from the matter of the said bill of aid or supply, is unparliamentary and tends to the destruction of the constitution of this government". All Lords that please had leave given to subscribe this order, which is to be added to the roll or standing orders.[10]

Sunderland, his Junto colleagues, and a further fifty-seven peers took the opportunity to sign this order in the Journal of the House.[11]

On 17 December the Commons requested a conference with the Lords in order to consider the amendments. The Junto, together with other leading Whig peers, were nominated as the Lords' managers at this conference and their report of the proceedings was agreed to by 52 votes to 47 with Sunderland acting as teller for the majority.[12]

The following day the Lords decided to insist on their amendments and a committee was established to draw up their reasons for this resolution which were to be delivered to the lower House at a further conference. The committee was also directed to search for precedents for the House of Lords altering bills containing penalties. Sunderland and his Junto associates were once again named in the committee.[13] The precedents were reported to the House on 8 January 1703 and following a motion by Sunderland it was agreed to insert them in the Journal of the House.[14] Sunderland and the other Junto Lords acted as managers at a further two conferences with the Commons after which the Lords insisted upon their amendments to the bill and it was then rejected.[15] No sooner had the Occasional Conformity bill been thrown out than another parliamentary dispute arose with the bill to settle a revenue upon Prince George of Denmark.

As a result of her anxiety for the welfare of her husband the Queen wished to provide for his maintenance in the event she should pre-decease him. A bill bestowing the sum of £100,000 upon the Prince at the Queen's death was introduced into the Commons where the Tories mischievously added a clause to exempt the Prince from the disabilities imposed on foreigners by the Act of Settlement. This implied that a specific exemption from these penalties was necessary and consequently the estates of King William's Dutch peers were under threat. Concern for the welfare of these Dutchmen and hostility to the tacking of extraneous clauses to money bills, highlighted by Sunderland in the debate on the Occasional Conformity bill, led to stiff opposition in the upper House with the Junto at the centre of the resistance. Sunderland's conduct indicates once more that his chief loyalty was to the Junto even if it meant embarrassing his mother and father-in-law and increasing the Queen's hostility towards him; the promise Sunderland's father made to Marlborough at the end of 1699, that his son would follow Marlborough's advice in all things was shown to be worthless. It was only after a ruling in favour of the Dutch peers by the judges that Prince George's bill passed the Lords by a small majority. The Whigs protested at the clause added to the bill as

well as the clauses which related to grants. Sunderland signed the second protest on 19 January 1703.[16] Sunderland was unconcerned that Marlborough, given the Queen's peronal interest in the bill, was eager that it should pass and Sarah Marlborough was furious at his behaviour while the Queen was unlikely to forget such a slight.[17]

The 1702-1703 parliamentary session came to an end with Sunderland helping Halifax to defeat the attempt, of the Tory dominated Commission of Accounts, to censure him for his handling of public funds in the previous reign.[18] To prevent this dispute getting out of hand the Queen prorogued Parliament on 28 February 1703 and though this helped to reduce the pressure on the government it came too late to prevent the first break in the administration.[19] The uncompromising Toryism of Rochester, together with his insistence that England should concentrate upon a naval war in order to secure trade and possessions rather than engage in military operations in Europe, had finally become too much for Marlborough and Godolphin. Unlike the previous August Marlborough now had the full support of the Queen who was impatient with the presumptious conduct of her uncle. Rochester was instructed to take up his position as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in Dublin and when he refused he was dismissed and replaced by the Duke of Ormonde. Despite rumours to the contrary no further changes were made in the ministry.[20] Sunderland and the Junto were doubtless delighted at the removal of Rochester and it seemed clear that if they continued their strategy of keeping up the political temperature they could force the government into a position where they would have to turn to the Whigs for succour.

If the Queen found Rochester's behaviour obnoxious then it seems obvious that Sunderland's actions were equally likely to displease Anne for her uncle's extravagant Toryism was matched by Sunderland's enthusiastic Whiggery. Sunderland's Whig zeal was conspicuous in both State and Church in the second half of 1703. During the summer Sunderland was using his best endeavours to get Dr. Charles Trimnell appointed as a prebend of Westminster. Trimnell had been intimately

connected with the Spencer family since attending Sunderland's father in Holland in 1689 and he had been on very close terms with Sunderland from at least 1694.[21] Through this connection Trimnell was presented to the rectory of Bodington in Northamptonshire in 1694. Two years later he exchanged this for Brington the Parish in which Althorp stood. In July 1698 Trimnell became Archdeacon of Norfolk and was Chaplain Ordinary to Princess Anne. He was a vehement Whig violently opposed to High Church doctrines and Erastian in his attitude to Church-State relations.[22] Sunderland approached the Archbishop of York on Trimnell's behalf and the Duchess of Marlborough spoke to the Queen.[23] Trimnell's candidacy, however, was to be unsuccessful, but he was to be closely associated with Sunderland for the rest of his career as Bishop of Norwich and then Bishop of Winchester.

Sunderland was also demonstrating his commitment to the Whig cause, in terms of its sentiment and its practical organisation, in November 1703. Since his entry into the Commons as M.P. for Castle Rising Robert Walpole had pursued a strongly pro-Junto course and this, together with his ability in the House, contributed to his esteem in the Whig ranks.[24] At the end of October his fellow Whig James Stanhope wrote to him:

> Having heard that you do not intend to come up till Christmas your friends have commissioned me to write to you. Lord Hartington, Lord Halifax, Mr. Smith and Lord Sunderland are particularly sollicitous about it and as to what concerns the public you might as well not bother coming. Having thus writ I don't presume any thing I say will have any weight but for both the public and myself I would be glad of your company.[25]

Sunderland's relations with both Walpole and Stanhope were to assume greater significance under George I. Sunderland was also active in celebrating the anniversary of William III's birthday. It was reported: 'The last 4th of this month [November] was King William's Birthday. 'Twas kept with illuminations etc., in the chief streets all over the town, and Lord Orford, Lord Sunderland made bonfires etc.,

and at the Kit-cat 'twas very great. Lord Hartington, Duke of Somerset etc., were there. The glass sent down was to the immortal memory of King William.'[26] Sunderland's actions can only have served to heighten the Queen's antipathy towards him.

During the spring and summer of 1703 events both at home and abroad were to illustrate the growing divergence between the Court and its erstwhile Tory allies. Marlborough's efforts on the continent failed to produce any worthwhile result and Louis XIV, who had now been joined by the Elector of Bavaria, was able to hamper the Imperial war effort by stirring up the Emperor's Hungarian subjects. It must have been extremely mortifying for Marlborough to observe that the progress made in the war was largely due to the efforts of Nottingham as Secretary of State. Unlike Marlborough, who was primarily occupied with the campaign in Flanders, Nottingham felt that the war effort should be concentrated in the Mediterranean, on the Iberian Peninsula, and in the West Indies. As part of this strategy Nottingham had helped to promote the Methuen Treaty with Portugal and an alliance with the Duke of Savoy. Nottingham's frequent disputes with the Dutch merely increased Marlborough's resentment. On the domestic front in August Godolphin and Harley, aware of the administration's weakness, tried to reach an agreement with William Bromley, the High Tory M.P. for Oxford University, to help secure the passage of the supply when Parliament met. Though the approaches to Bromley came to nothing Sir Charles Hedges was detached from Nottingham, in October 1703.[27]

Parliament met in November 1703 and the intense party conflict of the previous session was quickly renewed with the introduction of the second Occasional Conformity bill. Marlborough and Godolphin, owing to their growing impatience with the Tory zealots, were now ready to oppose the bill though in public they pretended to approve the measure. More significantly the Queen now had little enthusiasm for the legislation and she was ready to allow Prince George to absent himself from the House of Lords when they considered the bill. Once

again the Tory dominated House of Commons received the bill with great acclaim and its dispatch to the Lords was deliberately designed to coincide with the passage of the Money bill on 14 December 1703. The Junto had been preparing to oppose the Occasional Conformity bill and Sunderland, using his extensive knowledge of the political affiliations of the members of the House of Lords, played a vital part in its defeat by his careful predictions of the outcome of divisions in the chamber.[28] Sunderland drew up his first estimate in November 1703 based upon the division of 16 January 1703 on the penalties clause in the first Occasional Conformity bill. On that day the Whigs had carried the motion by 65 votes to 63 and on this basis, together with an analysis of the Lords who were absent that day but were now present, Sunderland gave the Whigs a majority of two. Sunderland's second list was drawn up after the death of the Bishop of Bath and Wells and probably dates from 8 December 1703. He gave the Whigs a lead of five over the Tories and on the basis of this analysis the Junto felt it was possible to risk a division. A motion for a second reading of the bill was thrown out by 71 votes to 59 on 14 December. Sunderland's prediction of the Whig vote was correct in terms of the total though he did err by identifying Bridgewater as a gain instead of Richmond. Despite winning over Bridgewater and Exeter the Tories lost eight votes including Prince George and as a result Sunderland over-estimated Tory strength. He had, however, amply demonstrated his expert knowledge of the political views of the members of the assembly and the importance of his contribution to the Junto leadership.[29] Up till now the Junto had been on the defensive but the controversy known as the 'Scotch Plot' gave them an opportunity to attack the Tories and put further pressure on the unstable coalition which constituted the government. As with the defeat of the second Occasional Conformity bill it was Sunderland who led the Junto assault.

Throughout 1703 the administration had received repeated warnings of a projected Jacobite insurrection in Scotland. Nottingham, as Secretary of State, had passed these reports to the Court's

representative in Scotland, the Duke of Queensberry. Queensberry, however, was more interested in using this opportunity to stigmatise his opponents north of the border as Jacobites, basing his accusations upon the unreliable testimony of Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat. Upon the promise of further information Queensberry obtained a pass from Nottingham to allow Lovat to go to France. Shortly afterwards the treacherous behaviour of Lovat was made plain in the declarations made by two other Jacobites, Sir John Maclean and Robert Ferguson. It was obvious that the affair had been ineptly handled and in order to prevent a cover up either Devonshire or Somerset, the two Whigs left in the Cabinet, leaked information which forced the government to reveal what had happened. The Lords were informed of the situation by the Queen on 17 December 1703 and a full account of the proceedings was promised.[30] A ballot was taken immediately to appoint a committee to examine James Boucher and other suspects who had been apprehended while coming over from France. The result was a clean sweep for the Whigs with Sunderland, Somers, Wharton, Scarborough, Townshend, Devonshire and Somerset being nominated.[31]

From 18 to 20 December the committee met at Northumberland House in order to cross-examine suspects and to consider correspondence including letters sent to Nottingham. It was Sunderland who shouldered the responsibility for leading the Whig inquiry into the 'Scotch Plot' diligently attending the meetings of the committee and making a detailed account of all the proceedings. From the notes which he made it is apparent that Sunderland pursued every available piece of information with relentless vigour in the hope of turning up some evidence that would discredit Nottingham and allow the Whigs to force him out of office. Sunderland's energy, industry, perseverance, and application in this painstaking and difficult search is quite staggering. The extent of Sunderland's commitment as a politician and the remorseless and determined way he sought any opportunity to victimize his opponents for the benefit of the Whig party is obvious. His stamina, resolution, his capacity for sheer hard work and unceasing toil are remarkable and leave no doubt that politics gave his whole existence

both meaning and purpose. The struggle for power totally consumed Sunderland and his chief loyalty was to his Junto colleagues and to Whig principles; to serve these ends Sunderland was prepared to consider almost any course of action.[32]

On 21 December Devonshire reported to the House of Lords and it was agreed to address the Queen to prosecute James Boucher to which she agreed the following day. The Commons, meanwhile, had complained to the Queen at the Lords taking prisoners into their custody and desired her not to suffer any diminution of her prerogative. In January 1704 the Lords declared that it was their right to examine persons upon criminal matters, condemned the Commons' address to the Queen, and appointed a committee, including Sunderland, to inform Anne of this matter. The Queen gave thanks to the Lords for their concern, but expressed her anxiety at the disputes between them and the Commons.[33]

Papers relating to the affair were delivered to the Lords in January and February 1704[34] and of particular interest were a series of letters in cipher which Sunderland described as 'the Gibberish letters'.[35] Nottingham urged that the committee of inquiry should examine William Keith who, along with Robert Ferguson, had been taken into custody on 11 February. The committee found that Keith had tried to delay the investigation and pronounced that he was not a fit object of the Queen's mercy.[36] Little progress had been made in deciphering 'the Gibberish letters' and a proclamation was issued for persons to come forward and assist the examination in return for a reward.[37] The committee's scrutiny of this correspondence was assisted by a cipher which was delivered to them and Sunderland was once again at the head of the search decoding and meticulously analysing the papers for any thing which could be used against Nottingham.[38] Unfortunately his efforts did not yield the information he so eagerly sought as he himself declared:

> The committee in pursuance of the power given to them by the House proceeded to treat about the explanation of the gibberish letters and they have attained to the knowledge of the greatest part of what is contained in them but

> not to the knowledge of the persons to whom they are directed or the persons named in them. And at last the committee so far prevailed as to gain a consent to lay the general account hereafter following of the substance of the letters before the House, so as in all other points the terms insisted on before were strictly observed.[39]

On 23 February 1704 Sunderland, Devonshire, Somerset, Scarborough, Townshend, Wharton, and Somers were appointed as a committee to make further inquiries into the plot.[40] The committee again met at Northumberland House and they examined prisoners continuously from 23 February to 17 March 1704 and on one occasion they went to Newgate prison in order to examine James Boucher. Sunderland again directed the inquiry making a detailed account of the committee's proceedings with his usual aggressive determination and devotion, but as in December 1703 he was unable to obtain anything concrete against Nottingham.[41]

Somerset reported the committee's examination and two days later, on Wednesday 22 March, the House passed several resolutions to the effect that there had been a dangerous conspiracy in Scotland to subvert the government and bring in the Pretender; that the greatest encouragement to this unrest was that the succession in Scotland had not been settled in the House of Hanover; that the Queen should undertake to settle the succession and to frustrate the designs of her enemies; and finally that when the succession in Scotland had been determined the House would do all in its power to promote a union of the two kingdoms of England and Scotland. Sunderland was named in the committee to address the Queen upon these heads. An attempt to censure Nottingham over his handling of the examination of Sir John Maclean was beaten off and the Junto Lords and other prominent Whigs protested at this resolution. A similar fate befell the attempt to bring Maclean to the bar of the House to be heard on criticisms of Nottingham's inquiry. On 25 March, however, the Whigs carried a resolution condemning the failure to prosecute Robert Ferguson for his attempt to discredit the claims that there

had been a conspiracy in Scotland. At the end of the month the Queen, in reply to the address of 22 March, declared her resolve to settle the succession in Scotland as a preliminary to a union.[42]

Sunderland had directed the Junto's campaign during the 'Scotch Plot' and he was also involved, less prominently, in the disputes between the Lords and Commons over the disfranchising of Whig electors at Aylesbury and the amendments which the upper House made to the Public Accounts bill. In both instances Sunderland assisted his Junto colleagues in the work of the committees appointed by the Lords and as a manager at conferences with the Commons. He would certainly have applied himself with the same vigour, enthusiasm, and determination he had adopted in the inquiry into the 'Scotch Plot'. Neither of these quarrels had been determined when the Queen prorogued Parliament on 3 April 1704 to put an end to the squabbling of Lords and Commons.[43] Sunderland must have been delighted at his efforts to defeat the second Occasional Conformity bill and in the examination of the 'Scotch Plot' for it was his endeavours which helped to precipitate Nottingham from office.

Exasperated by the setback over Occasional Conformity and the criticism of his handling of the 'Scotch Plot' Nottingham was determined to force the remaining Whigs out of the Cabinet and if he did not receive satisfaction he was intent upon resigning. Nottingham was unaware of the decision to dismiss Sir Edward Seymour and the Earl of Jersey and, consequently, the Queen was able to persuade him to retain the Seals, but news of these dismissals produced his formal resignation on 22 April 1704. It was rumoured that Sunderland would be created Lord Chamberlain or Secretary of State.[44] The problem facing Marlborough and Godolphin was to find a suitable candidate for the post of Secretary of State. Their alliance with the High Tories was at an end whilst the Queen was opposed to any of the leading Whigs. They eventually persuaded Robert Harley to accept the position and it was the natural choice for Harley and the Duumvirs had worked effectively together from the beginning of the reign. Harley's allies Sir Thomas Mansell and Henry St. John became Comptroller of the

Household and Secretary-at-War respectively, and a Whig nonentity, the Earl of Kent, was made Lord Chamberlain. The ministry, however, was even more vulnerable than before for with the more extreme Tories in opposition the administration would be unable to manage Parliament if they were attacked by the High Tories and the Junto simultaneously.[45] The problems which faced the government in managing Scotland gave the Junto an opportunity to exploit this weakness.

The session began well with the defeat of the third bill against Occasional Conformity in November 1704. The Tories had tried to ensure the passage of the bill through the Lords by 'tacking' it to the Land Tax legislation. Harley and Godolphin, through an intense lobbying of M.P.'s, had managed to outwit the Tory zealots and the 'Tack' was defeated by 251 votes to 134 on 28 November. The Occasional bill by itself passed through the House of Commons but was rejected in the Lords on its second reading by 71 votes to 54 with Sunderland again almost certainly prominent in opposing the bill.[46] Sunderland and the Junto, however, were able to harass the ministry over Scottish affairs.

The investigation into the 'Scotch Plot' had left the administration committed to settling the succession in Scotland. To achieve this end Godolphin had turned to the Marquis of Tweeddale and his Country party (known variously as the New Party or the Squadrone) to carry the Hanoverian Succession through the Scottish Parliament. Regrettably, Tweeddale and his followers were not up to the task and the Act of Security, which empowered the Scottish Parliament to provide for the descent of the Crown of Scotland irrespective of who ruled in England, was again passed on 5 August 1704. Under considerable pressure Godolphin had advised the Queen to approve the Act of Security. The Act was intensely unpopular in England and Godolphin could expect severe criticism in Parliament.[47]

On Friday 10 November Lord Haversham moved:

that all the Lords might be summoned against Monday he having several matters then to move, wherein the honour and security of the nation and religion were much concerned. Lord Sunderland proposed that the House might rather be called over and that the Lord Keeper issue out his letters to all absent Lords against Thursday sennight. Which was ordered accordingly. The said Lord Sunderland moved also that an humble address might be made to her Majesty... that she'd please to have a regard to the Protestant refugees in the Galleys, upon the exchange of the Bishop of Quebec and other ecclesiastics taken this summer by the [ship] Dreadnought and now prisoners in England. Upon which, the Lord Treasurer observed.., that the French King would look on the refugees as his own subjects, and would (therefore) hardly give them in exchange. But, however, he approved the motion (manifestly concerted) as what might show an acceptable concern in this House for the Protestant interest. So 'twas ordered.[48]

Sunderland's first motion was probably designed to allow the Junto to rally their supporters up to the House of Lords for the debate. His second motion was almost certainly an attempt to test Godolphin's responsiveness to offers of assistance for the administration from the Junto.

The debate began on 23 November with Haversham assailing the administration over the navy, the state of the coinage, the Act of Security and Scottish policy in general. After discussion a committee was appointed, to which Sunderland was nominated,[49] to consider the condition of the navy. It was agreed to look into Scottish affairs on the following Wednesday and the question of the coinage was pushed aside. On that day the House was in a committee of the Whole with Sunderland as chairman and the Queen in attendance.[50] Godolphin was soon in difficulty over the decision to give the royal assent to the Act of Security and while Halifax was attacking the government Wharton slipped over to speak with the Lord Treasurer. After a short exchange Wharton returned to his place and after conferring with

Somers and Halifax the course of the debate changed. When Haversham moved that the question be put as to whether the situation in Scotland had become dangerous as a result of the Act of Security Somers argued that the question was unnecessary and it was agreed to adjourn. Sunderland reported to the House that the 'committee had been in consideration of the State of the Nation with reference to Scotland and desire another time may be appointed, for the House to be in committee again'.[51]

By now the crisis was over as far as the ministry was concerned and the further proceedings of the committee, with Sunderland in the chair, made it clear that some tentative agreement had been reached between Godolphin and the Junto. With Sunderland carefully controlling the committee the heads of a bill on Scottish affairs were drawn up and reported by him on 11 December 1704;[52] they formed the basis of the Aliens Act. The terms were: after Christmas Day 1705 most Scots in England and Ireland would be regarded as aliens; the export of sheep, cattle, and wool from Scotland to England and Ireland was prohibited; and measures would be taken to stop Scottish trade with France. Other measures discussed by the Lords in December 1704 were allowed to drop, while the inquiry into the navy achieved little apart from allowing the Junto to keep the pressure on Godolphin. The co-operation between him and the Junto led to rumours that Sunderland was to be Secretary of State and Somers Lord President of the Council.[53] These reports proved to be unfounded, but the administration did begin to make concessions to the Whigs with the appointment of Sunderland's former father-in-law, John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, as Lord Privy Seal in the spring of 1705.[54] The Parliamentary session once again came to an end with a dispute between the Lords and Commons over an attack on the rights of the Whig voters at Aylesbury. Sunderland was again active in the conflict serving as a manager at the conferences with the House of Commons and reporting what had passed to the House. As with the previous electoral haggle between Lords and Commons the Queen brought the wrangle to an end by dissolving Parliament on 14 March 1705.[55]

The elections for the new Parliament in April and May 1705 saw the administration attempting to reduce the political influence of the High Tories by excluding from the Commons most of the Tories who had voted for the 'Tack' in November 1704. There is little evidence for Sunderland's electoral activities though it is certain he would have spared no effort to secure the return of as large a number of Whig M.P.'s as possible. His endeavours in Northamptonshire were unsuccessful for the two incumbent Tory members were again elected.[56] Sunderland exhibited his usual interest in the outcome of the election and a list of returns drawn up at this time gave the Whigs a net gain of 61. Sunderland's list was almost correct for recent research has shown that before election petitions were considered the Whigs had secured an extra 58 seats.[57] Following the election there were about 267 Tory members to 246 Whigs in the Commons which was a substantial shift of power away from the Tories with the Court now holding the balance between the two parties. About a third of the 'Tackers' failed to be re-elected but the attempt to keep the Tories divided failed, partly due to ministerial mishandling of relations with moderate Tories, but also because of the fierce party propaganda employed during the election.[58]

In less than three years the fortunes of the Junto had been transformed. At the start of the reign they were consigned into the political wilderness, yet, by the beginning of 1705, an effective working relationship had been established with the Court. Sunderland must take much of the credit for this success. The force of his personality added a new and vigorous dimension to the Junto's conduct. Ostentatiously proclaiming his devotion to Whig principles and to his Junto colleagues, even at the price of antagonising the Queen, Sunderland launched the Junto on the road to power. He used his expert knowledge of the House of Lords to thwart the ambitions of his Tory opponents and to loosen the ties which bound them to the Court. Building upon this success, while he was at the centre of the continual disputes between the Lords and Commons, Sunderland

proceeded to wreck the Court-Tory alliance by his ruthless and vindictive pursuit of Nottingham. With the collapse of the ministerial coalition which left the Court politically isolated the Junto were now ready to offer their support. It was Sunderland who made the first approach to Godolphin and who showed, in his chairmanship of the inquiry into Scottish affairs, the value of the Junto's assistance. The Junto's price for their help was high office in the administration and there was no more appropriate a candidate than Sunderland especially given his relationship with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough. That the newest and youngest member of the Junto should be the first to enter the government was perhaps surprising, but his conduct from 1702 to 1705 shows that of the leaders of the Junto none had a better claim to power than Sunderland.

II THE DRIVE FOR OFFICE 1705 to 1706

'A disposition to make Lord Sunderland Secretary'

In return for their benevolence the Junto wanted a major concession from Godolphin and they took advantage of his problems in finding a suitable envoy to be sent to Vienna by suggesting that Sunderland should be employed on condition that when he returned to England he would be appointed Secretary of State. Godolphin readily agreed to these terms for he knew that without the aid of the Junto the ministry would be in an impossible predicament surrounded by hostile Whigs as well as Tories. The Lord Treasurer had to go to considerable lengths, however, to get the Queen to approve Sunderland's being sent and this difficulty forshadowed the conflict which preceded Sunderland's promotion to the Secretaryship. Sunderland fulfilled the expectations of his colleagues during his mission, acquitting himself with considerable success and, upon his return to England, it was expected that Godolphin would fulfil his part of the bargain.

Godolphin, however, does not seem to have been in any great hurry to implement the agreement probably because he was aware of the depth of the Queen's hostility to Sunderland. The Junto, however, were determined to get their reward and as the months passed the necessity of satisfying their demands became more and more urgent. The outcome was a prodigious struggle between the Duumvirs (with interventions by Sarah Marlborough) and the Queen who had the backing of Robert Harley who, like Anne, was thoroughly averse to the Junto.

Sunderland's mission to Vienna arose out of the intrinsically hostile relations existing between the Emperor and his Hungarian subjects in the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth-centuries. The most recent example of this strained association was the Rácóczi rebellion which broke out in 1703 and Louis XIV was able to undermine the Imperial war effort by helping the insurgents. To bring about an accommodation with the Hungarians Emperor Leopold requested England and the Dutch to act as mediators in the dispute. The problem facing Godolphin was that the English envoy at Vienna, George Stepney, was believed to be too sympathetic towards the rebels and this, combined with his low social standing, roused the ire of the Imperial ministers. Godolphin also had major difficulties finding a suitable replacement, whilst the death of the Emperor meant that a special envoy would have to be sent to present condolences and congratulations to the new ruler.[59]

On 15 May 1705 Halifax wrote to the Duchess of Marlborough telling her that he had been visited by Godolphin:

> He spoke to the sending of some man of quality to Vienna, in such a manner, as if he would have had us propose somebody to be employed in that compliment. I was not prepared to offer one and that discourse fell. I have since thought that if there was a disposition to make Lord Sunderland Secretary, the employing him on such an embassy, for three or four months, might properly introduce him into the method of the business, the Queen

would be better acquainted with him, and he would soften by degrees. If the Emperor ever makes peace with the Hungarians it will be done on his first entrance on the government, and it would give great reputation to the English minister that was then employed... Your Grace can best determine whether such a short excursion would bring him quicker into the Secretary's office, and I would turn my judgement by that.[60]

Though the Duchess could see little value in Sunderland going to Vienna she gave her approval and with Godolphin agreeing to the choice of Sunderland, Halifax, Somers, and the Duke of Montagu all urged Sunderland to accept the embassy.[61] The Queen, unfortunately, did not share the zeal for Sunderland's appointment and there appears to have been some uncertainty in late-May and early-June 1705 whether he would actually go to Vienna.[62] The Queen, however, gave way and told Godolphin to 'speak to that person you proposed should go to Vienna to try whether he will care for that employment'. Yet it is clear that Godolphin had to go as far as threatening to resign before Anne would yield.[63] By 12 June 1705 Sunderland was known to have been accredited with the embassy to Vienna.[64] His instructions were issued at Windsor on 17 June and they not only included directions about his mission to Vienna, but also orders to consult with Marlborough and to persuade Pensionary Heinsius to settle the command of the allied troops in Portugal upon the English commander, Lord Galway.[65] Marlborough appears to have been responsible for the suggestion that Sunderland should visit him on his way to Vienna.[66] On 20 June Godolphin informed Lady Marlborough that, when Sunderland kissed hands on his mission to Vienna, 'the Queen seemed to be very well satisfied with Lord Sunderland's behaviour to her, and I think he had reason to be so with hers'.[67] Before Sunderland left for the continent the groundwork for his talks with the Dutch was being laid and he was also advised to court goodwill in the Republic.[68] On 26 June Godolphin gave Sunderland the last of his instructions to request the Emperor to replace Prince Louis of Baden as commander of the forces on the Rhine.[69] The same day Sunderland embarked at Greenwich and arrived at The Hague three days later.[70]

As soon as he arrived in the Dutch Republic Sunderland was unable to conceal his impatience to return to England[71] and it is obvious that he had only agreed to the mission to Vienna because he would be made Secretary of State when he came back home. As Alexander Stanhope told George Stepney at Vienna: 'You will be very happy in my Lord Sunderland who speaks of you with great respect and esteem. His behaviour to me is very free and obliging. All those lately come from England tell me for certain that at his return he will be Secretary of State in Sir Charles [Hedges] room.'[72] Even with the assistance of the Duke of Portland the negotiations at The Hague did not go as smoothly as Sunderland would have wished and there was considerable opposition to the attempt to get Galway put at the head of the troops in Portugal.[73] Eventually a tentative agreement was drawn up whereby command would alternate between Galway and the Dutch commander, Fagel, in the ratio of two campaigns to one respectively. The Dutch deputies also agreed to press the King of Portugal, in conjunction with the Queen, to join 13,000 of his troops to those of the allies. The States General quickly agreed to the second proposal, but the issue of command of the army would first have to be ratified by the Council of State.[74] In the interim the projected agreement was unacceptable in England and Harley instructed Stanhope to try and get a provisional settlement under which Galway would command the army during the next campaign and then a more permanent arrangement would be hammered out between England and the Dutch.[75] Sunderland left Stanhope to continue the discussions and he was soon informed of the frigid response of the Dutch to Harley's initiative.[76]

Sunderland arrived at Marlborough's camp at Meldert on 19 July 1705[77] and the chief topic under consideration was the command of the allied forces on the Rhine. Sunderland had received further injunctions from Godolphin and Harley urging him to press the Emperor to recall Prince Louis,[78] and he was now given detailed instructions, on how to conduct himself at Vienna, by Marlborough. Sunderland was to ask the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor Wratislaw to remove Prince Louis from his command; Sunderland was to obtain leave for

Marlborough to go to Vienna at the end of the campaign; he was to rely on the assistance and advice of Wratislaw and to concert measures with the Hanoverian envoy at Vienna; and finally Sunderland was to try and patch up Stepney's relations with Wratislaw and to inform the Imperial minister that as soon as a place could be found for Alexander Stanhope Stepney would be transferred to The Hague.[79] Sunderland left Marlborough on 26 July and the Duke observed that Sunderland was 'much more moderate than usual, so that I hope this journey will do him good'.[80] The Duke's confidence was probably fortified as a result of the considerable efforts he had made on Sunderland's behalf, and in particular his attempts to assuage the fears of Wratislaw that Sunderland and Stepney would try to establish a Republic in Hungary.[81]

Though Marlborough had expressed some reservations about the prospects for the mediation between the Emperor and the Hungarians[82] Sunderland was deeply pessimistic about achieving anything. On 9 August he wrote to Godolphin telling him as much,[83] and Sunderland's fears were doubtless increased by the far from sanguine reports he received from George Stepney[84] yet it is apparent that, as at The Hague, Sunderland was in a hurry to get back to England and was apprehensive that the mediation with the Hungarians might prove to be a long drawn out affair, and could lead to someone else obtaining the post of Secretary of State. Sunderland's fears are manifest in a letter to Harley. He declared:

> I find by Mr. Stepney we have hopes of beginning a treaty within a few days, but I fear there is not much reason to expect to bring it to a conclusion. However, if once we get it afoot we shall soon be able to judge whether they will trifle with us to eternity as, I must own, I am very much afraid they will.[85]

The situation Sunderland found at Vienna, where he arrived on 15 August 1705, seemed to confirm his fears. The new Emperor had agreed to renew the Anglo-Dutch mediation but was less inclined towards compromise and had sent the Hungarian field army into Transylvania. By so doing Joseph hoped to strengthen his bargaining position, while the rebel leader,

Prince Ráckóczi, had summoned a meeting of the Hungarian nobility to the same end.[86]

On 17 August 1705 Sunderland's audience with the Emperor and Empress took place and after the Emperor had assured Sunderland of his desire for an accommodation with the Hungarians, Sunderland, Stepney and the Dutch mediators presented a memorial concerning the peace negotiations. Sunderland was not optimistic as he informed Secretary Harley,[87] and eleven days later Sunderland wrote to Godolphin and this time he made no attempt to disguise his impatience and discontent. Sunderland unburdened himself:

> The affairs of Hungary are perfectly at a stand with us till we have some return from the deputies, but by our private informations here, and the disposition of the armies in that country, we have reason to apprehend that neither this Court, nor the chiefs of the Hungarians, will ever decide this matter otherwise than by arms, so that I must beg of you, my Lord, according to your kind promise, before I left England, not to leave me in this country to no purpose, but to let me have a letter, with directions from the Queen, to take my leave of this Court as soon as we shall see there's no hopes of bringing these matters to any conclusion. Monsieur D'Amelo is so much of this mind that he writ to the States, the last post, to desire the like orders for himself, as they had also promised him before he came. And indeed, as I have writ to Mr. Secretary, I can't but think it's very necessary we should be armed with such directions as soon as possible, and I hope by the first post, for otherwise we may run the hazard of staying here maybe two months, after all hopes of any treaty is gone, which would not have a very good appearance for the Queen or States, or for us that are their ministers. My Lord I rely upon your favour and goodness in this matter, for besides the reasons I have already given the only happiness I desire in this world is to see England and those I left in it.[88]

Sunderland made a similar request to Harley and Sunderland now put the blame for the lack of progress in the mediation upon the Hungarians.[89] The Cabinet agreed to Sunderland's plea on 17 September and he was told of the decision by Harley who also forwarded Sunderland's warrant and

letters of revocation.[90] Sunderland did not return immediately because he was waiting for his father-in-law to arrive at Vienna. Deadlock persisted throughout September but by 20 October N.S. the Hungarians were ready to negotiate and preparations were underway to begin the discussions.[91] There was an initial dispute about where the Hungarian commissioners were to be located and this led to a further outburst of resentment by Sunderland against the Hungarians.[92] The talks made little headway and by 27 October 1705 Sunderland was back at Vienna where he informed William Cowper that neither side had much inclination for peace.[93] A week later Sunderland told Harley:

> Mr. Stepney has given you an account of our Hungary affairs so that I won't give you the trouble of repeating it. You will see by what he writes that hopes of peace are remoter every day than other, however we do what we can to keep the negotiation afoot, that whenever any favourable opportunity happens those who will be here from England and Holland, when we are gone, may improve it to the best advantage. Lord Marlborough came here the day before yesterday.[94]

Marlborough's arrival at Vienna marked the successful culmination of the scheme outlined to Sunderland at Meldert in July and August 1705. Sunderland had spoken to the Emperor about removing Prince Louis of Baden from the command of the army on the Rhine and both the Emperor and Wratislaw agreed to write to Marlborough requesting him to make a short visit to Vienna in order to settle this matter. The Emperor also instructed his envoy in London, Count Gallas, to get the Queen to allow Marlborough to go to Vienna for a few days at the end of the campaign. Sunderland wrote detailed letters to both Godolphin and Harley, obviously designed to be used to persuade the Queen to agree to the Emperor's request, explaining the reasons for Marlborough's visit to Vienna. Sunderland deserves considerable credit for successfully carrying out his father-in-law's directions.[95] At Vienna the Emperor informed Marlborough that it was inconceivable to replace Prince Louis though Marlborough promised a loan of £250,000 from England and the Dutch to finance the Imperial reinforcement which had

been sent to Italy.[96] This reinforcement had been agreed on largely through the efforts of Sunderland, Stepney and the Dutch mediators.[97] Sunderland took leave of the Emperor on 19 November N.S. and he and Marlborough left Vienna four days later.[98]

On 1 December N.S. Sunderland and Marlborough arrived at Berlin where the Duke persuaded the Prussian Court to maintain their contingents of troops on the Rhine and in Italy. From Berlin they proceeded to Hanover where feathers ruffled by the defeat of Lord Haversham's motion in the House of Lords in November, to invite the Dowager Electress of Hanover to reside in England, were smoothed. Marlborough also persuaded the Elector of Hanover not to recall his troops from the allied army. Sunderland and Marlborough then travelled to The Hague in order to embark for England. Their departure was delayed by contrary winds and it was only on 7 January 1706 N.S. that they boarded the Peregrine yacht and sailed for home; they arrived in London on 31 December 1705.[99]

Sunderland's achievements on the continent were clearly significant while he had gained valuable diplomatic experience and knowledge of England's principal partners in the conflict with France. He had been moderate and cautious in his actions and had closely followed the advice and counsel of Marlborough in conducting himself at Vienna. The subtlety and tact with which he handled the Emperor and the Imperial ministers together with the sympathy he had shown for the Imperialists in their troubles with the Hungarians created a very favourable impression. Wratislaw, who to begin with had been highly suspicious of Sunderland, declared 'Cette Cour est tres contenté avec des manieres et de la conduite de my Lord Sunderland'.[100] As a result of Sunderland's endeavours at Vienna reinforcements were sent to Italy and Marlborough was able to visit the Imperial capital and prepare for the forthcoming campaign. Robert Harley wrote, congratulating Sunderland, that it was a pleasure 'to hear from all hands the honour wherewith you have sustained the employment you have undertaken. It is not only from Count Zinzendorf's letter to [the] D[uke of] Marlborough but from divers others that I learn the great

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reputation your Lordship's behaviour hath everywhere brought to the Queen's service and to your country'.[101] Sunderland appears to have successfully concealed, at least from foreign observers, his impatience to return to England. His pessimism about the possibility of a quick solution to the Hungarian problem was shared by Somers and Marlborough and his views were shown to be correct for it was only in 1711 that a treaty was agreed between the Emperor and his Hungarian subjects.[102]

Sunderland's desire to return to England can only have been increased by the news which reached him while he was abroad. In October 1705, despite the opposition of the Queen and Harley, the Whig, William Cowper, succeeded Sir Nathan Wright, a Tory, as Lord Keeper. Godolphin, in contrast to Harley, had worked with Somers and Halifax to secure Cowper's appointment and the different attitudes of the Lord Treasurer and the Secretary of State towards the Whigs were increasingly noticeable.[103] Sunderland congratulated Cowper upon his promotion, remarking:

> I received by yesterday's post the agreeable and welcome news of her Majesty's having given the Great Seal to your Lordship, which I congratulate, both upon your own account as well as that of the public. I own I have expected this news with a great deal of impatience ever since I left England and, after this, I can't doubt that everything will be done to the satisfaction of all honest men who wish well to their country.[104]

More significantly when Parliament met Godolphin made a decisive shift towards the Whigs. In the contest for the speakership of the House of Commons the Court backed the Junto's candidate, John Smith, who, in a full House, defeated the High Tory, William Bromley, by 248 votes to 206.[105] As the session progressed the bonds linking the Whigs to the Court grew tighter as Tory policy became increasingly reckless.

On 15 November 1705 Lord Haversham moved that the dowager Electress Sophia of Hanover should be invited to reside in England to safeguard

the Protestant Succession. The intention behind this Tory proposal was to embarrass both the Court and the Whigs; to support the motion would alienate the Queen whilst failure to do so would cause unrest at Hanover. Godolphin, however, had consulted with the Whigs beforehand and the motion was heavily defeated much to the delight of the Queen. The Whigs then introduced a Regency bill which set forth that, in the event of the Queen's death, Parliament and the Privy Council would continue to sit and the kingdom would be governed by Lords Justices until the Hanoverian successor arrived. This was followed by further legislation to naturalise Sophia and her heirs. Both measures had been approved by the Lords at the beginning of December. The Tories, almost in desperation perhaps, then raised the question of the 'Church in Danger'. The motion was debated in the Lords and Somers' motion, rejecting the validity of this assertion, carried by 61 votes to 31. The Church was declared to be flourishing and anyone maintaining the contrary was stigmatised as an enemy to the Queen, the Church, and the Kingdom. The Commons echoed this verdict on 8 December 1705 and a joint address was presented to the Queen to proceed against those who originated such rumours.[106] Sunderland relished, as he told Lady Marlborough, the 'defeats of the French in both Houses for I think they are of as great a consequence as victories abroad'.[107] At his return Sunderland was soon back at the centre of the Junto's activities.

In January 1706 Sunderland was involved in the debates in the Lords on the amendments which the Commons had made to the Regency bill. The alteration which excluded office-holders from the Commons was opposed by Wharton who moved to adjourn the debate on this clause. 'The motion was seconded by Lord Sunderland who hinted at the haste wherein the Lords were forced to pass the forementioned bill. Accordingly the debate was adjourned (nem. con.) till Thursday.'[108] When the consideration was resumed on Thursday 31 January Nottingham complained of the powers given to the Lords Justices by the Regency bill to which 'Lord Sunderland said this arraigning of what had already obtained the fiat of the House was not parliamentary and that

he well remembered the House of Commons had sent one Jennings to the Tower for the like crime.'[109] Eventually the Lords agreed to repeal the self-denying clause in the Act of Succession together with a further clause which required Privy Councillors to subscribe to all the acts of the Council,while the commissioners of prizes and newly created offices were to be barred from sitting in Parliament. The Commons would not accept these changes and Sunderland acted as one of the Lords' managers in the discussions between the two Houses.[110] The problems stemmed from the opposition of Country Whigs in the lower House who were always tenacious in their opposition to placemen. The Junto brought considerable pressure to bear on this Whig group and a compromise was obtained. The list of excluded officers was increased, those who remained in Parliament would have to be re-elected, and the clauses were to be effective from the end of the present Parliament. The bill, along with the amendments, passed the Commons on 15 February 1706.[111] As a further concession to the Whigs Halifax was appointed special envoy to Hanover to carry over the Regency legislation and he took with him letters from several Whig peers including Sunderland, Somers, Cowper, Newcastle, Wharton, Orford and Rivers.[112] Sunderland assured the Elector of Hanover that no-one was more capable than Halifax 'd'informer vostre altesse Electorale... de toutes les personnes qui ont toujours temoigné le plus veritable pour la succession comme de ceux l'ont aussi constamment opposée'.[113] Sunderland was also closely involved in the negotiations to bring about a union of England and Scotland.

Originally the Junto's chief interest in Scotland had been in securing the Hanoverian Succession in that kingdom, but, surprisingly, the Scottish Parliament of 1705 had shown no interest in the succession yet agreed to negotiate a treaty of union and gave the Queen the power to nominate the Scottish commissioners. The Junto quickly changed policy,adopting the union as their own in order to gain maximum political advantage. Somers carried through the repeal of all the clauses in the Aliens Act except that allowing commissioners to be

nominated to treat for a union. Godolphin, much to Harley's dissatisfaction, was prepared to let the Whigs take the lead in this matter. The Junto and the Duke of Queensberry arranged the choice of the Scottish commissioners and they were a virtual Queensberry monopoly. The English commissioners were chosen just prior to the discussions and sixteen of them were Junto men, including Sunderland, Somers, Wharton, Halifax, and Orford.[114] The greater part of the arrangements were agreed to privately beforehand by the Junto and part of the Scottish commission. Formal discussions began on 16 April 1706 and an incorporating union was quickly agreed upon and the Scots were to trade freely within the Empire and it was this which proved to be the foundation of the treaty. Scottish membership at Westminster was settled at sixteen representative peers, chosen by the Scottish nobility, and forty-five M.P.'s. In return for their contribution to the revenue of Great Britain the Scots received an equivalent of £398,085 10s. The treaty was signed on 22 July 1706 and was presented to the Queen at St. James's the following day; all that remained was for it to be ratified by the English and Scottish parliaments.[115] The Junto now turned its attention to the question of Sunderland's appointment as Secretary of State.

Once Sunderland had returned from Vienna it was generally accepted that he would replace Sir Charles Hedges as Secretary of State for the South.[116] Reports to this effect were still circulating in March[117] and by now the Junto were unhappy with Godolphin for failing to carry out his promise made in May 1705. In April 1706 Godolphin informed Marlborough of the difficulties he was having with both the Queen and the Whigs.[118] It is not difficult to account for the Queen's hostility to Sunderland. She had disliked his parents intensely and had opposed his marriage to Anne Churchill while Sunderland himself had served to increase Anne's antipathy towards him.[119] He had opposed the bill to settle a revenue on Prince George in 1702 and his unbending adherence to Whig principles did not go down well with the Queen to say the least. Anne 'had escaped the overbearing extremism

of Rochester and Nottingham and had no wish to have another extremist in government office'.[120] That Sunderland was Marlborough's son-in-law probably carried little weight with the Queen.

Because of his difficulties in persuading the Queen to agree to Sunderland's promotion Godolphin sought Marlborough's help and between them they arranged that Marlborough should write to her advising Sunderland's appointment.[121] The Queen replied:

> you may easily believe I shall be very willing to grant any request you make for anybody that I can especially for one who is so near to you and has shown so much zeal for my service as Lord Sunderland has lately done, but you know very well it is not in my power at this time to comply with your desire.[122]

Sunderland was surprised when his mother-in-law told him of the Queen's answer. He remarked:

> As to what you mention in relation to me and Mrs. Morley's [the Queen] answer, I own it is a great deal more favourable than I expected, having been represented to her, I suppose, as having cloven feet; but be that as it will, I shall have, and act with the same zeal always for her service, and I own I have no other concern in this matter, but that one would not make a very ridiculous figure which next to doing an ill thing I would always endeavour to avoid.[123]

The Queen did not discuss Marlborough's letter with either Godolphin or the Duchess. The Duke was confident that, given time, the Queen would accept Sunderland and derided his wife's fears that there was a secret influence at work upon Anne. The apprehensions of the Duchess, however, were to prove well founded.[124]

In July Godolphin wrote to Marlborough requesting some remarks in favour of Sunderland to put to the Queen. The Duke had some reservations about Sunderland, perhaps he did not want to push the Queen too far, but their exact nature is unclear, and he complied with the Lord Treasurer's application.[125] It seems likely that Godolphin made a further approach to the Queen on 20 August threatening to resign if she did not agree to his proposal. Anne answered three

days later refusing to replace Sir Charles Hedges, but proposing to bring Sunderland into the Cabinet without portfolio.[126] The Junto, whose frustration was mounting with Godolphin, refused to consider such a suggestion.[127] Godolphin's failure was followed by the first open intervention by the Duchess of Marlborough on behalf of Sunderland which resulted in a quarrel between her and the Queen.[128]

On 30 August the Queen informed Godolphin that all she sought was to avoid being governed by either Tories or Whigs. Anne continued:

> You press the bringing Lord Sun[derland] into business that there may be one of that party in a post of trust to help carry on the business this winter, and you think if this is not complied with they will not be hasty in pursuing my service in the Parliament; but is it not very hard that men of sense and honour will not promote the good of their country because everything in the world is not done as they desire, when they may be assured Lord Sunderland shall come into employment as soon as it is possible? Why, for God's sake, must I, who have no interest, no end, no thought, but for the good of my country, be made so miserable as to be brought into the power of one set of men, and why may I not be trusted, since I mean nothing but what is equally for the good of all of my subjects? There is another apprehension I have of Lord Sunderland's being Secretary, which I think is a material one, and proceeds from what you told me of his temper. I am afraid he and I would not agree long together, finding by experience my humour and those that are of a warmer will of ten have misunderstandings between one another.[129]

Whether these words were the Queen's own or those of Robert Harley is perhaps irrelevant, but what is beyond doubt is that Harley was now secretly advising Anne to oppose Sunderland's appointment. Both he and the Queen felt that the Junto sought a monopoly of power and it seems Anne had turned to Harley in August 1706 when Godolphin had threatened to resign.[130] Harley disingenuously informed Newcastle, about the difficulties in getting the Secretaryship for Sunderland, it 'makes some inquiring people at a stand and a gaze to consider where this delay springs'.[131]

In reply to the Queen's letter of 30 August Godolphin made a further threat to resign,[132] though he did try to end the dispute between the Queen and the Duchess of Marlborough.[133] Sarah, however, was determined to keep the pressure upon the Queen and she wrote to her on 6 September declaring that the only course which Anne could follow was to accept the advice of Marlborough and Godolphin.[134] Sarah's efforts were doubtless encouraged by Sunderland who wrote to her that 'upon the whole matter we expect no end in this affair, nor any good in anything else, but from you, and are truly sensible of all the vexations and uneasiness you undergo, but I am sure without you we had been in confusion long ago'.[135]

Godolphin pressed the Queen once again, but after an emotional outburst he agreed to await Marlborough's response to the proposal to bring Sunderland into the Cabinet without portfolio.[136] Given the intransigence of the Queen this proposal may have been put to the Junto again and, if so, it was evidently dismissed out-of-hand. The Junto's dissatisfaction at what appeared to be Godolphin's delaying tactics was now reaching dangerous proportions and Sunderland and Halifax even cancelled a proposed visit to the Duchess of Marlborough.[137] On 13 September 1706 Godolphin attempted to answer the Queen's objections to Sunderland, observing that though Sunderland was hot tempered 'his warmth is entirely well directed, and nobody has more zeal and concern for your Majesty's service and interest'.[138] Godolphin was becoming increasingly desperate.[139] After consulting Harley, Anne responded to the Lord Treasurer's letter by repeating that she and Sunderland would not get on together and once more offering a Cabinet place without portfolio. Godolphin was warned that appointing Sunderland would only be the first step and she would eventually become the tool of the Whigs.[140] Godolphin answered that he only proposed what was necessary for her service and these were not points of little consequence. The Queen merely gave a sharp acknowledgement of his letter.[141]

It appears that the Queen appealed to Marlborough for support on 27 August 1706, but the boat carrying the letter to the continent sank.[142]

When this loss became known the Duke wrote to Anne urging her to support Godolphin who could only be maintained by the Whigs and who would 'by placing some few about you, gaine such a confidence, as shall make your business and himself safe, will not this be the sure way of making him so strong that he may hinder your being forced into a party?'[143] Probably due to his concern at the situation in England and in response to further letters from the Queen Marlborough wrote in stronger terms. He argued that for Anne not to accept Godolphin's advice would put her into the hands of the Tories from which there would be no escape; furthermore it was only with the support of the Whigs that the war could be prosecuted with vigour. Marlborough concluded by requesting the Queen not to rely on any counsel but that of the Lord Treasurer.[144] Godolphin was not optimistic about the effect this letter would have, but he felt that if Marlborough used the same arguments when he arrived in England then Anne would give way.[145]

The Queen's relations with the Duchess of Marlborough were now deteriorating rapidly though Anne did try to resurrect the friendship early in November 1706 out of fear that Sarah would influence Marlborough and Godolphin to resign.[146] At the same time some of Harley's associates, alarmed at the Junto's hold over the Lord Treasurer, began a policy of disruption which was a certain sign of disaffection. Despite this, Marlborough retained his faith in Harley and urged Godolphin to take him into his confidence and Harley was still confident that he could persuade Marlborough round to his point of view and outlined to him his scheme for a non-partisan administration. Similar arguments were tried with Godolphin, but Harley placed his greatest hopes in the Captain-General.[147]

Marlborough arrived in London on 18 November 1706 and two days later he and Godolphin conferred with Harley. The Secretary's scheme was finally rejected and, fearing further resistance might lead to his dismissal, Harley gave way.[148] Anne now had little choice but to acquiesce, though she still endeavoured to maintain her resolve and

Marlborough had to give considerable assurances to her including promising to force Sunderland to resign if he did anything that displeased the Queen.[149] Parliament met on 3 December 1706 and Sunderland's appointment as Southern Secretary was declared the same day.[150] The Whigs also made other gains. Cowper was made a baron, Wharton an earl and Halifax's brother, Sir James Montagu, was created Solicitor-General. Nottingham, Rochester, Jersey and Buckingham were struck from the Privy Council and the only Tories remaining in office were St. John, Harcourt, and Mansell, along with Harley.[151]

Sunderland's emergence as Secretary of State in December 1706 was the culmination of four years of success and achievement. Sunderland had renewed the vigour, aggression, and optimism of the Junto at a time when even the most sanguine of their members must have been apprehensive about the future. Not content with inspiring his associates Sunderland led the way by demonstrating that a revival of Whig fortunes depended upon isolating the Court from their High Tory allies and forcing the Queen's servants to come to terms with the Junto. Sunderland made the most important contribution to this strategy; High Tory aspirations were frustrated and their leaders harried out of office. In implementing this policy Sunderland was remorseless, ruthless, determined and industrious, traits that were to characterise his conduct for the rest of his career. Sunderland was at the centre of the Junto's political organization encouraging his colleagues by his zeal and commitment while devotedly adhering to both Whig principles and the Junto in a way which frightened and disturbed those, like the Queen, Harley and Marlborough and Godolphin, to a lesser extent, who were more moderate in their political outlook. As a result of his endeavours, and his connection with the Duke and Duchess of

Marlborough, when the Junto came to nominate one of their number for high office Sunderland's claims could not be overlooked. His behaviour as Envoy Extraordinary at Vienna was beyond reproach. Prudent, cautious, willing to listen to and to follow advice Sunderland, though greatly impatient to return to England to claim the prize of the Secretaryship, conducted himself admirably and even impressed those who had serious doubts about his character. When he returned to England there could be no excuse for not making him Secretary of State. The Queen, however, thought differently, but she was unable to resist the pressure on Sunderland's behalf when Godolphin, Marlborough, and Sarah espoused his cause so vigorously and despite her deep hostility to Sunderland the Queen was forced to give way. In just over ten years Sunderland had risen to occupy one of the most important offices in the administration and for someone who was still only thirty-two years old this was a phenomenal success.

CHAPTER THREE: SECRETARY OF STATE 1706-1710

'Such great men of such assiduity'

The office of Secretary of State was one of the most important in the executive branch of government. It was a position of great power and influence yet it carried a very heavy administrative responsibility which meant a particularly gruelling workload for any incumbent. The burdensome duties weighing upon Sunderland as Secretary of State become even more daunting when the political and parliamentary activities in which he was engaged are also considered. Sunderland, however, was ideally suited to the office of Secretary of State. As an administrator he was hard working, vigorous, decisive, perceptive, resilient, energetic and reliable. He responded immediately to unfavourable developments, was determined to maintain his authority, and his resolve was fortified by an almost unquenchable optimism. His stamina and sanguine temperament proved to be a major source of strength particularly in dealing with the complex and difficult circumstances and problems which he faced in trying to prosecute the war in the Iberian Peninsular and Northern Italy. On the other hand, though Sunderland was a strong and able Secretary of State, he achieved no major success between 1706 and 1710 and this experience was both frustrating and exasperating. Ironically, Sunderland in holding one of the most powerful positions in the administration was constantly reminded of the constraints and limitations of power and the near impotence that can sometimes be associated with it.

I THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE

'Her Majesty has been pleased to give me the seals and has alloted me the Southern Province'

As Secretary of State Sunderland had a full time staff of seven to assist him. In his office there were two under-secretaries, a first clerk, and four junior clerks. Sunderland made few changes when he took up his office in 1706. He kept Joseph Addison as under-secretary for he had proved himself to be an efficient and expert administrator, he was well connected in the Whig party, and he shared Sunderland's literary interests. Sunderland dismissed the other under-secretary and replaced him with Thomas Hopkins, who was a staunch Whig, was like Addison an experienced and capable administrator, and had accompanied Sunderland to Vienna in 1705. Hopkins remained with Sunderland throughout his period in office, but in 1708 Addison went to Ireland as Wharton's chief secretary. He was replaced by Robert Pringle, a Scot, who was a member of the Squadrone, the Junto's Scottish allies. Pringle was an experienced public servant having been a personal secretary to King William III and he helped serve as an intermediary between the Junto and the Squadrone. Sunderland also retained Charles Delafaye, who had served under Sir Charles Hedges, whom he promoted to the position of first clerk. Delafaye 'was a true civil servant and had a long career in the Secretary's office'.[1] As well as being responsible for his own staff the Secretary also had influence over a number of other office-holders in the performance of his duties. These included the decyphering branch and the secret office of the post office for the interception and decoding of correspondence, the State Paper Office, and the Messengers who not only carried the Secretary's dispatches but also apprehended persons for questioning or arrest, helped control the press, and were in many ways a private police force.

The Secretary's offices were located at the Cockpit in Whitehall though Sunderland also received a house in the Privy Garden which had been previously occupied by the Earl of Nottingham.[2] Unfortunately,

Sunderland's accounts for the period when he was Southern Secretary are not extant, but it appears that the Earl of Nottingham's estimate of his net income at £6,000 a year is about the average for a Secretary of State at this time. In terms of expenditure the expenses varied with each individual Secretary, but the staff were probably the largest item on his budget.

The various political, administrative, and ceremonial duties that a Secretary had to carry out meant that he had to leave the routine management of the office to the under-secretaries. The workload of the office was particularly heavy and the clerks worked long hours every day of the week. Each day began with the arrival of the mail. Letters would be summarised for the Secretary of State and he would read the more important dispatches to the Queen or the Lords of the Committee. The heads of a reply would be agreed upon and a draft answer would be prepared, approved, and dispatched. Petitions constituted a considerable proportion of domestic business. Each one would be referred to the appropriate governmental body and its recommendation, along with the petition, was then presented to the Queen by the Secretary who then carried out her orders.

The Lord Treasurer, the two Secretaries of State, and the Lord Chancellor were the four most important offices in the government in the eighteenth-century. During Queen Anne's reign the Lord Treasurer was the most influential official followed by the Secretaries of State. It was the possession of the Signet which gave the Secretary his power for it was through him that a decision was implemented. Every order made in the name of the Queen was communicated by the Secretary. All appointments, orders, patents, proclamations, and warrants carried his authentication. All letters, petitions, and information directed to the Queen went via the Secretary. The Lord Chancellor and the Archbishop of Canterbury did have some exclusive powers, but even their official communication with the Queen was conducted through a Secretary. It was only the Lord Treasurer, carrying out his official duties, who normally came into direct personal contact with the sovereign apart from the Secretary of State. The Secretary was

involved in the formulation, direction, and organization of military policy. He countersigned all the warrants for appointments and promotions and was responsible for providing the troops with clothes, food, arms, and transport. The Secretary also had great influence on naval affairs. The Lord High Admiral had to receive his orders in writing from the Secretary while Admirals at sea were ordered to take their instructions from the Secretary of State. In combined operations involving both the army and the navy only the Secretary had the necessary authority to direct both services.

The Cabinet Council and the Lords of the Committee were the two most important executive bodies with which the Secretary of State had to deal. The distinction between them derived from the fact that the Queen and Prince George attended the meetings of the Cabinet but not those of the Lords of the Committee. Sunderland was present at these gatherings by virtue of being Secretary as was Robert Harley and his successor Henry Boyle. The other members were the Lord Treasurer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lord Keeper, the Lord President, the Lord Privy Seal, and the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Apart from these ex officio members the Dukes of Marlborough, Somerset, and Devonshire were also present because of their importance as office-holders, as Captain-General, Master of the Horse, and Lord Steward respectively, and as politicians. Because the principal business discussed by the Cabinet and the Lords of the Committee was foreign or military matters the meetings were usually determined by the Secretaries of State and the Lord Treasurer. Most of the time was taken up with reading, discussing, and preparing answers to letters from English envoys or commanders abroad. Once a reply had been decided upon the Secretary would draft a letter to be approved at the next meeting. The Lords of the Committee could interview foreign diplomats, military commanders who had returned home, and call in officials such as the Secretary-at-War and the Solicitor-General when it was thought necessary. Once policy had been decided it was presented to the Queen for approval at the Cabinet Council. When the Queen had given her sanction there could be no alteration without her consent.

The Secretary of State was also a member of the Privy Council. This body was only important upon very extraordinary occasions though it was regarded as the only official group of royal advisers. The Queen issued proclamations in Council and a meeting was often called to authenticate a royal order, prorogue Parliament or to choose Sheriffs. In reality these were merely formalities and the few matters usually discussed were quasi legal. The Secretary prepared the agenda and probably conducted the meeting though officially the Lord President should have presided. The Privy Council was usually called when the Cabinet was to meet and either at the beginning or end of its meeting the clerk of the council was called in and the Cabinet was transformed into the Privy Council; all Cabinet members were Privy Councillors. Some committees of the Privy Council survived into Anne's reign including that which heard appeals from Jersey, Guernsey, and the plantations while there was another committee to consider Irish legislation which had to be approved by the Privy Council before it could be introduced into the Irish Parliament.

The distinction between the two Secretaries of State was primarily in foreign affairs. The Southern Secretary was responsible for relations with France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Turkey and Flanders. His Northern counterpart dealt with Russia, Poland, the Empire, Scandinavia, and the Dutch Republic. This distinction also extended into maritime affairs with the Northern department concerned with the Baltic and the North Sea, and the Southern with the Channel, the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic. Each Secretary corresponded with English envoys, military commanders, and Admirals in his own sphere of activity. Likewise he interviewed and negotiated with the appropriate foreign envoys in London. English envoys abroad were expected to write regularly but the frequency of a Secretary's correspondence might vary greatly. The War of the Spanish Succession greatly increased the importance of the Southern Secretary as he dealt with a large area of military operations in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Flanders.

The duties of the Southern Secretary were more wide ranging than the Northern because he was also responsible for Ireland and the

Colonies. On Irish affairs the Secretary corresponded primarily with the Lord Lieutenant or the Lords Justices. The major Irish concerns were Parliament, political management and the army. In relation to the Colonies most of the supervisory work was carried out by the Board of Trade and Plantations. The Secretary, however, was kept informed of all Colonial developments and brought these matters before the Cabinet and the Lords of the Committee. Sunderland, on occasion did intervene in Colonial affairs. In 1707, following repeated French assaults on the Leeward Islands in the West Indies, Parliament agreed to provide aid for the Islands and the Governor, Colonel Parke, requested that an expedition involving some 10,000 troops should be sent against the French colony of Martinique. Parke made some uncomplimentary remarks about the troops and he was quickly reprimanded by Sunderland. Commissioners were appointed to examine the damage caused by the French attacks in order to establish what reparations should be paid. Sunderland let the Board of Trade and Plantations deal with this matter and the Board supervised the inquiry. In December 1707 news reached England that the Islands had been devastated by a hurricane and supplies and transports were immediately ordered. As a result the Leeward Islands were a prominent concern of Sunderland's during his tenure as Southern Secretary.

In domestic affairs there was no division of duties between the two Secretaries. Presenting petitions, as has been noted, was an important aspect of their work. They were also responsible for appointing the agents of central government in the localities, the prevention and suppression of unrest, and dealing with political offences. Sunderland helped to quell riots in the South of England arising out of grain shortages in 1709 and in the same year he punished J.P.'s for obstructing the activities of recruiting officers. In 1709 Sunderland also encouraged foreign Protestant refugees to come to Britain and helped them settle in the country. The Secretaries were also involved in apprehending suspected persons. Warrants were issued to Messengers by the Secretary and after the person or persons had been arrested they would be examined by the Secretary who decided whether they were to be discharged or brought to trial.[3]

II THE CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN EUROPE 1706-1710

'there is not a man of more resolution'

As Secretary of State for the South Sunderland was responsible for a large area of the military operations against France and his chief preoccupations were the conflicts in the Iberian Peninsular and in Northern Italy. In both theatres of war the operations of 1706 had been encouraging if not completely successful. In Spain the allied armies had captured Madrid in June and, but for the irresolution of the Earl of Peterborough and King Charles III, it seemed likely that the Habsburgs would have recovered control of Spain. In September 1706 the Imperial army defeated the French at Turin and with the evacuation of French troops from Italy it appeared that the allies could now carry the war into France itself. Sunderland must have felt that with a vigorous and aggressive prosecution of the war in both Italy and Spain decisive blows could be inflicted upon the French. Both areas, however, presented Sunderland with major problems which had to be overcome if the war was to be pursued with any success. There were important climatic and logistical difficulties which were aggravated by touchy and over-sensitive allies. The King of Spain, the King of Portugal, the Duke of Savoy, and the Emperor all seemed intent on making excessive financial and material demands whilst being mainly concerned with their own petty disputes and rivalries rather than making any serious contribution to the allied war effort. To begin with Sunderland, with his energy and enthusiasm, and confident that only one campaign was necessary to bring France to her knees, made light of these problems, but even he could not conceal his cynicism and disillusion as each campaign passed with no real progress. It was a tribute to his resilience and strength of character that even by 1710 his dispatches still urged resolute action when the faint hearted would have despaired of achieving anything.

The Military Operations in the Iberian Peninsular 1706-1710

In the Iberian Peninsular in 1706 allied troops led by the Marquis das Minas and the Earl of Galway had advanced from Portugal and had occupied Madrid on 29 June. The other allied army, under the leadership of Charles III, and the British commander, the Earl of Peterborough, had been dilatory in its proceedings and was plagued by arguments and ill-feeling between Charles and Peterborough. As a result when the two armies eventually joined each other the initiative had passed to the Bourbon forces and the allied forces were forced to retreat to Valencia where Peterborough obtained permission to retire to Italy and command of all the British troops was given to Galway. Towards the end of the year an expedition was sent from England, under the command of Earl Rivers and Admiral Shovell, to capture Cadiz, but upon arrival at Lisbon both the ships and the troops were in poor condition and being unable to undertake any immediate operations it became increasingly uncertain how the force should be employed. At the same time the Earl of Galway was more and more reluctant to continue serving in Spain.[4]

Sunderland was at the centre of a difficult and confusing situation. To begin with Charles III had requested that Rivers should bring the forces under his command to Valencia and the English commander set about complying with this request. At a Cabinet Council in London on 15 December 1706 it was decided that Rivers should remain in Portugal and join his force with the Portuguese army. These orders were dispatched two days later and the same day Sunderland wrote to Galway urging that he should continue to serve in Spain. At a further Cabinet meeting on 20 December it was agreed that Sunderland should inform Rivers that despite any orders he might have received to the contrary he and the troops under him should now proceed to Valencia. The next day the Cabinet resolved that letters should be sent to Galway to persuade him to remain in Spain, but if this failed to influence Galway then Rivers was to be given command of the British forces. It was also decided to inform Peterborough that his presence was no longer necessary in Spain and that he should return home

immediately. Sunderland sent his letters to Galway, Peterborough, and Rivers on 23 December. In his letter to Rivers Sunderland repeated his orders to proceed at once to Valencia. Before receiving these orders, however, Rivers had already decided to act on his own initiative and at a council of war held at Lisbon on 19 December N.S. orders were issued to accompany the fleet under Shovell to Alicante in Valencia. In January 1707 Rivers informed Sunderland that he was pleased to have the Queen's orders to undertake what he had already done.[5]

At the same time Sunderland was determined that the failures of the previous campaign in Spain were not to be repeated and clear, decisive, and vigorous orders were sent to the English envoys and commanders in Spain and Portugal. Sunderland directed the new envoy at Lisbon, Paul Methuen, to press the Portuguese to send their recruits to Valencia forthwith.[6] Sunderland told James Stanhope, who was serving as British minister to Charles III, that:

> by every letter our affairs seem to be worse and worse with you, but I hope my Lord Rivers coming will restore them; I must acquaint you that Her Majesty does entirely approve of his going as soon as possible to Valencia, with the troops under his command, according to the desire of the King of Spain, and Lord Galway, but at the same time does expect, that all the troops there shall act together in one body, in order to march to Madrid, and not be divided upon twenty different projects, as they have been hitherto, and as I fear some about the King of Spain, will have a mind to again'.[7]

Similar instructions were dispatched to Galway and Rivers.[8]

Given these precise and definite instructions Stanhope's letter of 15 January N.S. 1707 could only serve to alarm Sunderland. Stanhope declared that at a council of war Lord Peterborough, who had just returned from Italy, had urged that the allied forces should be divided and should stand on the defensive. Stanhope, with the support of Lord Galway, pressed vigorously for offensive action and went so far as to announce that he would protest in the Queen's name at the

adoption of defensive measures. Charles III requested the opinion of the officers in writing and Stanhope, Galway, and Sir Charles O'Hara issued a joint statement in favour of taking the offensive.[9] Sunderland responded immediately in support of Stanhope. He wrote:

> I have the favour of yours of the 15th January N.S. with the enclosed copies of yours, Lord Galway's and Sir Charles O'Hara's opinions at the council of war. I am sorry to find, that you three were the only ones of that opinion, for nothing but private interest, I am sure, can be an argument for the contrary opinion. I am commanded by Her Majesty, to acquaint you, that she does entirely approve of your opinion and of every thing you said and did, in her name, upon that occasion. You will see by my former letters, that it has always been the opinion here, that the dividing the army, would be the loss of all, and that the only way of putting King Charles in possession of the monarchy of Spain, is by marching straight to Madrid, with the forces in one body. This is so much the Queen's opinion that she would have you insist upon it, in the most positive manner, as being the condition, upon which she sends these additional forces there. Her Majesty has writ to the King of Spain, upon this subject, in the most pressing manner.[10]

Once again Sunderland sent similar instructions to Galway and Rivers.[11]

Further news from Spain brought little encouragement. Charles III decided to leave the army in Valencia and return to Barcelona and though he promised to return when the allied army was ready to enter Castille, Galway doubted if he would. There were disputes among the commanders of the army about the best way to march to Madrid together with difficulties in agreeing about the place of the Portuguese forces in the line of battle. Galway appears to have underestimated the strength of the enemy forces under the command of the Duke of Berwick. Stanhope, however, felt that the enemy superiority in horse and the problems the allies had in getting forage and provisions would make an offensive operation a dubious undertaking. Stanhope went to Barcelona with Charles III, but was unable to persuade him to return to Valencia and he was soon reporting to Sunderland that the Court of Charles III showed no disposition to act offensively and that there was even talk

of an attempt on Rousillon in France. The only encouraging news was that Lord Rivers had agreed that the command of the British troops should be given to Galway. The news from Portugal was little better with Methuen facing considerable problems in getting the Portuguese to advance into Spain.[12]

Despite Stanhope's warning Sunderland remained confident that the allied army would be victorious and he sought to bolster the spirits of both Galway and Stanhope.[13] On 15 April he informed Galway that he was,

> heartily glad to find our affairs in so good a condition with you, and particularly that the desires of all your friends have induced you to stay. I own we here did reckon everything forgone, if you had left the service and as I don't doubt but you will have the satisfaction once more of seeing Madrid, so I am to assure you in the Queen's name, that you may depend upon everythings being done, that is possible to make you easy in the service.[14]

With the approval of a council of war Galway had decided to advance into Murcia where he came upon the forces of the Duke of Berwick. The battle of Almanza took place on 25 April 1707[15] and Galway told Sunderland, 'I'm under a deep concern to be obliged to tell your Lordship we were entirely defeated... I cannot my Lord but look upon the affairs of Spain as lost by this sad disaster'.[16] Almanza was certainly the decisive battle in the peninsula and the Bourbon forces were now clearly in the ascendant.[17] Galway was wounded, but along with a number of his subordinates and about 3,500 men he managed to reach Tortosa on the Catalan Frontier.[18] Sunderland echoed Galway's sentiments when he informed the Duke of Marlborough that 'a great deal will be wanting to retrieve our misfortune in Spain, which I fear is hardly retrievable in that country'.[19]

Following their success at Almanza Berwick's forces advanced into Valencia which, apart from strongholds like Alicante and Denia, was soon under their control. Requenna, the last outpost in Castille, also fell and Galway and Stanhope were involved in preparing defensive

positions in Catalonia to meet the expected enemy assault. Both men complained of the lethargy of Charles III and his Court. The Duke of Orleans, the newly appointed Bourbon commander-in-chief in Spain, occupied Saragossa and most of Aragon. Galway managed to hold his own on the river Cinca for some time whilst the diversion of French troops to Toulon also eased the pressure upon the allies. By September, however, the Bourbon forces had been strengthened and they concentrated upon taking the town of Lerida. Though the allied position here was a strong one and despite an attempt by Galway at raising the siege the town fell at the beginning of October, followed by the castle six weeks later. These operations marked the end of this campaign and by December 1707 the allied forces in Catalonia were in winter quarters. Apart from Alicante and Denia the allied position in Spain was restricted to the area of Catalonia bounded by the Segre and Ebro rivers.[20]

The operations undertaken in Portugal in 1707 had a similarly undistinguished outcome. The preparations for the campaign went on very slowly and it soon became obvious that the Portuguese would not do anything until the four regiments which had been promised from Ireland arrived. Upon the news of the defeat at Almanza Sunderland directed Methuen:

> the Queen would have you use your utmost endeavours to keep up the spirits of the Portugese, and represent to the King the absolute necessity there is of prosecuting the war with more vigour than hitherto has been done. The Queen hopes that His Majesty will do all that is in his power towards sending such a force into Spain, that if possible, we may have a superiority in that country; the Queen is resolved to have nothing undone, that may contribute towards it.[21]

Military operations were centred upon the towns of Serpa and Moura. The allied forces lost these two places in June 1707 and were unable to recover them. By August Methuen was very apprehensive about the growing strength of the enemy though the Bourbon forces were unable to

exploit the opportunity because they had to await the outcome of the siege of Toulon. They occupied Ciudad Rodrigo in October but bad weather brought the campaign to an end the same month.[22] As far as Sunderland was concerned the military operations in the Iberian Peninsular had been disastrous in 1707.

In order to improve allied prospects in Spain following the reverses of 1707 both Galway and Stanhope had requested that a detachment of Imperial troops should be sent to Spain preferably under the command of Prince Eugene. Sunderland agreed with this suggestion and considerable efforts were made to persuade the Emperor to send Eugene to Spain but to no avail. It was felt that as the defeat at Almanza had soured relations between Galway and Charles III and since the Imperial commander who came from Italy would be at the head of all the allied troops in Spain it would be futile for Galway to remain with the allied forces. It was resolved to send him back to Lisbon as Ambassador and officer in charge of the British troops in Portugal. Sunderland prevailed on the reluctant Galway to accept this commission. Stanhope, meanwhile, left Spain to return to England in January 1708 and it was agreed in London that he should return to Spain as Envoy Extraordinary and commander of the British forces. At the same time it was finally agreed to send Count Guido Starhemberg to command in Spain. He arrived at the end of April 1708 with nine infantry regiments and 3,000 horse and further infantry reached Spain in July. Stanhope was optimistic upon his return to Spain but there were difficulties with the expenses that were being incurred by the allied forces in Catalonia whilst in July the enemy had captured Tortosa.[23] It was not in Spain, however, that the allies were to obtain their success in 1708.

The operations to capture Port Mahon on the island of Minorca was the only encouraging development in the war in Spain in 1708. Stanhope was the prime mover behind the project, but he received considerable support and encouragement from Sunderland. The Royal Navy played an important role in transporting and convoying across

the Mediterranean but these services could only be provided for part of the year as most of the fleet had to return to England for the autumn and winter months. If the fleet was to remain in the Mediterranean all year it would be necessary to have a good harbour nearby where the ships could anchor and refit. Stanhope had been arguing the case for wintering a fleet in the Mediterranean for some time and he had managed to obtain the approval of the Duke of Marlborough. On his return to Spain early in 1708 Stanhope had visited The Hague where, in discussions with Marlborough, Heinsius, and Eugene, it was decided that a search should be made for a base in the Mediterranean. In April Sunderland informed Stanhope that the matter had been referred to the Admiralty.[24] The Admiralty replied that they did not know of a suitable base in allied control. In May Sunderland wrote to Stanhope advising him that everyone accepted that it was necessary to winter a fleet in the Mediterranean if Port Mahon or any good harbour on the Spanish coast could be secured.[25] On 22 June Godolphin authorised Stanhope to make an attempt to capture Port Mahon and the following day Sunderland received a second report from the Admiralty which declared that Port Mahon was the only place suitable for wintering a squadron.[26] In July Admiral Leake was ordered to consider the feasibility of leaving a fleet in the Mediterranean and the following month Sunderland wrote again to the Admiralty informing them that Stanhope had answered some of their objections and that they should reconsider the matter.[27]

Stanhope began preparations for the attempt on Port Mahon in August 1708 and he requested Admiral Leake to provide naval assistance. Sunderland had already ordered Leake to demand satisfaction from the Pope for the support given by the Papacy[28] to the Pretender's expedition against Scotland earlier in the year but the Admiral agreed to join Stanhope at Minorca. Stanhope left Barcelona on 3 September N.S. 1708 with two men-of-war, two galleys, and 2,000 men. Leake arrived off Minorca two days later and began reconnoitring the island and taking soundings off the harbour of Port Mahon. He was joined by

Stanhope on 13 September. Because it was by now late-summer Leake set out for England the following day but he agreed to leave Admiral Whittaker and about half the ships in his force together with 800 marines. The assault began on 14 September N.S. and most of the island was easily subdued the only difficulty was capturing Fort St.Philip which guarded the entrance to Port Mahon. The siege of the Fort commenced on 23 September N.S. and by the end of the month the entire island was secure.[29] Sunderland had written encouraging Stanhope in September[30] and in October he congratulated him upon the success of the operation.[31]

Stanhope was determined that Port Mahon should be retained in British possession. He arranged that only British troops were to be admitted into Fort St. Philip and though a Spaniard was made governor of the island Stanhope's chief engineer, Colonel Petit, was made governor of the fort and was directed to prevent any interference by the Spanish governor. Stanhope advised the ministers in London to retain Minorca and in December 1708 he was ordered to obtain the island from Charles III. Before any real progress could be made in these negotiations the Dutch, who opposed Britain's possession of Minorca because of the threat posed to their trading interests, were informed of the proceedings and, as negotiations were underway to settle the Dutch Barrier and secure Dutch recognition of the Hanoverian Succession, it was found expedient to declare that Stanhope had carried on the negotiations without the approval of the Queen and that they would be stopped at once. Nevertheless, Minorca remained firmly under British control and its acquisition by Britain was confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.[32]

Following the success at Minorca operations in Spain gave Sunderland little encouragement up to his dismissal in 1710. In 1708 the Bourbon forces turned their attention to the two remaining allied outposts in Valencia at Denia and Alicante. Denia fell in November 1708 and despite a relief attempt by Stanhope Alicante was captured in April 1709. In Catalonia the allied forces faced growing

difficulties with provisions and in February 1709 Stanhope was apprehensive that there would be a famine. The previous month James Craggs had told Sunderland that if Stanhope left Catalonia then things would fall into utter confusion and that Stahremberg would also leave Spain. Stanhope engaged in some rather dubious negotiations with the Duke of Orleans which came to nothing as did an expedition against Cadiz. Stahremberg did have a small success in Arragon in 1709 which increased the territory under allied control but generally there was little activity in 1709 as Louis XIV was mainly concerned with removing French troops from Spain in order to placate the allies. At the end of 1709 Stanhope returned to England and there was little improvement in Spain the following year.[33] The conduct of military operations in Spain from 1707 to 1710 had proved frustrating and disappointing for Sunderland in spite of all his endeavours and the situation in Portugal proved to be much the same.

At the end of 1706 the English ministers had agreed that if Portugal was to make a significant contribution to the allied war effort in the Iberian peninsular it would be necessary to pay the Portuguese troops directly out of the subsidies which were being paid to the Portuguese government and that a British commander should be at the head of all the allied troops in Portugal. There was also the added problem of paying the Portuguese troops in Catalonia as the Portugese Court was very reluctant to provide for their troops in Spain; it was felt that these troops should be paid in Spain and the money deducted from the subsidies sent to Lisbon. On 22 July 1707 Sunderland wrote to Methuen:

> I am sorry to find the Portugese are so forward to undertake that which can signify nothing, but to ruin the army in this hot season, when at other times they are so hardly prevailed upon to do anything, and indeed the more one thinks of it, the more one is convinced that your opinion is well grounded, that whatever forces are sent thither, nothing is to be expected from them, at least whilst the command is in the hands of their generals. Her Majesty would therefore

> have you once more attempt the obtaining their consent, that the Commander of the Queen's troops may Command-in-Chief the Portugese that act in conjunction with them, or at least such a proportion of them as are paid by the Queen and the States.[34]

Sunderland gave repeated directions to Methuen upon this point and the envoy repeatedly informed the Secretary of State that the Portuguese would not give way on anything but particularly the issue of the commander of the forces.[35]

Galway's arrival did not produce any improvement as the Portuguese continued to refuse to give way. Sunderland kept reiterating the importance of the Portuguese agreeing to the demands which had been made and on 22 June 1708 he informed Galway that the Queen,

> has ordered a Committee of the Lords at a conference with the Portugal envoy, to let him know in the strongest manner that Her Majesty takes so ill this treatment of Her in so just a demand as that of having a separate body of troops under the command of her General, and is so convinced of the impossibility of any success on that side without it, that she is resolved to send no more troops to Portugal till this preliminary is granted, and to desire the said envoy to acquaint his master with this resolution of Her Majesty, and that they can't complain of any violation of the treaty in this, since they have performed every part of it so ill on their side.[36]

Sunderland did, however, inform Galway that given the importance of the operations in Portugal even if the Portuguese did not give way on the point of the command of the allied forces troops would still be sent from Britain though he was not to inform the Portuguese of this.[37] Likewise on 22 September Sunderland told Galway:

> I must now acquaint you that Her Majesty thinks it absolutely necessary to insist upon her paying the Portugese troops in Catalonia, and deducting the same from their [the Portuguese] subsidies, the King of Spain and Mr. Stanhope representing that without this it will be impossible to keep those troops from mouldering away, and becoming of no manner of service.[38]

Yet despite the obduracy of the Portuguese Sunderland directed Stanhope that the Portuguese troops in Catalonia should not be allowed to starve though, as he had told Galway, the cost would be deducted from the subsidies sent to Lisbon.[39] In November 1708 Stanhope told Sunderland that unless the Portuguese troops in Catalonia were paid it would be better to do without them.[40] As a result it was agreed that the Queen would pay for the troops and they were to be put upon the Spanish establishment. The Portuguese were pleased at this arrangement particularly as there was no deduction from their subsidies. As a result of receiving regular pay and provisions both the performance and the reputation of the Portuguese troops improved markedly.[41]

Galway worked hard to try to get the Portuguese to take the offensive but the failure to obtain the command of the army and any arrangement about the payment of subsidies greatly hampered his efforts. No major engagement had been fought in 1708 and in 1709 there was only one significant encounter at Val Gudiña in May. The allied force was defeated and though Galway had advised against a battle he was blamed for the failure.[42] From August 1709 Galway's dispatches to Sunderland became more and more despondent[43] and at the beginning of 1710 Sunderland informed him that upon consideration of affairs in Portugal 'the Queen has come to the final resolution of sending no more troops there this year, nor of increasing the subsidies, being persuaded that it could not be justified here the flinging away of more men and money in a place where there is a general certainty they will be of no use, but rather a disgrace to the government here'.[44] There had been no improvement in the situation when Sunderland was dismissed as Secretary of State in June 1710. The failures, setbacks, frustration, irritation, and unfulfilled promise which characterised the military operations in the Iberian peninsular were to be repeated in northern Italy between 1706 and 1710.

The Military operations in Northern Italy 1706-1710

The problems which Sunderland faced in Northern Italy not only involved the struggle with France but also the complications arising from the rivalry and animosity which existed between the Emperor and the Duke of Savoy both of whom were allied with Britain against France. By the Treaty of Turin of 1701 the Duke of Savoy had aligned himself with Louis XIV, but the Duke's desire for territorial aggrandisement, the threat he perceived from the French occupation of Milan, and the increasingly peremptory treatment he received from Versailles led to him entering into negotiations with the Emperor. A treaty was signed in November 1703 under which Vienna promised to give Victor Amadeus parts of the Milanese together with the Imperial fief of Montferrat which belonged to the Duke of Mantua. In July 1704 the Emperor also agreed to give up the strategic territory of the Vigevanese. The determination of the Duke of Savoy that the Emperor should honour this agreement, the reluctance of Vienna to meet its obligations, and the very ambiguity of the treaty itself was to cause the Maritime powers continual anxiety.[45]

Upon taking office Sunderland was immediately involved in the complications of the dispute and with his usual thoroughness he familiarised himself with the details of the problem by making a study of the Imperial-Savoyard treaty of November 1703.[46] Upon the instances of Count Briançon, the Savoyard envoy in London, the Queen agreed to send the Earl of Manchester to put the Duke of Savoy's case to the Imperial Court and the British and Dutch governments resolved to put pressure on the Emperor to satisfy Victor Amadeus. Sunderland informed the English envoy at Turin, John Chetwynd, that 'as to His Royal Highness being put in possession of what is yielded to him by the treaty Her Majesty will use her best offices with the Court of Vienna, to procure his being satisfied in so just and reasonable a demand'.[47] In response to the efforts of the Maritime powers the Emperor consented to hand over the Milanese districts of Lomellina, Valenza, Sessia, and Alessandria to Victor Amadeus at the end of February 1707.[48]

For the Duke of Savoy this success was merely the beginning and he now turned his attention to the part of the treaty which stipulated that the Vigevanese or an equivalent should be given to him along with the Montferrat which belonged to the pro-French Duke of Mantua. If Victor Amadeus was to obtain the Montferrat the Emperor would have to publish the ban of the Empire against the Duke of Mantua. Vienna, however, refused to discuss the cessation of the Vigevanese or an equivalent until a general European peace was settled and the Duke of Lorraine opposed giving the Montferrat to the Duke of Savoy. Victor Amadeus again turned to the British government for help and Sunderland instructed Manchester to do all he could in order to get a satisfactory settlement.[49] Sunderland also directed the Northern Secretary, Robert Harley, to order the British envoy at Berlin, Lord Raby, and the Duke of Marlborough to press the King of Prussia and King Augustus of Poland to use their influence with the Emperor to get him to publish the ban of the Empire against the Duke of Mantua.[50] Manchester could make little headway with the Imperial Court and there was little change for the rest of 1707, much to the annoyance of Victor Amadeus.[51] The wrangling between Turin and Vienna over the Duke of Savoy's claims was overshadowed for much of 1707 by the expedition against Toulon.

The defeat of the French at Turin in September 1706 left allied forces dominating Northern Italy and the Duke of Savoy was eager to consider ways of exploiting this advantage. Both he and the Imperial commander in Italy, Prince Eugene, had discussed the possibility of an expedition against Toulon with the Earl of Peterborough. The Duke of Savoy wrote in enthusiastic terms to Queen Anne while Peterborough submitted a scheme to Sir Charles Hedges who was then Secretary of State for the South. By the time the letters reached London Sunderland had replaced Hedges. The Queen's answer to the Duke of Savoy, which was drawn up by Sunderland, expressed approval of the proposals made by the Savoyard ministers in London, Counts Maffei and Briançon. Victor Amadeus was told that a project

for an expedition would be given to Count Maffei in order to be sent to him.[52] The Earl of Peterborough, who was now very unpopular with the British government which held him responsible for the loss of Madrid in 1706 and disapproved of his leaving Spain for Italy without permission,[53] was left in no doubt as to his standing at home. Sunderland told him:

> Her Majesty has commanded me to acquaint you that it has allways been her opinion (as His Royal Highness the Duke of Savoy knows by the propositions that have been made to him, from time to time) that the most effectual way of bringing France to reason, was to carry the war into their own country, and that it could be done nowhere with so much advantage to the common cause, as in Provence or Dauphiné, and that Her Majesty is pursuing such measures with the States General, and the Duke of Savoy as may best contribute to the execution of so great a design. As for any ships that may be necessary Her Majesty has long ago ordered the ships that are at Lisbon to be in a readiness to go into the Mediterranean, and given directions for so many more to go from hence, as will make up a complete number for assisting His Royal Highness in the execution of that service.[54]

In December 1706 the projected incursion into south-east France was discussed in London. The meetings were attended by Sunderland, Harley, Marlborough, Godolphin and the two Savoyard ministers Maffei and Briançon.[55] On 27 December Sunderland drew up the heads of the scheme which had been agreed upon. In essence the operation involved a combined land and sea campaign with the intention of entering France and occupying the French naval base at Toulon which would provide the British navy with an anchorage from where it could dominate the western Mediterranean. The land forces were to be led by the Duke of Savoy and Admiral Shovell was to command the fleet.[56] Further preparations took place in the first quarter of 1707. The Earl of Manchester was sent to Vienna to acquaint the Emperor with the plan and to solicit him to allow an Imperial commander to help in its execution. In February Sunderland directed Admiral Shovell to

dispatch an officer to concert measures with Victor Amadeus and at the end of March Shovell ordered Admiral Norris to proceed to Turin.[57] The expedition, however, was soon beset with problems.

The Imperial Court wanted to annex the Kingdom of Naples which meant that troops would have to be diverted from the Toulon expedition. In March 1707 John Chetwynd wrote anxiously to Sunderland about Imperial preparations to send a force to southern Italy.[58] At the same time news reached London that Eugene and the French were negotiating an agreement to allow Louis XIV to evacuate his troops from northern Italy.[59] Sunderland immediately ordered Chetwynd that if the treaty between Eugene and the French 'does take place, and that upon it the Germans should persist in sending away troops upon the design of Naples, you are to endeavour all you can to prevent any such design, by showing Prince Eugene, how fatal that must be to the main design, of carrying the war into France, upon which the Queen does reckon that the good or bad issue of this war does depend'.[60] Similar instructions were sent by Sunderland to the Earl of Manchester at Vienna.[61] Chetwynd did not receive Sunderland's directions until 13 April N.S. 1707, but in the meantime he co-ordinated the opposition to the descent on Naples with the Duke of Savoy and the Dutch envoy at Vienna. He felt, however, that the Emperor would not change his mind.[62] Sunderland tried to encourage Chetwynd in April by observing:

> As for the expedition to Naples, it seems resolved on, and though it is certainly wrong, and to be prevented if possible; yet I can't think considering our superiority now in Italy, that it can obstruct the main design of entering France, provided the Imperialists do heartily intend it, and will make the necessary preparations for magazines, which I own I have the better hopes of, since you tell me Count Slick is recalled, and that, the affair will continue in the hands of the Marquis de Prie.[63]

The Earl of Manchester was initially hopeful that the operations against Naples would be dropped, but by early-May 1707 he was reporting to Sunderland that the plan had been settled and that about 10,000 Imperial troops would be sent to Naples under the command of

Marshal Daun. It was only the threat to Imperial territory posed by Charles XII of Sweden, who was then in Saxony, which delayed the departure of this force. The news of Galway's defeat at Almanza injected a new sense of urgency into matters. The Duke of Savoy asked Chetwynd to press Eugene to stop the march of the troops to Naples and it was agreed in London that the Queen should write to the Emperor on this subject. Sunderland directed Manchester to protest in the strongest possible manner against the expedition.[64] Chetwynd continued his efforts with Eugene but by 1 June N.S. there was little chance of stopping the march of Daun's troops who completed the reduction of the Kingdom of Naples in the summer and autumn of 1707.[65]

While the Emperor was under pressure to halt the Naples venture the preparations for the Toulon expedition continued. In mid-May 1707 Norris arrived at Turin where he, Chetwynd, Eugene, and Victor Amadeus discussed the project. The only problem was that the Duke of Savoy felt there was insufficient powder and ball. He expected the Queen to provide the extra provision and also requested further credit from Britain. Sunderland immediately told Chetwynd and Norris that orders had been given to provide further powder and ball and that the Duke of Savoy could have further financial assistance. Norris, Chetwynd, and Shovell were all engaged in procuring further supplies. In July Sunderland went so far as to direct Shovell to spare any quantity of powder and ball that was necessary for he would receive a sufficient replacement. The shortages of supplies continued throughout May and June and they had still not been settled when the troops began their march in July. To add to this Chetwynd's initial prediction that the army would take the field at the beginning of May proved to be far too optimistic as the snow was late in clearing on the passes into France. Despite these delays the Duke of Savoy was still eager and enthusiastic and Shovell even reported that Eugene shared these sentiments though it does appear that Eugene disliked the project.[66]

Towards the end of June 1707 Victor Amadeus and Eugene were making the final preparations for the army's march and on the last day of the month the expedition finally started. Though nominal command was exercised by the Duke of Savoy effective authority lay with Eugene. After an arduous march across mountain terrain the army had reached the French frontier by 1 July. Doubtless Eugene's discomfort was increased by Chetwynd's repeated urging that they should march straight to Toulon. The Duke of Savoy directed Shovell to join him between Nice and Villefranche after which the naval and land forces combined to force the river Var in mid-July. Following this successful operation a council was held where, at Shovell's insistence, it was agreed to march directly to Toulon. Shovell established a base at Hyères and Byng was sent with twelve men-of-war to carry the provisions which the army would need. As the troops advanced into France there was increasing disorder and ill-discipline in their ranks while the intense heat merely increased the dissatisfaction and discomfort. Chetwynd was surprised at the lack of French resistance though he felt that having been caught unawares the French were now concentrating their forces at Toulon as they were in fact doing.[67]

The allied forces arrived at Toulon on 26 July N.S. but from the very beginning things went badly. In the first days after their arrival there appears to have been so little activity that Chetwynd felt compelled to speak to the Duke of Savoy, but the situation did not improve. The operations that were undertaken were of little consequence and ill-discipline was still rife in the army. The Duke of Savoy complained that he had little influence and that his orders were not obeyed and it seems that Eugene faced similar difficulties in getting his instructions carried out. On 9 August N.S. 1707 Chetwynd informed Sunderland 'this is the fifteenth day that our army has been before Toulon and I know no good that it has done'.[68] Both Chetwynd and Shovell had little doubt that the Duke of Savoy was eager to prosecute the siege, but Eugene, who was anxious about the strength of the enemy forces and the weakness of the allied infantry, caused

Chetwynd considerable unease by his caution and the objections he raised against continuing the expedition. The British envoy was reluctant to blame Eugene, but he felt that Imperial management was either stupid or malicious - he did not know which - and he regretted having to do anything in conjunction with Vienna. Relations between Eugene and Victor Amadeus began to deteriorate and rumours of further French reinforcements together with the French undertaking a localised attack seemed to confirm the view that the operations would have to be abandoned. In spite of some successes achieved by the fleet it was decided to end the siege and to retreat. The army decamped on 22 August N.S. and on the return march Chetwynd sourly observed that the progress away from Toulon was much quicker than it had been towards it and no complaints were heard; the unrest in the army, however, continued.[69]

In the face of the various setbacks in the start of the Toulon expedition and the failure to prevent Imperial operations against Naples Sunderland remained somewhat over sanguine about the outcome of the undertaking. With the news that Shovell's fleet had joined the land forces he told George Stepney 'the news from Provence... is beyond expectation'.[70] Robert Harley was informed 'our affairs in Provence go on as prosperously as we could wish'.[71] This was certainly an exaggeration of the progress that was being made but apart from keeping up morale and hoping for the best there was little that Sunderland could do. By early-August it was clear that little was going to be achieved and at the end of the month he told Marlborough that 'we have the melancholy news of our disappointment at Toulon. The greatest apprehension I have from it, is the ill effect it may have in Holland that makes it more necessary for England to show a spirit upon this occasion'.[72] Sunderland himself was certainly intent on keeping up the spirit of the allies. Realising that the only thing that could be done was to forget about what had happened and to concentrate on the next campaign he wrote to Admiral Norris:

> notwithstanding our disappointment in the main design... yet considering how it has broken the enemy's measures everywhere else, I believe they will have little reason to boast, nor are we without good hopes that the Duke of Savoy and Prince Eugene by the taking Suze or Fenestrelles, may put matters into such forwardness towards Dauphiné as will promise us a very successful campaign.[73]

By making the best of things and looking to the future Sunderland was, perhaps, pursuing the only realistic course of action. Unfortunately, however, military operations in northern Italy, were for the remainder of Sunderland's tenure as Secretary of State, to be hampered by the disputes between the Duke of Savoy and the Emperor.

The first half of 1708 saw no real progress in the territorial disputes involving Vienna and Turin despite the continued efforts of the Queen and the dispatch of Francis Palms to Vienna to argue the Duke of Savoy's case. This stalemate and the Imperial delay in making the necessary preparations for the ensuing campaign caused Victor Amadeus considerable unease and he doubted whether any military operations would be possible that year. Sunderland's response was quick and decisive. In May 1708 he directed Marlborough to write to Prince Eugene and Count Wratislaw to represent the fatal consequences if Vienna allowed matters to drift on in this way.[74] Marlborough wrote to Wratislaw in the strongest terms though it seems that even before his letters could arrive a change was taking place and his efforts could only serve to hasten any progress. The troops under General Visconti received orders from Vienna to begin preparations for the campaign and to follow the instructions of the Duke of Savoy. The Duke of Lorraine was now ready to allow Victor Amadeus to obtain the investiture of the Montferrat and the Emperor agreed to publish the ban of the Empire against the Duke of Mantua. On 7 July the Duke of Savoy's minister at Vienna received the investiture of the Montferrat.[75]

Chetwynd was hopeful that with this concession the Duke of Savoy would undertake a vigorous campaign. The Imperial Court, however,

was certain he would do very little and after capturing Exiles and Fenestrelle Victor Amadeus brought military operations to an end. Sunderland could not conceal his frustration and suspicion at the conduct of the Duke of Savoy and he complained to Palms, 'I must own it makes us here very uneasy to see that the Duke of Savoy ends his campaign by the taking of Fenestrelle... this looks too much as if he thought he had now done his own business, by getting so great an acquisition as the Montferrat etc., and by shutting up the entrances to Piedmont. I wish it may not prove so, but one can't help having some suspicions of this kind'.[76] Sunderland conveyed similar sentiments to Marlborough[77] and the reports of Palms and Chetwynd of the Duke's good disposition towards making a good campaign the next season could have been little consolation.[78]

Sunderland can hardly have been surprised when, in December 1708, the Duke of Savoy renewed his demands for the cessation of the Vigevanese or an equivalent together with the payment of debts owed to him by the Emperor and some disputed villages in the Milanese. Victor Amadeus broke off his negotiations at Milan with Vienna and once again requested the assistance of the Queen and the States General to induce the Emperor to satisfy his demands. Sunderland again informed Chetwynd that the Queen would use her utmost endeavours on behalf of the Duke of Savoy. The Imperial Court was determined not to yield on the question of the Vigevanese and Victor Amadeus resolved that unless he received satisfaction he would not take the field in person in 1709.[79]

Sunderland meanwhile was constantly urging both Chetwynd and Palms to assure Victor Amadeus that the Queen was sparing no effort with regard to his demands both at Vienna and at the peace negotiations which were then underway at The Hague. Both men were instructed to press the Duke of Savoy to take the field in person and as early as possible. By July, however, Sunderland could not conceal his exasperation. He told Palms that the Queen,

is very much both surprised and concerned to find the Duke of Savoy persists in his resolution of not taking the field in person. Her Majesty was in hopes, that, after all she had done, at his desire, and for his interests he would not, for such small matters as are in dispute, have had so little regard to the pressing instances of such good allies, as his highness must be sensible the Queen and States have been to him, especially at a time when his own interests, one would think, should have engaged him not to neglect the opportunity of the ill condition of the enemy. And as Her Majesty does entirely approve of what you have said, and done on this occasion, so it is her pleasure, that you represent this matter anew to His Royal Highness in the strongest manner, so as to make him understand, that, notwithstanding Her Majesty shall be always inclined to do what she can to support his interests, yet such a proceeding as this must necessarily weaken any arguments and instances she can use with the rest of the allies to join with her in promoting his concerns, as it must render it unjustifiable to her own people to be at such great expense to so little purpose.[80]

The Duke of Savoy, however, would not change his mind and consequently the Imperial General Daun was put at the head of the allied force. Daun advanced slowly into Savoy and after doing very little the army began to retreat in September and by the beginning of October Chetwynd reported that the campaign was over. Sunderland could not derive any satisfaction from the operation.[81]

The dissension between Vienna and Turin was to continue until Sunderland was dismissed in June 1710. In an attempt to find a solution the dispute was referred to The Hague where Marlborough and Townshend pressed Eugene and Zinzendorf about making some concessions to the Duke of Savoy. Marlborough and Townshend even persuaded Heinsius to write to Vienna in the strongest manner about ending the controversy and Marlborough wrote in similar terms to Wratislaw. These discussions seemed to offer the possibility of a settlement but initially neither Sunderland nor Chetwynd was optimistic of a satisfactory outcome being

agreed upon. Sunderland became more hopeful in 1710 that the project concerted at The Hague would be acceptable to both sides, but the Duke of Savoy refused to put himself at the head of the army until he received satisfaction from the Emperor. Sunderland continually urged that preparations should be made for a vigorous campaign and that Victor Amadeus should lead the army, but appropriately, the last two letters Sunderland wrote to Chetwynd as Secretary of State reveal the uncertainty concerning the intentions of the Duke of Savoy. The dispute was still unsettled when Sunderland left office.[82]

III DOMESTIC PROBLEMS 1706-1710

'my Lord Sunderland sits up whole nights'

Perhaps the most successful aspect of Sunderland's period as Secretary of State was the defeat of the attempted Jacobite invasion of 1708. It was an operation which required all his vigour and industry to bring it to a successful conclusion. The Jacobite Court and its followers were confident that they could exploit Scottish resentment at the Treaty of Union in order to raise a rebellion against the British government. The French government was willing to assist the Jacobites not because they had much faith in the success of the planned invasion of Scotland, but rather because they hoped that British troops and resources would be diverted from Flanders. Preparations for the invasion began in December 1707 and by February 1708 the force was ready to embark. The activity at Dunkirk had, however, not gone unnoticed in London. At a Cabinet meeting on 17 February 1708 it was decided to assemble a considerable naval force under Sir George Byng to patrol off Dunkirk and Cadogan was directed to be ready to embark troops at Ostend if necessary. Sunderland was confident that the French would not come out and face Byng's force, but unfortunately bad weather forced Byng to return to the Downs with his squadron. The Admiralty decided that when the weather cleared the

naval force should proceed to Graveline Pits where it would be split into two groups. The first group would take station off the north channel of Dunkirk and the second, smaller, force would cruise between Beachy Head and Dieppe to cover any French move from Brest. The French, however, seized the opportunity presented by the bad weather. The invasion fleet, with the Pretender and 6,000 troops, sailed on 6 March 1708 and after anchoring at Nieuport headed for Scotland on 9 March.[83]

Cadogan immediately wrote to both Sunderland and Byng informing them that the French had sailed and that he was ready to embark ten batallions of troops as soon as a convoy arrived at Ostend. Upon the arrival of this news in London on 11 March, Sunderland, Marlborough, and Godolphin were at Kensington by 5 a.m. and a Cabinet meeting was held two hours later. It was agreed to bring over the troops with Cadogan at Ostend, all officers in Britain were to repair to their commands immediately, the Lord Lieutenant of Lancashire was to put the militia in order, two regiments of dragoons were to proceed to Nottingham, infantry was dispatched to York, and orders were given to prepare the transport of additional troops from Ireland. A further meeting was held at 6 p.m. to settle the transportation of the soldiers from Ireland. The next day another Cabinet meeting decided that the Scotch Lords should write to Scotland to prepare magazines for the troops that were to come over from Ostend. The Lords Lieutenant of the Northern Counties were directed to apprehend any person going to Scotland without the necessary passes or certificates. On 14 March it was agreed that Marshall Tallard and the other French officers held prisoner at Nottingham should be deprived of their swords. The Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was to be instructed to order the convoy for the troops from Ireland to proceed to Belfast.[84]

When the news of the French departure reached Byng he divided his force. Admiral Baker was sent to Ostend to bring over the soldiers and Byng took the rest of the squadron in pursuit of the French. As the English and French ships journeyed north the weather was appalling and

Sunderland's anxiety cannot have been eased by reports from Scotland which mistook Byng's ships for French vessels. The French anchored in the Firth of Forth on 12 March, but Byng was only a few hours behind them. The signals made by the French ships to the shore met no response and when Fourbin, the French commander, detected Byng's presence in the Forth the following day he ignored the requests of the Pretender and the Scots to be put ashore and he fled north. Byng set off in pursuit and though the English ships managed to engage the French for a short time they only managed to capture the Salisbury. The haul of prisoners included French infantry and Irish and Scottish Jacobites. After this brief encounter the French made good their escape and with little prospect of catching up with them Byng returned to the Firth of Forth. The French sailed up the coast of Scotland and were considering making a landing at Inverness, but bad weather forced them to change their plans. They decided to return to Dunkirk by sailing down the west coast of Scotland and Ireland and back up the Channel.[85]

Admiral Baker had left Ostend with the ten batallions of infantry on 17 March 1708, but by now the crisis was over. Sunderland, with considerable perception, believed that Byng's encounter with the enemy would put an end to their design. Baker arrived off Tynemouth on 21 March, but at the same time Cadogan was already making preparations for the return of the troops to Ostend. In late-March Cadogan informed Sunderland that part of Fourbin's squadron had returned to Dunkirk and by the end of the month Sunderland instructed the Secretary-at-War, Robert Walpole, that the troops marching for Scotland should return to their quarters and the troops with Baker were back at Ostend by 19 April. Sunderland could derive considerable satisfaction from the effective and successful conduct of operations which had prevented the landing of the French troops in Scotland.[86]

Sunderland was an ideal administrator. He was hard working, energetic, resilient, able, decisive, vigilant, sanguine, and determined to use his authority as Secretary of State to the full. Upon taking up office Sunderland was convinced that if the struggle with Louis XIV was pursued aggressively and with sufficient enterprise and vigour in both Italy and Spain then the allies, as a result of their successes, would be able to dictate peace terms to France. Sunderland brought his influence to bear upon the formulation of policy in London and was then determined that it should be effectively and successfully implemented. He gave his subordinates precise instructions on how the war should be conducted and then gave them the necessary support and encouragement to help them overcome the obstacles in the way of achieving the goals which had been set in London. Sunderland knew that success would not be easily obtained and in the face of military setbacks and the problems caused by Britain's allies he kept urging and encouraging Chetwynd, Stanhope, Galway, Methuen, and Manchester to keep on with their efforts and to make yet another attempt to achieve some progress. Sunderland himself must have wondered if any good would come of all this ceaseless toil, but rather than retreat into despondency and despair he knew the only course of action was to hope for the best and to keep trying. Yet the obstacles proved too great and the reality and illusion of power were brought into sharp contrast. Sunderland could draw up and direct policy but after this he relied on the individuals on the spot to carry it through. Despite using all their endeavours these men could not overcome the various circumstances, particularly awkward and myopic allies, which mitigated against their efforts. For much of the time Sunderland was reduced to the level of an impotent spectator who could only shout and hope for a favourable outcome. Significantly, the defeat of the Jacobite invasion attempt and the capture of Minorca which were primarily British undertakings were the two bright spots for Sunderland between 1706 and 1710. Paradoxically, Sunderland was an outstanding administrator yet the achievements of his Secretaryship were not commensurate with his ability. It was the most frustrating aspect of his political career so far.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE DOMINANCE OF THE JUNTO DECEMBER 1707 TO NOVEMBER 1709

'Those that have behaved themselves in such an extraordinary manner to me'

From December 1706 to November 1709 the Junto pursued a single minded, ruthless, and determined offensive to secure control of the administration. Marlborough and Godolphin were as hostile to party domination as the Queen and Robert Harley but they were dependent upon Whig support to allow them to prosecute the war. The High Tories had been alienated by the Duumvirs' war strategy while Harley and his followers were unable to provide effective security for the ministry in the face of a hostile majority in Parliament. In these circumstances Marlborough and Godolphin had to give way to the demands of the Junto. By their willingness to make concessions the Duumvirs became more and more dependent upon Sunderland and his colleagues and the concessions they made estranged Harley and his followers and culminated in their resignation in February 1708. Harley's departure left the Queen as the only obstacle to Junto ambitions and though Anne put up a skilful and resourceful resistance she was unable to stem the tide. In the struggle for control of the government Sunderland's energy, industry, and vigour were readily apparent and he was totally consumed in the Junto's drive for ascendancy. Sunderland was in the van of the Junto's assault and he was ready to follow any path which promised to reach the desired goal. Sunderland led the merciless and vindictive campaign to drive Harley out of office. It was Sunderland who directed the Junto's Scottish policy which embarrassed Marlborough and Godolphin, and which so outraged the Queen that she threatened to dismiss the Secretary of State. Sunderland, however, also exhibited political skill and acumen in helping to ease the tensions and

animosities that arose within the ranks of the Junto as a result of its furious drive for power. On different occasions Sunderland helped to calm the resentment of Somers, Wharton, Orford, and Halifax, yet it was his relationship with Somers which proved the strongest and most enduring. Sunderland was perhaps the leading Whig protagonist during these years and he and Somers are distinguishable as the heart and driving force of the Junto.

In her speech at the opening of Parliament on 3 December 1706 the Queen announced that the Scottish Parliament was considering the Treaty of Union which had been concluded in July 1706. As Scottish representation at Westminster would be composed primarily of those Scots who were responsible for the passage of the Union at Edinburgh the Junto wanted the support of as many of the men who came to London to augment their following in Parliament. The Court, likewise, was canvassing support amongst the Scots. Godolphin was negotiating with the Squadrone and Harley was in contact with the Duke of Hamilton.[1] Sunderland was in touch with the Earl of Sutherland, the Earl of Mar, Sir David Nairne, Secretary Johnstone, and possibly the Earl of Seafield, and was trying to get Annandale, Hamilton, and Atholl to favour the union. The Earl of Marchmont kept Somers informed of proceedings in the Edinburgh Parliament and Somers sent John Shute to Scotland to get Presbyterian approval for the Union. Sunderland, Somers, and Halifax also accepted minor alterations, known as 'explanations', made by the Scottish Parliament in the Articles of the Treaty of Union which the Junto felt were justified so long as they did not affect the calculation of the equivalent. Having agreed to these concessions Sunderland, Somers, and Halifax had to persuade the Whigs in the House of Commons to accept them.[2]

The efforts of the Court to win over Hamilton came to nothing and it was the Junto who managed to maintain control of the passage of the

Treaty of Union through the Scottish Parliament. The Treaty, together with the 'explanations' and an act for the security of the Presbyterian establishment in Scotland, was agreed to and touched with the royal sceptre on 16 January 1707. The Queen informed the House of Lords of this ratification and on 28 January Sunderland, as Secretary of State, delivered into the House a copy of the Scottish ratification along with the proceedings of the English and Scottish commissioners who had drawn up the articles of union.[3]

The High Tories in the Lords seemed to have deliberately restrained their criticism of the union but the Presbyterian Act of Security was bound to cause concern. On 14 January 1707 Nottingham, with the support of Rochester, Buckingham and Haversham, urged that the Church of England should be safeguarded from the dangers of the union.[4] The Court and the Junto responded immediately. A fortnight later a meeting was held at Sunderland's office, attended by Godolphin, Marlborough, Wharton, Orford, Townshend, Halifax, Charles Trimnell and William Wake, where it was decided to insert a bill for the security of the Church into the Treaty of Union as well as measures to safeguard the bill's passage through Parliament.[5] The Archbishop of Canterbury introduced the bill into the House of Lords.[6] The bill confirmed the existing rights of the Church though it did not mention the Test Act. On 3 February the Archbishop of York, together with Nottingham, moved that the Test Act should be included in the bill. They were opposed by Sunderland, Wharton, Somers, Halifax, and the Archbishop of Canterbury and the motion was rejected by 60 votes to 33. The bill then went through without any amendments and it was reported by the Bishop of Salisbury and ordered to be engrossed.[7]

By the beginning of March 1707 the Junto and the Court had successfully carried the Treaty of Union through the House of Commons. On 15 March the Lords began their consideration in a committee of the Whole House with Sunderland calling upon the Bishop of Salisbury to take the chair.[8] The strength of the Court and the Junto in the Lords allowed Sunderland and Wharton to assure Sir David Nairne that

in the debates that day there had been no important speeches,[9] and this was despite the considerable efforts made by Nottingham, Guernsey, and Haversham in opposition to the union.[10] Sunderland's confidence is evident in his letter to Queensberry at the beginning of February 1707,

> to congratulate with you, for your having brought this great work of the Union, to so happy a conclusion; I am sure, as there is nobody who did more sincerely wish it might have this good end, than I, so there's nobody, who has a greater and sincerer satisfaction, in the great share and honour your Grace has, in the having been at the head of an affair, that I don't doubt will prove so great, and so lasting a good to this whole Island, and it is that which both nations, will bless you, and your memory for.[11]

This was even before the House of Lords had begun to consider the treaty. On 18 February Sunderland delivered into the House the Act for the election of the Scottish peers and M.P.'s that were to sit at Westminster.[12] In the face of tenacious High Tory opposition[13] Sunderland, Somers, Wharton, Halifax, Townshend, Godolphin, and the Bishops of Salisbury, Oxford, and Norwich argued for the union.[14] The treaty was passed in the Lords on 6 March and Sunderland was appointed to the committee to thank the Queen for her speech recommending the union. The address was drawn up by the Lords and agreed to by the Commons two days later.[15]

Harley's irritation at the way the Junto had dominated the proceedings led him to make one final effort against the Whig leaders. Harley sought to exploit the resentment of English merchants at what they regarded as manipulation of customs duties and thereby forcing the Junto to annoy either the Scots or the merchants depending upon whose side they took. Under the terms of the union trade restrictions between England and Scotland were to cease on 1 May at the commencement of the union. Up to this date the Scots were to retain their own customs and excise system which had lower duties than the English. Some merchants sought to exploit the anomalies of this arrangement by

importing goods into Scotland at the lower duties prior to 1 May and selling them in England after this date for a larger profit. There were complaints in the House of Commons and it was certainly an issue on which the Junto were vulnerable. To give way to the merchants would antagonize the Scots but to ignore the complaints of the merchants would mean risking the loss of their support.[16]

A bill was introduced into the Commons to prevent this abuse and to counter the objection that the legislation infringed the union Harley brought in an additional clause exempting Scottish merchants resident in Scotland who could prove their goods were imported on their own account.[17] When the bill arrived in the Lords the Junto were in obvious difficulties. Somers described Harley's clause as unfortunate, Halifax said it was destroying the bill, and Sunderland vindicated his own conduct and disclaimed any involvement with the amendment.[18] In an attempt to end this impasse the Lords agreed to Rochester's proposal for a prorogation.[19] Sunderland was furious at this development and even more incensed at Harley as he told the Duke of Marlborough:

> I believe you will be surprised at this short prorogation. It is entirely occasioned by him [Harley] who is the author of all the tricks played here. I need not name him, having done it in my last letter to you. I will only say no man in the service of a government ever did act such a part. I wish those to whom he has acted it were ever capable of thinking him in the wrong, for I fear it may be some time or other too late. I don't write so full of professions to you as some do, but I am sure my heart is much sincerer.[20]

When Parliament resumed the Commons passed the bill again and to avoid further difficulties the Queen followed Godolphin's advice and brought the session to an end.[21]

Foreign affairs saw a greater sense of common purpose between the Junto and the Court, but even here their relationship was still not completely harmonious. Halifax complained that Townshend was to be sent as the English envoy to the forthcoming peace negotiations at

The Hague when he and Marlborough had decided that Halifax should be employed in that capacity. Marlborough bitterly resented Halifax's accusations and Sunderland had to intervene on Halifax's behalf with his father-in-law and reassure him of Halifax's fidelity.[22] Sunderland knew that if the Junto were to build up their authority in the administration they would need the help of the Duumvirs and there was nothing to be gained by antagonising them unnecessarily.

Sunderland's conciliatory spirit is clear in his letter to Marlborough of 9 May 1707. He wrote:

> As to what you mention in your letter I received by Mr. Craggs, in relation to a friend of ours [Halifax], I can assure you, nothing has given me so much uneasiness a great while, as that whole matter, but I am sure, the only reason that hindered him, from writing, was that he thought, the best way, to have all that was past, forgot, was to say no more of it, and he is now as easy with Lord Treasurer, and all his, and your friends, as he ever was, and I will answer for it, you will find him, in all respects as you wish, and as he used to be: I can only say for my self, that as I have in this, so I will in every thing, do all I can towards making every thing easy, among those, who are the only people, that either will or can support this government.[23]

Sunderland was to act as a peace maker on a number of occasions as the Junto pursued their goal in the next three years. There were, however, more serious causes of unrest for the Junto and the Court.

The Junto were dissatisfied about the appointment of Sir Simon Harcourt, a follower of Harley, as Attorney-General and the Earl of Pembroke as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, but the main source of anxiety was over the Church. The Junto had wanted one of their ecclesiastical adherents to succeed to the vacant bishopric of Winchester, but Godolphin had already promised it to the Bishop of Exeter, Jonathan Trelawny, and neither the Lord Treasurer nor the Queen would give way in spite of the remonstrances by the Archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of the Junto. Godolphin knew that some compensation would have to be made to the Junto and he felt the vacancies at Exeter,

Chester, and in the Regius Professorship of Divinity at Oxford University would give him the opportunity. The Queen meanwhile, probably acting upon the advice of the Archbishop of York, had promised the bishoprics of Exeter and Chester to Offspring Blackall and Sir William Dawes respectively, and the Regius Professorship to George Smallridge. Smallridge was a protégé of Harley and Blackall and Dawes were both High Tories. The Junto were furious at this development and Godolphin, who was under great pressure, did at least get a short breathing space by the death of the Bishop of Ely whom he replaced with John Moore, Bishop of Norwich. The Junto insisted that one of their supporters should be made Bishop of Norwich and that the Queen's promise to Blackall and Dawes should be rescinded.[24]

For most of the time Somers was the most active member of the Junto during the bishoprics crisis.[25] Sunderland was unable to do much for he was incapacitated by ill-health. He attended the Cabinet meetings in early May 1707 to discuss the re-organization of the Scottish administration but for the rest of the month he was ill with fever. Though he was back at Whitehall on 10 June he was still suffering from the complications of an eye infection. He does not appear to have fully recovered, despite transacting business as Secretary of State, for he had to retire to Althorp in August. In Sunderland's absence Harley was given responsibility for dealing with the Earl of Peterborough who had just returned to England and Sunderland did not recover fully until September 1707.[26]

By June the Junto Lords were so exasperated that Godolphin felt that Sunderland could not be relied on to present Trelawny to the Queen so that he could pay homage for the bishopric of Winchester. Godolphin asked Harley to go to Windsor to prevent anything happening which might be regarded as an affront to the Queen.[27] Shortly afterwards the Junto declared that unless their ecclesiastical claims were met they would go into opposition at the opening of Parliament and launch an attack on the Admiralty which was presided

over by Prince George, as Lord High Admiral, and Marlborough's Tory brother, Admiral George Churchill.[28] Marlborough was very concerned about his brother and he requested Sunderland not to participate in the attack upon the Admiralty.[29] Sunderland made it perfectly clear, as Marlborough must have known, that his first loyalty was to the Junto. The Duke wrote apprehensively to his wife:

> I have had a letter from Sunderland by which he lets me see the consequences that must happen if the Queen can't be prevailled with in the affaires of the Church. It is pretty hard to me to give him an honest answer, since it would lay too great a weight upon the Queen. If other things go well, that will be done as thay wish, but I am rather despairing then otherways I have done what I can, and let what will happen I hope to have nothing to reproch myself, and then God's will be done.[30]

Sunderland was confident that the Junto would eventually get what they wanted as he told Shaftesbury:

> tho' I must be so plain, as to tell you, things at Court are far from being upon the foot, all honest men wish, but as we have hitherto, (in the Scripture Phrase) worked out our salvations with fear and trembling, so I don't doubt but standing to our principles, and going on with our main point, will get the better at least, of the difficulties, we have in our way.[31]

The Queen remained obdurate in the face of the Duumvirs attempts to persuade her to compromise. In August 1707 Sunderland repeated his warning about what would happen if the Junto did not receive satisfaction.[32] Marlborough replied that he had done all he possibly could to satisfy the Whigs.[33] At the end of the month a Junto council was held at Althorp to prepare their strategy for the forthcoming parliamentary session.[34] In the autumn the Duumvirs used the threat of resignation to the Queen but to no effect and a further Junto council was held at Orford's house on 2 October.[35] A week later Sunderland left Marlborough in no doubt about the determination of the Junto to have their way:

I am fully convinced, that things are not so well, as they were last year between the Queen and Marlborough and Godolphin but I beg leave upon this occasion to say, that if Marlborough and Godolphin would have believed, what some of their friends and servants have told them often in relation to Harley this had never happened, but be that as it will, without looking back to what is past, I am sure it's high time, to try to retrieve them, before they are past recovery, and I can't but believe, as you say, that when it's very plain that Marlborough and Godolphin are in earnest the Queen will not part with them since what is insisted upon is so reasonable in itself, as well as what has been promised over and over; I am ashamed to trouble you in so many letters, with this over and over, and indeed I should not do it, but for the apprehension I have of the inevitable confusion must attend the Queen and all that have to do with them, if this obstinacy continues, for as to myself I am very easy, having long resolved, as an honest man, whatever happens to act upon the same principles, and with the same people I have always acted.[36]

At the meeting of Parliament in October 1707, exactly as Sunderland had told Marlborough, the Junto began to criticise the running of the Admiralty and they were joined by the High Tories who wanted to enlarge the Junto attack into a full-scale condemnation of the government. On the initiative of Wharton and Somers the debate on the address of thanks for the Queen's speech was postponed and the peers went into a committee of the Whole House to consider the State of the Nation with relation to the fleet and trade of the kingdom. A petition from merchants who had lost ships was delivered to the Lords in November. In this the merchants complained about the inadequacy of the protection provided for their vessels by the Admiralty. The examination of the petition began on 3 December 1707 and the House appointed two committees; one under the Duke of Bolton to inquire into the truth of the merchants' allegations and the other under Halifax to consider suggestions to encourage privateering

in the West Indies.[37] Sunderland was responsible for laying papers from the Admiralty before the House.[38] The ministry was soon in difficulties and Harley responded with a proposal to reconstruct the administration. He had met the Duumvirs on 5 December 1707 and revealed a scheme by which the moderate Whigs would be persuaded publicly to dissociate themselves from the Junto. Harley also requested permission to approach moderate Tories with a view to them supporting the Court. A further meeting took place four days later where the Whigs who were present agreed not to press the Queen into accepting unreasonable terms. At the same time overtures were made to the Tories. Godolphin then gave way to Anne over the appointments to the bishoprics of Exeter and Chester. In her speech on 18 December the Queen emphasised the necessity for an all party ministry and Harley had managed to outmanoeuvre the Junto. The all party scheme was reflected in the ecclesiastical appointments. The High Tories Blackall and Dawes obtained the bishoprics of Exeter and Chester, Charles Trimnell, the associate of Sunderland and the Junto's candidate, became Bishop of Norwich, and Marlborough's nominee, Dr. Potter was made Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. As a result of this agreement the Junto's parliamentary attack collapsed. Their spokesmen in the House of Commons were unable to carry their motions on the Admiralty and on 19 December the Whig Lords deserted their High Tory allies.[39] The pressure on the government did not ease, however, for the mismanagement of the war in Spain gave its opponents a further opportunity to harry the ministry.

In December 1707 the House of Lords had begun an examination of the conduct of the war in Spain and the Earl of Peterborough was the prominent figure in this affair. Peterborough had been in command of the English troops in Spain but as a result of his dilatory proceeding and the hostility between him and Charles III allied success in Spain in 1706 had come to nothing. When it became apparent that he was an embarrassment to his allies he obtained permission to go to Italy to discuss with Prince Eugene and the Duke of Savoy the possibility of an expedition against France, as well as raising a

substantial sum of money for Charles III. Peterborough, after talks with Eugene and Victor Amadeus and raising £100,000 at Genoa, returned to Spain in January 1707 where he took part in the preparations for the campaign in Valencia.[40]

By this time it had been decided in London to recall Peterborough. Sunderland informed him that the project he had concerted with the Duke of Savoy was irrelevant and impracticable; that the loan he had raised at Genoa was an extraordinary proceeding, as was his going to Italy in the first place, for which he had no authority; that he was to return to England immediately and to explain his conduct.[41] Peterborough wrote to Sunderland attempting to justify himself, but Sunderland merely repeated the order to return home as soon as possible.[42] In reply to Sunderland's directions Peterborough 'took his own self-willed and embarrassing mode of complying'.[43] He visited Turin, Vienna, Leipzig, Hanover, and finally the Duke of Marlborough's headquarters at Soignies in August. On 16 August he wrote to Sunderland that he was ready to embark and requested a convoy. Since Sunderland was at Althorp Harley was given responsibility for dealing with Peterborough and the ministers in London were already preparing for his arrival.[44]

Peterborough arrived in London in August but declined waiting upon the Queen as he claimed his name had been struck out of the Privy Council Register. Harley showed even more ill-will to Peterborough than Sunderland. On 25 August he directed Peterborough to prepare a written account of his proceedings to be laid before the Queen. In September Sunderland assumed responsibility for Peterborough and the ministers spent much of this month examining various papers relating to Peterborough. In reply to a letter from Peterborough Sunderland informed him of the points his paper should deal with. These were: Peterborough's not marching to Madrid when he knew that Galway was there; his discouraging Charles III from marching to Madrid through Valencia; Peterborough's refusal to serve with Galway; his departure from Spain for Italy; Peterborough's negotiating with the Duke of Savoy

without having authority from the Queen for so doing; and the apparent mismanagement of money drawn out of the Treasury by Peterborough. Sunderland concluded by telling Peterborough that his paper should be ready to be presented to the Queen by 12 October.[45] Peterborough caused continual difficulties and his memorial was not received until 19 October. Sunderland and the other ministers examined Peterborough's answer in December after which Sunderland told him that his answer was unsatisfactory and that a new account should be prepared by 7 January 1708.[46] Peterborough did not reply to Sunderland until 7 January when he declared that he hoped the new paper would be ready in a few days.[47] Before any further steps could be taken the focus of attention shifted to Parliament where, following their attack over the Admiralty, 'the Junto resumed their role as principal parliamentary defenders of the Ministry and the war'.[48]

The Tories had rallied to Peterborough and were determined to use the inquiry into the war in Spain to embarrass the Whigs and the Court. The Commons had begun their analysis of the number of troops present in the Peninsula at the time of the battle of Almanza in early December and had appointed 17 January 1708 to consider the matter further.[49] The Lords began their inquiry on 15 December and the following day in a committee of the Whole House Nottingham, Rochester, and Haversham defended Peterborough. On the 19 December Nottingham suggested that the allies should concentrate their military efforts in Spain and that 20,000 troops should be transferred from Flanders to the Peninsula. Rochester declared that before the war could be carried on vigorously it would be necessary to know how the government was to employ the supplies voted by Parliament. Marlborough answered that measures were already being concerted with the Emperor to send reinforcements to Spain. He was followed by Sunderland, Wharton, Townshend, and Cholmondeley who urged the necessity of supporting the war in Spain.[50] Somers then proposed that 'no peace can be honourable or safe, for Her Majesty and Her Allies, if Spain and the Spanish West Indies be suffered to continue in the Power of the House of Bourbon'.[51] The Junto had successfully cut the ground from under

the feet of the Tories who had little choice but to support the motion. The resolution was reported and a committee, including Sunderland, was appointed to draw up an address to the Queen. The Commons agreed with the address and a joint recommendation was delivered to Anne who expressed her approval on 7 January 1708. The Lords began an official inquiry into Peterborough's conduct the same month with Sunderland delivering papers into the House. Though the charges against Peterborough failed, Rochester and Nottingham were unable to vindicate him and he received no vote of thanks. For the remainder of 1708 and 1709 Peterborough was preoccupied with a Treasury examination into his accounts as Commander-in-Chief in Spain and until he could refute the charges of appropriating government funds his property was confiscated.[52] The Commons inquiry into the conduct of the war in Spain continued during January and February 1708 and became part of the struggle between the Junto and Robert Harley, with Sunderland determined to drive the Secretary of State for the North out of the ministry.

The pressure which the ministry had been subjected to over the Admiralty and Spanish affairs indicated that the administration would have to come to terms with either the Whigs or the Tories if it was to avoid a political disaster. Robert Harley was intent on reorganizing the administration. He wanted to get rid of Godolphin but to retain the services of Marlborough while reaching an accommodation with the Tories. In January 1708 Harley had been negotiating with the Tories while at the same time Godolphin was becoming more and more suspicious of the Secretary of State and by 29 January relations between the two men had broken down. Harley continued his efforts to buy off both Marlborough and the Tories, and he sought to use the debates in the House of Commons over Spain to break the Junto's association with the Court. On 29 January, after a motion had been made that only 8,660 of the 29,395 troops provided by Parliament had been in Spain at the time of the battle of Almanza, the debate was adjourned by 187 votes to 182. Proceedings were

renewed on 3 February when Henry St. John presented a fresh account to the House of the state of the forces in Spain. In the debate Harley and his associates remained silent which pleased the Tories, but his attempt to embarrass the Junto failed. Instead of rushing to the support of the Court the Whigs in the Commons attacked it for its mismanagement thereby undermining Harley's scheme to show the inability of the Junto to support the Court in Parliament. Harley still tried to win over Marlborough but with no success and after a disastrous attempt to lead the meeting of the Cabinet on 8 February, in the absence of Marlborough and Godolphin, Harley and Sir Thomas Mansell resigned on 11 February followed by Harcourt and Henry St. John the following day.[53] Though not directly involved in Harley's fall, the Junto, and Sunderland in particular, played an important part in helping to bring about Harley's downfall.

Throughout 1707 Sunderland had repeatedly complained to Marlborough of Harley's iniquity[54] and by October the Junto had decided to force Harley out of the administration[55] and in December they were presented with an ideal opportunity which Sunderland exploited to the full. William Greg, a clerk in Harley's office, had been engaged in a treasonable correspondence with France and though Sunderland had been watching Harley's office for some time he had as yet discovered nothing of significance which could be used against the Northern Secretary.[56] Marlborough, however, was informed of Greg's activities and he immediately told the Queen.[57] On 31 December 1707 and 1 January 1708 Greg was examined at Harley's office by Sunderland, Cowper, Godolphin, Devonshire, Marlborough and Harley after which Greg was committed to Newgate. It was agreed on 5 January 1708 to send the evidence against Greg to the Attorney-General in order to bring him to trial. The ministers continued their examination of Greg's conduct for the rest of the month.[58] On 12 January Sunderland and Harley gave evidence at Greg's trial at the Old Bailey[59] and a week later Greg was found guilty on the basis of his own confession and he was sentenced to death. Greg repeatedly denied that Harley knew what he was doing and

it seems it was the poor security and unsatisfactory organization of Harley's office which allowed Greg to carry out his treasonable behaviour.[60] Though not directly implicated the affair could not have come at a worse time for Harley because, with Sunderland hounding his tracks, he was forced to disclose his plans to reorganize the administration and to implement them prematurely.[61]

The Junto were still determined to gain some advantage from the Greg scandal especially as they knew of Harley's negotiations with the Tories and his attempt to discredit them in the House of Commons. Sunderland and Harley continued to examine witnesses and on 9 February the House of Lords appointed a committee of inquiry which included Somers, Wharton, Halifax, Devonshire, Bolton, Townshend and Somerset. Two days later Sunderland delivered papers to the committee who continued their work for the remainder of February and the first half of March 1708. Despite a close examination of the witnesses there was no evidence of Harley's complicity in Greg's activities. Upon consideration of the committee's report it was resolved that Greg should be used as an example, that Harley had been indiscreet in the choice of persons he employed as his agents, and that information given to the French had contributed to the loss of ships of which the merchants had complained to the House of Lords in November 1707. It was agreed to lay the report and the resolutions before the Queen in an address and to request that in future greater care should be taken in the offices of the Secretaries of State. Anne replied that she felt that the entire episode would serve as an effectual warning for the future. Sunderland, however, was still trying in March and April to get evidence to implicate Harley but he met with no success.[62] By this time anyway the Junto had got what they wanted, for Harley and his followers had resigned though their hopes of augmenting their influence in the ministry were disappointed. Henry Boyle became Secretary of State, Robert Walpole Secretary-at-War, and John Smith Chancellor of the Exchequer. Both Boyle and Walpole were Court Whigs rather than committed Junto supporters. The Queen took

no notice of Godolphin's recommendation that Halifax's brother, Sir James Montagu, then Solicitor-General, should be made Attorney-General. Once again, therefore, the Junto began to pressurise the Court for a greater share in the administration and this time they were able to exploit the situation in Scotland.

In December 1707 the House of Commons considered measures to render the Union more effectual and the Junto and their new Scottish allies, the Squadrone, proposed the abolition of the Scottish Privy Council in the hope that it would undermine the authority of Queensberry in Scotland. The Commons agreed to abolition without a division and it was also decided that J.P.'s in Scotland should have the same powers as their English counterparts and that the Court of Justiciary should abolish Circuit Courts in Scotland. The bill was carried through the House of Lords by the Junto with the support of the Squadrone peers, the majority of the Bishops and the Earl of Rochester and his followers in February 1708 and it became law the same month. The abolition of the Scottish Privy Council also meant the disappearance of the office of Secretary of State for Scotland, but Godolphin managed to keep Scottish affairs out of Sunderland's hands by giving the Signet to the Earl of Mar and appointing Sir David Nairne as Underkeeper of the Signet to act in Mar's absence.[63] Sunderland and the Junto were to remain on the offensive in Scotland during the 1708 election.

Parliament had been prorogued on 1 April 1708 and dissolved a fortnight later. Sunderland was optimistic about the election as he told his mother-in-law: 'As to our elections here at home, by the nicest calculation that can be made, they will be very considerably better than in this Parliament.'[64] He enthusiastically informed Marlborough of the Whig victory at Southwark on 30 April[65] and helped to secure the election of Joseph Addison at Lostwithiel by persuading John Hickes to stand down.[66] He was also involved in the elections at Shaftesbury and Poole.[67] On 7 May Sunderland again wrote to Marlborough that 'our elections go on hitherto very

prosperously, and there is no reason to doubt, but we shall have a very good Parliament'.[68] He was keenly interested in the results of the elections as they came in. He gave up his calculations with sixty-nine returns still to be entered and though he made some errors he recorded the majority of electoral changes which accurately reflected the movement in favour of the Whigs. Sunderland measured the Whig gain at twenty-nine seats[69] which agrees with the accounts 'that the Whigs gained on balance thirty seats or more in the English and Welsh constituencies, which made them stronger in Parliament by over sixty'.[70] The election of the forty-five Scottish M.P.'s led to the return of about twenty-seven members belonging to the Seafield-Queensberry group; nine were followers of the Squadrone; and the other nine were Jacobites of varying distinctions.[71] Sunderland wrote to the Duke of Newcastle:

> I heartily congratulate with your Grace upon the elections throughout England, being so well over as they are. I think one may venture to say, it is the most Whig Parliament, has been since the revolution. So that if our friends will stick together and act like men, I am sure the Court must, whether they will or no, come into such measures, as may preserve both us and themselves.[72]

It was in the election of the Scottish Representative peers, however, that Sunderland played his most conspicuous and controversial part.

Following the abortive invasion attempt in 1708 the government directed the Earl of Leven to round up potentially dangerous Scottish nobles who were then ordered to be brought to London together with the Jacobites who had been captured by Byng's squadron on board the Salisbury. Scottish opinion was outraged especially as those who were arrested included notable Whigs and Presbyterians. Lord Belhaven, for instance, was clearly being victimized for his opposition to the union. At the same time it was unclear who had advised bringing the Scots to London,[73] but subsequently Sunderland appears to have admitted that he was responsible.[74]

The first prisoners to be examined in London by Sunderland and Boyle were those taken on board the Salisbury, but the Duke of Hamilton was the most important captive to be sent up to London.[75] Hamilton applied to the Court for bail and after being turned down he approached the Junto. Sunderland, Roxburghe, and Orford made an agreement with Hamilton under which in return for being released on bail the Jacobites and the Squadrone would oppose the Court in the election of the Scottish Representative peers. It was hoped that this combination would weaken the Court's grip on Scotland and increase the Junto's following in the House of Lords. It was agreed in Cabinet on 4 May that Hamilton was to be released on bail of £30,000. Hamilton was to provide £10,000 and Wharton, Halifax, Devonshire, and Newcastle stood a further £5,000 each.[76] Sunderland informed Montrose of these developments:

> Your Grace will hear of Duke Hamilton's being at liberty. This as it was dexterously managed so it has produced such an Union, as will in all probability carry the election of the sixteen peers, in the manner your Grace, and all of us wish. I can only say, that the whole Squadrone is in the list agreed on, and as I am sure you may depend upon Duke Hamilton, and his friends to a man, so I beg you would shew the same confidence towards him, and his, and by doing so, I think we can't fail of carrying our point. All this matter was settled before the Duke of Roxburghe went away, so that I will trouble your Grace with no more, but beg leave to refer you, to my Lord Orkney who will inform you of the whole matter, if my Lord Roxburghe has not done it before. My Lord Orkney will acquaint you that Duke Hamilton, the Squadrone, and I may add the Whigs of England are now upon the same bottom, and I don't doubt will continue so.[77]

The alliance with the Jacobite Duke of Hamilton showed the lengths to which Sunderland was prepared to go to achieve control of the ministry.

On his release Hamilton returned to Scotland and on his way he met groups of Jacobite prisoners being brought up to London. He and his brother, the Earl of Orkney, tried to persuade the prisoners to support

the alliance against the Court and to give up their proxies. Hamilton told Sunderland that as soon as the prisoners had been examined in London they should be sent back to Scotland. Orkney and Hamilton also complained about Queensberry being made a British peer as Duke of Dover. In response Sunderland, acting on behalf of Somers, Halifax and Devonshire, wrote to Newcastle requesting that, before he passed Queensberry's patent as Duke of Dover under the Privy Seal, Newcastle should write to the Queen pointing out the ill-consequences of such a creation. Defoe found it difficult to believe what was happening in Edinburgh and Marlborough reacted in much the same manner. Even the Jacobite prisoners on their way to London were surprised at Hamilton's unholy alliance with the Junto and the Squadrone.[78]

Despite Sunderland's confidence that the alliance of the Squadrone and the Duke of Hamilton would secure the return of a significant number of their candidates the struggle in Scotland proved to be a more difficult affair. Hamilton had repeatedly urged the necessity of some sign of favour from London and both he and Montrose were alarmed when Marlborough gave his proxy to the Earl of Mar for it clearly indicated who had the support of the Court. Montrose and Hamilton again pressed Sunderland to get the prisoners sent back to Scotland as soon as possible after their examination in London. Hamilton also told Sunderland that something must be done to bolster their influence in Scotland. Sunderland got the Jacobite prisoners admitted to bail as fast as he could and on 7 June 1708 he sent letters to Montrose, Roxburghe, and Hamilton. Sunderland's letter to Roxburghe was the most important as he informed Montrose:

> We are extremely obliged to Mr. Cockburn, for the trouble he has taken in coming up. The accounts he gives us seem very hopeful. All shall be done here that is in our power to assist. I will not trouble your Grace with any repetition, but beg leave to refer you to my letters to Duke Hamilton and the Duke of Roxburghe. You will see by my letter to the last, which I send to be shown publicly, if it's thought that will do any good, but I have no reserve.[79]

Sunderland's letters were openly used during the election at Edinburgh, but their contents are only indirectly known. Mar claimed to have got hold of a rough copy of Sunderland's letter to Roxburghe in which he promised that the new Whig Parliament would inquire into the illegal practices employed in the Scottish election. Mar also accused Sunderland of exploiting his authority as Secretary of State by writing to Dalhousie requesting him to use his vote against the Queensberry interest. Sunderland did write to Dalhousie and the contents of the letter were such that Hamilton thought it best to return the letter to Sunderland. In all probability it would seem that Sunderland used the Queen's name in his letter to Dalhousie. Mar was certain that the Court's success in the election would be seriously compromised as a result of Sunderland's behaviour.[80]

The outcome of the election confirmed Mar's anxiety. The Court managed to get ten of its candidates elected including Seafield and Mar. The Squadone-Hamilton alliance brought in Hamilton, Orkney, Montrose, Roxburghe, Crawford, and Rothes, and they were also confident of bringing in Annandale, Marchmont, Ross, and Sutherland when the House of Lords considered the disputed elections. A decisive contribution to the success of the anti-Court group was made by a number of army officers: Crawford, Buchan, Glencairn, Dalhousie, Forfar, Torphichen, and Forbes. Sunderland was requested to prevent the Court venting its wrath upon them by depriving them of their commissions.[81] Sunderland was delighted at the result of the election as he told Montrose:

> I must congratulate with you upon our victory for indeed I think it deserves that name and I don't doubt, but it will prove a thorough one, if it be improved, towards which you may depend upon our doing all that is in our power, but above all things, I must recommend to your Grace, and the rest of our friends with you, the getting substantial proofs of the violences, threats and promises used upon this occasion, because that will effectually at one blow rid you, and us of a subaltern ministry. As for the protestations you have enclosed we have looked them over, and as far as we can judge enough will

hold to throw out several of the enemy and bring in several friends, but as to this, we cannot judge perfectly of it, till we have the honour of seeing some of you, and discourse the whole matter with you, so that we must beg your Grace, and the rest of our friends, that are chose, or petitioners, to come up to London as soon as your affairs will permit. That we may be so thoroughly apprised of the whole, so as to inform our friends fully of it.[82]

The Earl of Mar wasted no time in informing both Godolphin and the Queen of Sunderland's conduct. He directed Sir David Nairne to deliver papers concerning Sunderland's letter to Roxburghe to Anne and the Lord Treasurer. Nairne was also to tell Somerset and Boyle that Sunderland was responsible for the setback the Court had suffered in the election. On 18 June 1708 Mar delivered lists to the Queen which he claimed showed that had it not been for Sunderland the Court would have carried all its candidates in the election.[83]

The Queen was furious with Sunderland and she could hardly contain her resentment as she wrote to Marlborough:

> there is no wonder opposition should increase when one of my own servants are at the head of it, as you will see by the enclosed, which I could not forbear sending you, to give you a view of the ill treatment I receive from the person that is mentioned in it. There are larger accounts come today from other hands, all to the same purpose. It is such a behaviour I believe as never was known, and what I really cannot bear, nor what no other I dare say would one minute, but I am willing out of sincere kindness and consideration I have for you, to defer taking away the seals till I receive again more confirmation of what the enclosed contains, not that I have doubt of the truth of it, all Lord Sunderland's own actions having shown so much of the same spirit. I have told my thoughts very freely to Lord Treasurer on this subject, and I do not doubt he will give you an account of what passed between us, and what his opinion is, and therefore will not say any more on a thing that must be so disagreeable to you, only that it is impossible to bear such usage, and I am sure you are too reasonable, if you consider this matter impartially, to blame me when I send for the seals.[84]

Four days later the Queen wrote to Marlborough again telling him that further evidence, probably Mar's letter of 18 June, had arrived concerning Sunderland. The Queen had questioned Sunderland who, though he denied using her name, admitted that he had written very freely to the Squadrone Lords. Anne felt that whether Sunderland had used her name or not was beside the point and the only course open to her was to dismiss him.[85] The Queen was determined to show her resentment and Marlborough decided to consult Godolphin and the Duchess before he answered her letters. In the meantime he told his wife to ask Sunderland not to annoy the Queen unnecessarily. Marlborough prepared his answer with the advice of the Duchess and Godolphin and sent it to the Queen on 22 July. He expressed his surprise that Anne had gone so far as to threaten to remove Sunderland and asked her to defer any decision until he could see her. Marlborough pointed out that to dismiss Sunderland would discourage the Whigs who were the government's only security.[86] The Queen gave way to Marlborough's solicitation but she ominously observed:

> you tell me you think I am obliged in conscience as a good Christian, and as a mark of resignation to God, to forgive and forget all resentments I may have to any particular person or party. I thank God, I do forgive all my enemies with all my heart, but it is wholly impossible for human nature to forget people's behaviour in things so fresh in one's memory, so far as to have a good opinion of them, or any reliance on them, especially when one sees for all their professions they are still pursuing the same measures, and you may depend upon it they will always do so, for there is no washing a Blackamore white.[87]

The 'same measures' the Queen mentioned probably refers to the continuing attempt of the Junto to increase their power in the administration.

Sunderland was still the only member of the Junto who held Cabinet office and by the Spring of 1708 the anger of the Whig Lords at Marlborough and Godolphin was intensifying. There had been rumours the previous year that Somers was to be made Lord President but nothing came of it due to the hostility of the Queen towards him. Pressure to

admit Somers into the Cabinet began to build up in April 1708. Godolphin, Devonshire, and Newcastle tried to persuade Anne to admit Somers into the Cabinet without portfolio. The Queen was obdurate and even Marlborough's efforts failed to influence her. The Junto were indignant and Somers went so far as to compose an indictment of ministerial deceit.[88]

In June 1708 the Duchess of Marlborough's political confidant and advisor, Arthur Maynwaring, had tried to persuade Sunderland that the Junto must keep firm to their alliance with the Court. Maynwaring was hopeful that Sunderland could moderate Junto demands but the continual delay of Somers appointment nullified his efforts.[89] At the end of July Sunderland wrote to Marlborough 'to lay before him what I take to be the present state of things here in as plain and inoffensive manner as I could'.[90] Sunderland further assured his father-in-law that he could only rely upon the support of the Whigs if their demands were met.[91] In a letter to the Duke of Newcastle, however, Sunderland revealed the full extent of his indignation and anger at the delay of the Duumvirs in satisfying the Junto. He wrote:

> the present posture of our affairs... grow worse and worse every day at home; for without running over all the particulars, such as the villainous management of Scotland, the state of the fleet which is worse than ever, the condition in Ireland in which the Protestant interest is lower, and the Popish higher than ever; their late management in relation to the invasion, and in particular the pardoning Lord Griffin, is a declaration to the whole world, as far as in them lies, for the Prince of Wales, and against the Protestant Succession, these are such proceedings that if there is not a just spirit shown in Parliament, we had as good give up the game and submit to my Lord Treasurer's and my Lord Marlborough's bringing in the Prince of Wales.[92]

Sunderland made it clear that the 'just spirit' to be shown in Parliament included setting up Sir Peter King as the Junto's candidate for the Speakership of the House of Commons in opposition to Sir Richard Onslow who was the nominee of the Court.[93]

Somers and Wharton also exhibited the same impatience as Sunderland when they accused Godolphin of giving false assurances of support while attempting to form a government with the backing of more moderate Whigs. There were also problems with Somerset who felt that the Queen's aversion to Somers made his appointment impracticable and that he himself would be more able to lead a reorganized ministry. The Junto did less than justice to Marlborough and Godolphin for both men were pressing the Queen to make concessions to the Junto, but Anne would not 'submit to the five tyrannizing Lords'.[94] In July Sunderland retired to Althorp where, at the end of August, a Junto council was held and Godolphin, in an attempt to reach an agreement, also attended but nothing was settled.[95]

In September 1708 Sunderland was negotiating with Godolphin and the Duchess of Marlborough and they agreed to a further meeting of the Junto with the Lord Treasurer at Newmarket in early-October.[96] Sunderland told Wharton that he hoped a favourable agreement would be reached.[97] The meeting was attended by Godolphin, Sunderland, Somers, Wharton, Halifax, Orford, Devonshire, Bolton, and Dorchester. The Junto proposed that the Earl of Pembroke, who was Lord President and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, should replace Prince George as Lord High Admiral thereby allowing Somers and Wharton to succeed as Lord President and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland respectively. Godolphin answered by proposing an act of Parliament to allow Prince George to continue in office but to empower his council to act for him. Godolphin was told that unless the necessary appointments were made the Junto would put Sir Peter King up for the Speakership of the House of Commons.[98] By mid-October Sunderland, Godolphin, and Maynwaring were pressing the Duchess of Marlborough to come up to London to help settle the dispute.[99] On 19 October Sunderland informed Newcastle of the meeting with Godolphin and he argued that the appointment of Sir James Montagu and Robert Eyres, as Attorney-General and Solicitor-General respectively was evidence that the Junto's firmness would meet with success in the end.[100]

Sunderland's frustration with Marlborough and Godolphin got the better of him on one occasion for he remarked to Maynwaring that

'he believed there was a management in the struggle with Mr. Harley'.[101] Maynwaring informed the Duchess of Marlborough of Sunderland's remarks and he blamed Somers and Halifax for Sunderland's rash comments.[102] Two days later Maynwaring again wrote to the Duchess of Marlborough:

> At Lord Halifax's before dinner I had a good deal of discourse with Lord Sunderland who was uneasy, and said he had received a letter from you that shewd you were not well pleased with him, and I was glad to find for his own sake as well as other people's, that it made so much impression upon him. I will not trouble your Grace with the wise talk I used about the politics, but I took occasion to say I was very confident you were not angry with him and that no one would do him an ill office if he would: which I the rather mentioned, because he took occasion to speak of my having been at the Lodge. Your Grace knows whether I am an enemy to him; and indeed I don't know that he thinks me so. But it is certain he is mightily deluded, and many of his notions cannot I think come from Lord Somers but from some underlings of the party that haunt his house, or at least from the master of the feast we were at. And I both hope and believe from what I did observe in him yesterday, that it will be in your power to do him good, and make him more reasonable, which I sincerely wish; because there is no one whose humour or qualities I like better.[103]

Nevertheless Maynwaring wished that Sunderland's zeal could be employed elsewhere[104] and Godolphin had few illusions about Sunderland's conduct.[105]

On 26 October Sunderland wrote to Newcastle requesting the Duke to engage his followers in the Commons to support Sir Peter King in the election of the Speaker.[106] The second part of the Junto plan was an attack on Prince George as Lord High Admiral. While she had been trying to thwart the Junto the Queen had been carrying the burden of her husband's illness. This added concern had helped to undermine her resolve and when Prince George died on 28 October 1708 the Queen's opposition collapsed.[107] Sunderland informed Newcastle:

> my Lord Treasurer has acquainted us, that the Queen had agreed to make Lord Pembroke Lord High Admiral, Lord Somers President, and Lord Wharton Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Lord Somers is out of town, so that whither he will be persuaded to accept it or no I can't tell, but he would be so much in the wrong, if he should not. That I don't doubt but he will.[108]

Sunderland's faith in Somers was justified for both he and Wharton took up their new offices on 15 November 1708.[109] The plan to set up Sir Peter King was dropped[110] and when Parliament met Sir Richard Onslow was elected Speaker.[111] The Queen was unable to attend the opening of Parliament due to her grief at her husband's death and commissioners were appointed to act in her place. They were: Sunderland, Cowper, Godolphin, Newcastle, Devonshire, and Somerset. On 18 November they approved the choice of the Speaker after which Cowper read the Queen's speech and Sunderland was a member of the committee to condole with, and to thank the Queen for her speech.[112]

The 1708-1709 Parliamentary session saw Sunderland once more directing the Junto's Scottish policy. He was determined that the Junto and the Squadrone should seize the opportunity to increase their strength in the House of Lords by presenting protestations at the election of Court candidates in the Scottish Representative peers election. In July he had been urging the Scots to get evidence which could be employed in this attempt and he renewed his attempt to get the Scottish nobles up to London for the meeting of Parliament.[113] Sunderland urged Montrose to lose no time in coming to London:

> the Parliament now drawing very near, and after all the struggle we have had this summer, it would be pity, for want of any diligence, to fail in doing what I will venture to say, we are sure of if we stick together and act like men. I mean the making of the Union complete and entire, and happy for the whole island, by ridding you, of your subaltern ministry. We have the best Parliament that has been chose these many years, the greatest union of all men of reputation among us, those that differed

last year being now entirely united, so that if we fail of doing right, it's entirely our own fault. So that I must beg of your Grace not to strike such a damp upon your friends and those that wish the good of Britain as to stay any longer in the country, for there are a good many things necessary to concert well together, before the Parliament meets, which it is impossible to do in the absence of one of your consideration.[114]

The Junto and the Squadrone laid great hopes on their ability to carry the petitions of Annandale, Ross, Marchmont, and Sutherland. A meeting was held on 11 December to prepare their plans.[115] The petitions of the four Scottish peers were entered in the House of Lords on 18 December, but due to delays in getting the necessary papers from Scotland a committee was not appointed to consider the petitions and papers until 10 January 1709. Sunderland was named as a member of the committee.[116] Sunderland and the Junto were particularly concerned to deny Queensberry's right to vote in the election by virtue of his sitting in the House of Lords as Duke of Dover, which was a British peerage created after the union.[117] In this context the Duke of Hamilton's protestation was specifically aimed at invalidating Queensberry's vote. Sunderland was so active in this affair that Godolphin complained to Marlborough that he had been unable to see the Secretary of State as 'so much of his time is applied to caballing and parliament meetings'.[118] On 21 January 1709 the Lords agreed by 57 votes to 50, with Sunderland voting in the majority,[119] that Queensberry's vote was invalid. It was declared: 'That a peer of Scotland, claiming to sit in the House of Peers by virtue of a Patent passed under the Great Seal of Great Britain after the Union, and who now sits in the Parliament of Great Britain, had no right to vote in the Election of the Sixteen Peers.'[120] Despite their further endeavours with election petitions the Junto and the Squadrone were only able to unseat Lothian and bring in Annandale.[121]

By December 1708 Nottingham was alarmed by reports he had received from William Bromley that a bill would be introduced into

Parliament to repeal the Sacramental Test and to bring about a General Naturalization of foreign Protestants. Nottingham felt the only alternative open to the Tories was to attack the administration over how ill-prepared Scotland had been to meet the attempted invasion of 1708 together with the failure to prosecute Jacobites in Scotland. At the beginning of 1709 Haversham opened an inquiry in the House of Lords on the points suggested by Nottingham. Sunderland was responsible for delivering papers to the House relating to the invasion attempt which were considered on 25 February when Haversham and Buckingham attacked the ministry.[122] The Court, however, with the help of the Junto were able to beat off the assault.[123]

For the remainder of the session the Junto and the Squadrone kept the pressure on the Court over Scottish affairs. The Queen announced that the Scottish administration was to be altered and there was to be a third Secretary of State with responsibility for Scotland. The Squadrone and the Junto wanted either Montrose, Roxburghe, or even Hamilton appointed but despite the efforts of Sunderland and Somers Godolphin was determined that the Court should retain its authority in Scotland and Queensberry was made Secretary of State for Scotland in February 1709. Clearly there had been a great deal of wrangling over this point for as a gesture of conciliation Montrose was made Keeper of the Scottish Privy Seal and Roxburghe, along with Argyll, was added to the Privy Council of Great Britain. Nothing, however, was done for Hamilton. The Scottish law of Treason was also changed to bring it into line with England, and Somers appears to have influenced the framing of this legislation which, though it met stiff opposition from the Scots in both Houses of Paliament, was eventually passed. Somers also joined the other ministers in carrying through an Act of Grace and Free Pardon which granted an amnesty to all treasons which had been committed. Sunderland introduced the indemnity into the Lords on 20 April 1709 where it passed unanimously and was then sent down to the Commons for approval.[124]

Throughout 1707 and 1708 Sunderland had spared no effort on behalf of the Junto in their struggle with the Queen and the Duumvirs, pursuing any course of action he felt would help the Junto tighten its grip on the administration. Likewise in 1709 he continued his unsparing endeavours but at the same time on different occasions during the year he acted as a moderate and restraining influence on the other four Junto Lords. Like his endeavours to reconcile Marlborough and Halifax in 1707 he probably believed that the Junto's quest to dominate the ministry should not be made any more difficult by allowing personal feelings or resentments and preoccupation with essentially secondary concerns to influence the Junto's behaviour. The problems he faced in this respect also highlight the strength of his association with Somers and the influence that each man could have on the other's conduct. It was Sunderland and Somers who constituted the heart and strength of the Junto at this time.

Halifax was the most persistent source of concern for Sunderland and Somers during 1709. The increasing willingness of Louis XIV to discuss peace terms[125] with the allies raised the question of who the government should employ as its plenipotentiary at such a negotiation. Halifax seemed a likely candidate; he had been employed in discussions with the Dutch in 1706 and 1707 and at the end of December 1708 Marlborough was advising Godolphin to consult with Sunderland and Somers about employing Halifax in the peace talks. The Duke, however, disliked the idea of Halifax being appointed as plenipotentiary and was strongly opposed to any suggestion that Halifax should be admitted into the Cabinet. Consequently, Marlborough was alarmed to find that Halifax, ostensibly with the support of Sunderland, was pressing for Cabinet status. Nothing came of this attempt and significantly it was agreed to employ Somers' protégé, Lord Townshend, at the talks at The Hague. Interestingly enough Halifax appears to have blamed Somers for his failure to gain admission to the Cabinet and for much of 1709 relations between the two men were very uneasy. Furthermore by the end of the year Somers had persuaded Sunderland that it was unnecessary to

have Halifax in the Cabinet. Sunderland's support for Halifax early in 1709 was probably because he believed it was necessary to have a further member of the Junto in the Cabinet; by the end of the year with Orford's entrance into the Cabinet Halifax's case did not seem to be so pressing. Sunderland and Somers had to go to considerable lengths to get Halifax to move a vote of thanks for the Queen's speech at the opening of Parliament in November 1709 and to pay a compliment to the Duke of Marlborough in order to ease their relations which had been soured earlier in the year. Sunderland did in fact express his disapproval of Halifax's conduct towards Marlborough.[126] Relations between Sunderland and Somers, and Wharton were also uneasy in 1709.

Following his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland Wharton, together with his Chief Secretary, Joseph Addison, arrived in Dublin on 21 April 1709. Wharton was eager to assist the Dissenters in Ireland by removing the Test Act but such a move would be very unpopular in both Houses of the Irish Parliament. Therefore, Wharton and Lord Coningsby, with the apparent approval of Somers and Godolphin, drew up a scheme by which a bill against Popery was to be sent over to England for review by the British Privy Council, as all Irish legislation had to be under Poyning's law, and the ministry would subsequently add a clause to repeal the Test Act. Wharton would then force the amended bill through the Irish Parliament. Wharton, however, was concerned that the plan might go awry in England and his suspicions centred on Godolphin. The Lord Treasurer and the Lord Lieutenant had already clashed over a vacancy in the office of Irish Muster Master. Wharton had requested, through Sunderland, to be allowed to fill the vacancy with his own nominee, but Godolphin, much to Wharton's annoyance, had supported Marlborough's candidate, Colonel Pennyfeather. Only when he was directed to do so by Sunderland did Wharton allow Pennyfeather's patent to pass. The Cabinet now felt that the repeal of the Test Act in Ireland was an unnecessary risk and Coningsby told Wharton that Somers was chiefly responsible for this decision. When the Popery bill was sent back to

Ireland the clause for the repeal of the Test Act had not been added.[127] A new source of friction quickly arose between Wharton and the ministers in London over the Irish Money bill.

Following Wharton's first speech to the Irish Parliament the Irish House of Commons brought in the heads of several bills, the most important being the Money bill. The heads of the Money bill were passed in May 1709 and they included provision to buy arms and ammunition and store them in four arsenals which were to be built throughout the kingdom. The ministers in London had been kept informed of the progress of the heads of the Money bill and the clause concerning the building of arsenals was viewed with concern for it was feared that the arms and ammunition might be seized by rebels in the event of an uprising. On 10 June 1709 it was decided that Sunderland should write to Wharton to get this provision removed before the heads of the Money bill were sent over to England for consideration. In reply to Sunderland Wharton argued that there would be no danger from the clause as the arsenals which were to be built would be under direct government control and that it was the only way to provide effective security for the Protestant interest in Ireland. On 20 June Wharton wrote to Sunderland, 'I take the liberty to enclose... a long letter I have writ to Lord President which I hope he will communicate to your Lordship, and which I also hope will set me right with your Lordship'.[128] When the Irish bills were sent over to London in July the offending article had not been removed from the Money bill.[129]

In England the Irish bills were examined by a committee of the Privy Council comprising the Cabinet, Lord Coningsby and two Chief Justices. The preamble to the money bill was altered so that only one arsenal was to be established at Dublin. Wharton, however, felt that this alteration would offend those it was least desirable to do and that as a result the Money bill would be lost in the Irish Parliament. As a result of Wharton's apprehensions a special meeting of the Cabinet was held to consider what reply should be made.[130] On 27 July Sunderland told Wharton:

> I am very sorry to find, your Lordship apprehends the alteration made here may prove the loss of the Money bill, but I will hope, (and indeed I can never believe otherwise, till I see it) that when the gentlemen of Ireland consider of this matter cooly they will not be so much their own enemies, as to insist upon a point, that is so untenable, and that is in effect overturning the whole constitution of that kingdom, as it has stood for these two hundred years, ever since Poyning's law.[131]

Sunderland did not doubt that Wharton would secure the passage of the bill, though if the Irish insisted upon this point Wharton was given the power to prorogue the Irish Parliament.[132] Sunderland concluded with a warning:

> I must not omit telling your Lordship that Her Majesty looks upon it to be of so great consequence to her government and the constitution itself, that any people that are in her service, that shall countenance so extravagant a proceeding must expect her severest resentment. I have now acquainted your Lordship with Her Majesty's pleasure in relation to this matter, and as I heartily wish you success in this and everything else, so I don't doubt but by your prudence and dexterity, you will bring this affair to the issue that is wished for.[133]

There was considerable opposition to the Money bill as it had been returned from England but Wharton exhibited his considerable acumen as a parliamentary manager and while the Irish Parliament was prorogued the members of both Houses were lobbied by the Viceroy. By early August Addison was optimistic that when Parliament met the Lord Lieutenant would prevail. The bill was read for the first time in the Irish Commons on 10 August and after consideration it was ordered to be given a further reading two days later. After a heated and laboured debate lasting over four hours it was agreed to commit the bill by 147 votes to 59. Sunderland congratulated Wharton upon 'the great victory you have had, with relation to the Money bill the

majority is greater than I ever heard of in the Irish House of Commons'.[134] The Money bill was approved by the Irish House of Lords at the end of August.[135] Once it was certain that the Money bill would pass Wharton wrote to Sunderland on 12 August complaining of the treatment he had received from his colleagues.[136] Sunderland gave a conciliatory reply promising support for any alterations Wharton saw fit to make in the Irish administration and reassured the Lord Lieutenant that he and Somers would do all they could to prevent the appointment of the Archbishop of Armagh as a Lord Justice when Wharton returned to England.[137] With this support Wharton was able to prevent the Archbishop's nomination as a Lord Justice and his relations with Sunderland and Somers were once again harmonious.[138] Together with their growing ascendancy at home the trend of events in Europe seemed to be moving more and more in favour of the Whigs.

By the beginning of 1709 Louis XIV was convinced that France must have peace even if it meant accepting unfavourable terms from the allies. In March 1709 Pierre Rouillé was sent as plenipotentiary to The Hague. This French overture helped give a stimulus to the negotiations between Britain and the Dutch over the establishment of an effective Barrier against France in the Spanish Netherlands. Somers and Godolphin were anxious at the growing desire for peace in the Dutch Republic which threatened the Junto's policy of restoring the entire Spanish monarchy to the Habsburgs. Marlborough was sent as Ambassador to negotiate an agreement with the Dutch and to settle the peace proposals that were to be put to the French. The peace preliminaries were based upon the points outlined in Parliament's address to the Queen at the beginning of March 1709. The address stipulated: the restitution of the entire Spanish monarchy to the Habsburg claimant; a Barrier for the Dutch and the Duke of Savoy; Louis XIV was to recognize the Protestant Succession in Britain and to exclude the Pretender from French territory; the fortifications of Dunkirk harbour were to be demolished. Sunderland had served on the Lords committee to draw up the address.[139] The Dutch were willing to accept these terms as outlined in Marlborough's instructions

owing to their eagerness for a settlement of the Barrier. They presented their proposals to Marlborough who carried them to London on 30 April. There was little enthusiasm for the Dutch proposals and a counter project was drawn up on which the Barrier Treaty was to be negotiated. Sunderland delivered the scheme to Marlborough on 3 May just prior to the Duke's return to The Hague along with the new English plenipotentiary, Lord Townshend.[140]

When Marlborough and Townshend arrived at The Hague attention was concentrated upon the peace negotiations. Rouillé had made little progress in his discussions and it appears that as a plenipotentiary he was a bad choice; at the end of April he was replaced by the Marquis de Torcy. Marlborough, Eugene, and Heinsius were confident that the French could be brought to accept any terms but though it became apparent that Torcy was prepared to make large concessions it was clear that he was not empowered to settle the question of the Spanish Monarchy. The allies presented Torcy with forty preliminary demands. Torcy delayed his response but Marlborough was confident that the proposals would be accepted. Sunderland claimed 'the proceeding of France in this affair has been very extraordinary, and that must turn to their disadvantage, since there's so much firmness, and spirit in Holland'.[141] In fact Louis XIV was willing to accept all the preliminary articles except number thirty-seven which required him to force Philip V out of Spain if necessary. Louis refused to accept the allied terms and issued a proclamation throughout France indicating the enormity of their demands. The result was an upsurge of loyalty to the French King.[142]

With the breakdown of the peace talks the settlement of the Barrier became the Junto's prime concern. Marlborough was reluctant to give way to Dutch demands, particularly over the article requiring the restitution of the entire Spanish monarchy. Townshend, with the backing of Sunderland and Somers, was certain that the only way to prevent the Dutch coming to terms with France was to settle the Barrier question. As a result Townshend, Sunderland, and Somers were ready to make major

concessions to the Dutch including removing the article to restore the whole Spanish monarchy from the treaty. The Junto's willingness to reach an agreement served to alienate Marlborough who had never been enthusiastic about the negotiations and had in fact helped to hinder their progress.[143]

Townshend kept Sunderland informed of his negotiations and at the end of 1709 forwarded the Barrier Treaty to him.[144] 'After the conventional clauses as to the renewal of alliances, the Treaty contained provision for the succession to the throne of England: the States General pledged themselves "to assist and maintain" the Protestant Succession as ordained by Parliament, and to make no peace with France until Louis XIV had acknowledged the succession and had expelled the Pretender from his dominions. In return, the Queen of Great Britain pledged herself to obtain certain concessions from France and from the future sovereign of the Southern Netherlands, on behalf of the States General.'[145] The Dutch were allowed to garrison a large number of towns and fortresses on the French border and throughout the Southern Netherlands. Accompanying the rights of garrison were considerable financial and commercial privileges. Even the Junto were appalled at the concessions made to the Dutch yet they were forced to accept Townshend's arguments that this was the only way to keep the Dutch in the war against France. Townshend was directed to ratify the treaty as it stood and it was finally completed in December 1709.[146] At the same time as the Barrier Treaty was under negotiation the Junto were crowning their ascendancy at home by having Orford brought into the Cabinet as First Lord of the Admiralty.

The Junto had always regarded Pembroke's appointment to the Admiralty in 1708 as a temporary expedient and were intent upon replacing him with the Earl of Orford. Pembroke's reluctance to accept the post in November 1708 produced an unsuccessful attempt by the Junto to get Orford installed. In May 1709 the Junto began a determined effort to get control of the Admiralty. By this time, however, the Queen had recovered from the loss of her husband and she

was once more a formidable obstacle to Junto ambitions. Anne's resolution was fortified by the support of Harley who was now fully restored in her confidence and who advised the Queen through Abigail Masham who had replaced the Duchess of Marlborough as the Queen's favourite. Godolphin was again caught between the Junto and the Queen.[147]

The Junto made no progress in June or July 1709 and Sunderland began to express his unease to Maynwaring.[148] Somers was particularly disgruntled[149] and Sunderland found it necessary to urge caution. He advised the Lord President:

> I am sorry to see you have such a fit of the spleen upon you; for though there is but too much reason for it upon the whole, yet if you will give me leave to say so, I think you push it a little too far; for if you will allow me, I will tell you just my thoughts in relation to the affair of the Admiralty. I own, I never did think they would do it in the right time and manner, either for themselves or for us: for they are not capable of doing any right thing with a good grace; but, at the same time I am fully convinced, that if it continues to be pressed by all of us, as I do not doubt it will, they both must and will do it at last, as we would have it.[150]

If, however, the Junto did not receive satisfaction it would be necessary to break with the Court at the opening of Parliament. Sunderland was also urging the Duchess of Marlborough to use her endeavours on behalf of Orford.[151]

Marlborough tried to persuade the Queen to appoint Orford at the end of August 1709 while Maynwaring tried to convince Somers that the obstruction did not proceed from the Duumvirs or the Duchess of Marlborough. By the end of September Somers had delivered his views on the problem and these combined efforts appear to have forced the Queen to yield. On 27 September 1709 Godolphin wrote to Pembroke, at the Queen's request, suggesting that he retire. At this point Orford began to make difficulties. He demanded that the Admiralty should be put into a commission of his choice. To help settle this problem a meeting was arranged between Godolphin and Orford at Newmarket.[152]

To assist this meeting Sunderland got Maynwaring 'to write to Mr. Walpole... to desire he would use all his endeavours that no mistakes should happen between Godolphin and Lord Orford'.[153] As an inducement to Walpole Sunderland proposed that Walpole's brother-in-law, Sir Charles Turner, should be included in the Admiralty commission.[154] Sunderland did not approve of Orford's demand over the commission but felt that Godolphin would be equally in the wrong not to agree to this request.[155] Sunderland told the Duchess of Marlborough that if Godolphin did not end the dispute at Newmarket, 'I will venture to say there will be no end of it. This is Lord Somers' opinion, and if it be yours we must beg you to press him [Godolphin] to it'.[156] No agreement was reached at Newmarket.[157]

Undeterred Sunderland and Somers continued to press Godolphin and eventually he spoke to the Queen about the proposals put to him at Newmarket by Orford; surprisingly Anne accepted them. Godolphin wrote to Orford to come up to London to accept the Admiralty and Sunderland congratulated the Duchess of Marlborough on the success. With an almost perverse sense of his own importance, Orford now demanded that he should be offered the position of Lord High Admiral which he promised to refuse and to request that he be named as First Lord in a commission. Sunderland and Somers, doubtless exasperated by Orford's conduct, vainly sought to get him to give way over this matter. Godolphin did, however, get the Queen to agree, but she would not accept Orford's subsidiary demand that Admirals Byng and Jennings should be included in the commission. The Queen returned to London on 2 November 1709.[158]

At Sunderland's request, Maynwaring visited Godolphin on 4 November to get him to settle the Admiralty that evening. Maynwaring was now convinced that Godolphin was the real obstacle to the inclusion of Byng and Jennings in the Admiralty commission. Sunderland also blamed Godolphin who, he said, opposed the two Admirals because they had refused to come into the Prince's Council at the Lord Treasurer's request in the spring of 1708. Somers also spoke to Godolphin who said he would visit the Queen the next day. On 5 November Sunderland

told the Duchess of Marlborough that instead of visiting the Queen Godolphin had written to her and had said in reply that Anne had affirmed her aversion to Byng and Jennings though she had requested to see Godolphin that evening. Somers' patience was at breaking point and Sunderland pleaded with the Duchess of Marlborough to come up to London the following day. Sarah complied with her son-in-law's request and a compromise was agreed though Somers probably made a greater contribution to bringing it about. It was agreed to drop Jennings and bring Byng into the commission on his own. On 9 November Orford was sworn as a Privy Councillor and took his seat in the Cabinet along with Sunderland, Somers, and Wharton.[159]

The Junto were now the dominant force within the administration. By a policy of ruthless, relentless, and determined aggression they had brought Somers, Wharton and Orford into the Cabinet alongside Sunderland. No one had contributed more to this achievement than Sunderland. His drive and enthusiasm had provided the energy necessary to carry out the Junto's design. He had directed and co-ordinated Junto strategy and was intent on carrying it through to the end even to the extent of risking his own dismissal. His handling of the Junto's Scottish policy revealed his ruthless opportunism in its most blatant form. Sunderland acted as the intermediary between the Junto and Marlborough and Godolphin conveying the demands of the Junto to the Duumvirs and using his influence with the Duchess of Marlborough to help the Junto to get their way. Sunderland utilised his connection with the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough to the fullest on behalf of the Junto. Yet at the same time that his youthful vigour and Whig zeal were so prominently displayed Sunderland also showed that he could on occasion be a more subtle and calculating politician. He helped to moderate the resentments and excess of Somers, Wharton,

and Halifax at different times realising that their dissatisfaction was more likely to hinder rather than help the Junto to get control of the administration. Sunderland's shrewdness as a politician was to develop during the last years of Anne's reign and by the beginning of George I's reign he was to have become a much more sophisticated politician, though without losing his vigour and zeal. There is no doubt that Sunderland was by now the outstanding member of the Junto and his importance was to increase in the following years; it was clear that if the future lay with any member of the Junto it was with Sunderland. At Orford's appointment Sunderland had declared that the Junto were now 'upon so solid a bottom, that nothing but our own folies and divisions can hurt us'.[160] His reading of the situation was inaccurate. Ironically, it was Robert Harley, the man he had helped to drive from office in 1708, who was to destroy all that Sunderland had worked so hard to achieve.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE COLLAPSE OF THE WHIG ADMINISTRATION 1709-1710

'The danger to the whole'

There is perhaps no more fitting tribute to the political adroitness of Robert Harley than the destruction of the Whig administration in 1710. Almost from his resignation in February 1708 Harley had been preparing the strategy by which he would reorganize the government. Proceeding with patience, dexterity, subtlety, deviousness and with an astute sense of the possible his political style contrasts markedly with the blunt, aggressive, and vigorous enthusiasm which so often characterised Sunderland's conduct. Harley built up an alliance of High and moderate Tories, together with dissident Whigs, that would be strong enough to topple the ministry. Sunderland appears to have been one of the first to appreciate the danger which threatened the Whigs and his perspicacity in this respect was further confirmed by his growing awareness of the political consequences of the impending Hanoverian Succession. Sunderland constantly emphasised the need for unity within the administration and was prepared to do his utmost to foster a common sense of purpose. His loyalty to Marlborough and Godolophin, but particularly to his father-in-law, was remarkable and seems to have been nearly as strong as his devotion to the Junto and to Whig principles. His constancy was such that Marlborough reciprocated it to a degree which transcended purely political and selfish reasons. Sunderland's behaviour at his dismissal again reveals his willingness to accept the necessity of sacrifice on behalf of the Whig interest. The election of 1710 reveals once more Sunderland's credulous optimism and yet, paradoxically, it was combined with a sense of grim realism. It is also typical of his sanguine temperament that, as Harley and his associates destroyed what Sunderland had laboured so hard to achieve from the beginning of the reign, Sunderland was already looking towards

the future and political salvation in the form of the House of Hanover.

Harley's resignation in 1708 had been followed by a further reverse in the election; his supporters fared very badly and Henry St. John could not even get back into the House of Commons. Harley was aware, however, that the setback which the High Tories had also suffered gave him an opportunity to renew his political association with them. He made tentative overtures to William Bromley, the leader of the High Tories in the Commons, and, though the first contacts were rather frigid, by the summer of 1709 their relations were becoming more and more cordial. Through Bromley, Harley was able to come to terms with Rochester, though the other leading High Tory peer, Nottingham, held aloof as both he and Harley were too suspicious of each other. The support of the High Tories alone, however, was insufficient. Harley knew that if an effective challenge was to be made to the ministry he would have to canvass support from the Whigs themselves and his hopes centred on prominent Whig peers who were not close associates of the Junto and who also harboured grievances or suspicions against them. Harley's first efforts were directed towards Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury. Shrewsbury had been one of the outstanding Whig leaders following the 1688 revolution and he had been a close ally of the Junto during William III's reign. In his attitude to politics, however, Shrewsbury had much more in common with Harley and the Duumvirs, preferring to manipulate party rather than to acquiesce in its superiority. His dissatisfaction with party wrangling resulted in him leaving England in 1700 for Italy and he did not return until the beginning of 1706. In spite of promptings from Somers, Halifax, and Marlborough he initially showed little inclination to resume his political activities. Harley had been in irregular contact with

Shrewsbury from 1701 and in 1708 he began to make direct proposals. Shrewsbury's prime concern was that the war had gone on far too long and he was convinced that peace was necessary and this helps to explain his receptiveness to Harley's proposals. By the beginning of 1709 Shrewsbury was regarded as one of Harley's adherents. Harley, meanwhile, had also secured the support of other Whig nobles notably Rivers and Peterborough and was to continue his search during the following year. Equally significant was that by the opening of 1710 Harley had recovered the confidence of the Queen. Anne had been deeply humiliated by the failure of Harley's attempt to form a ministry in 1708 and their relations had been lukewarm for much of 1708 and 1709. During the struggle over Orford's appointment, however, Harley was again indirectly advising the Queen and by the end of 1709 he had recovered his former authority at Court.[1]

The struggle over the control of army patronage at the beginning of 1710 showed the dilemma confronting Sunderland and the Whigs. With Orford's appointment at the Admiralty Sunderland felt that the Junto dominated administration was virtually unassailable. This belief was reflected in his eagerness to prosecute Sacheverell and his willingness to support a parliamentary address to the Queen to remove Mrs. Masham. These were hardly the measures of men conscious of their political insecurity, yet paradoxically both courses of action indicated that the administration was not as firmly established as Sunderland believed. The extremity of these actions does in fact demonstrate the strength of the opposition to the Whigs. The crisis over the army shook Sunderland's confidence for by February 1710 he was appealing for greater cohesion between the Whigs and Marlborough and Godolphin. It also accounts for his change of attitude towards the trial of Doctor Sacheverell. In December 1709 he was a vigorous advocate of impeachment but during the trial itself his enthusiasm for the prosecution waned dramatically. Sunderland's willingness to back Marlborough throughout the Duke's dispute with the Queen helped to bind the two men closer together and though he quarrelled with

Godolphin he was soon conscious of the importance of having the full support of the Lord Treasurer.

In 1709 the Queen had been ready to challenge Marlborough's authority in the army by refusing to give any employment to General Maccartney and also refusing two requests by Marlborough for the Captain-Generalcy for life. At the beginning of 1710 a further conflict took place. The death of the Earl of Essex meant there would be a vacant regiment and a new Lieutenant of the Tower of London would need to be appointed. Marlborough intended to nominate Northumberland to the Lieutenancy, but Harley advised Anne to make Lord Rivers Lieutenant of the Tower and to give Essex's regiment to Abigail Masham's brother, John Hill. Marlborough saw this as a direct challenge and in a fury he and the Duchess retired to Windsor Lodge on 14 January 1710. Marlborough identified Abigail Masham as the source of this new dispute and he drafted a letter to the Queen demanding that if Abigail was not removed he should be dismissed. The letter was sent to Godolphin to show to the Whigs, but the Lord Treasurer did not wish to show it to the Queen and prevailed upon Somers to ask Anne to give way. The same day there was a meeting at Devonshire's house attended by Sunderland, Arthur Maynwaring, and Orford. It was decided to support Marlborough to the utmost and Maynwaring was to speak to Wharton to have him consult with Sunderland. In the afternoon Cowper had an audience with the Queen, but, as with Somers, she remained obdurate about her decision. There was a further meeting at Devonshire's in the evening but Sunderland was absent because of a headache and no decision was reached about how to proceed. The next day Devonshire became the third Whig Lord to have an unsuccessful audience with the Queen on this subject.[2]

Sunderland kept Marlborough informed of developments in London and declared his intention to support his father-in-law who replied that though he would follow the advice of his friends in London it was absolutely necessary to remove Mrs. Masham.[3] Marlborough directed

Godolphin to consult with Sunderland and other leading Whigs[4] and he told Sunderland that he would follow their advice[5] yet he also wrote a letter in which he made it clear that he was determined to keep to his original decision and a similar communication was enclosed for Cowper. Godolphin did not show these two letters to the Whigs and both he and Somers had further audiences with the Queen. Godolphin then forwarded Marlborough's letter to Cowper along with a request that Cowper should again speak with Anne. This pressure seems to have worked for the Queen agreed not to insist on John Hill having the vacant regiment and both Godolphin and Somers urged Marlborough to wait upon Anne. In the meantime, unable to get a positive resolution from London, Marlborough informed the Queen that he intended to resign.[6] The Duchess disliked the request of Godolphin and Somers and she directed Maynwaring to consult with Sunderland.[7]

Maynwaring met with Sunderland, Walpole, and Craggs on Friday 20 January when they agreed that Marlborough should remain at Windsor.[8] 'Sunderland went after to Godolphin and spoke very warmly to him... and said ...that he was sure none that had ever pretended to be Whigs would fail in this dispute except Boyle and Mr. Compton; to which Godolphin made no reply, but seemed much nettled.'[9] A meeting followed at Devonshire's house, attended by Sunderland, Maynwaring, Walpole, and Craggs, where it was decided to make two changes in Marlborough's first letter which was to be sent instead of him coming up to London.[10] The other leading Whig Lords, together with Godolphin, agreed that Marlborough should wait on the Queen and Godolphin urged the Duke to do so enclosing a conciliatory letter from Anne. Marlborough agreed to their request, but he had also decided to try to get support for a parliamentary address to remove Mrs. Masham together with a further request that he be given the Captain-Generalcy for life. Sunderland was the only leading Whig ready to support Marlborough.[11] Rumours of the Duke's intention appear to have reached the Queen who was furious and who immediately began to canvass assistance in both Houses of Parliament. The result was a very full House of Commons

and because it was felt the address was unlikely to pass it was allowed to drop. On Tuesday 24 January Marlborough had an audience with the Queen.[12] The dispute revealed the strength and influence of the Queen and Sunderland was quick to see the implications this had for the future.

Aware of the danger which loomed Sunderland repeatedly emphasised how important it was to get Marlborough and Godolphin to act as one with the Whigs. Early in February he informed the Duchess of Marlborough that:

> Notwithstanding all the difficulties, and disagreeable things have happened of late, we shall get the better of them all, if we can but entirely cement together Lord Marlborough and the Whigs, which is so necessary and so plain that it can't fail. I am sure I will do my part towards it, with the greatest sincerity, and will only say, he may if he will, nay indeed must be the head of our party.[13]

The dispute in January had raised Sunderland's suspicions about Godolphin's reliability and seems to have soured relations between them for some time. He was, however, aware that the hostility of the Queen must be the government's prime concern and was eager that the Duchess of Marlborough should rekindle the Lord Treasurer's flagging spirit. Sunderland wrote anxiously to his father-in-law:

> Lord Treasurer has a slowness, and coldness about him, that is really terrible, and therefore all that can be must be done, to keep him up, and to animate him, but I am sure it will be impossible to do it without Lady Marlborough, and therefore I must beg of you, in the name of all our friends that you would persuade her, to come straight to town, when you are embarked to keep Lord Treasurer up to do what is right, for without her, I know we shall all sink, I don't mean be out of our places, for that I think will be no mortification, to anybody of common sense, but besides the danger to the whole, none of our heads are safe if we can't get the better of what I am convinced Mrs. Morley [the Queen] designs, and if, Lord Treasurer, can but be persuaded to act like a man, I am sure our union

> and strength is too great to be hurt. Lord President, Lord Steward, and Lord Orford, have charged me, with their compliments, and good wishes to you, and do hope and beg you, to press this of Lady Marlborough's being here, as that upon which every thing depends.[14]

As if to emphasise their unity the Whigs supported a parliamentary address to the Queen to allow Marlborough to go to The Hague to attend the peace negotiations which were about to be renewed with the French and also to prepare for the forthcoming campaign. It appears likely that Sunderland was responsible for drafting this address.[15]

The impeachment of Doctor Henry Sacheverell for 'High Crimes and Misdemeanours' can have left little doubt that the initiative no longer lay with Marlborough, Godolphin, and their Junto allies. When the decision to impeach was made in December 1709 Sunderland, no doubt reflecting his confidence in the strength of the administration, was one of its leading advocates. Once again, as with his support for the address against Mrs. Masham, this served as a tacit admission of the ministry's insecurity. Sunderland's awareness that he and his colleagues could no longer pursue an aggressive policy grew during the early months of 1710 and probably explains his passivity in the debates upon Sacheverell in the House of Lords in March 1710. The Sacheverell riots at the beginning of the same month, in which he played an important part in suppressing and which emphasise his decisiveness, vigour and ability to respond to a crisis, can only have served to highlight the difficulties facing the government.

There can be little doubt about the motives which induced Sir Samuel Garrard, the High Tory Lord Mayor of London, to invite Henry Sacheverell to preach before him and the City Fathers at St. Paul's on 5 November 1709. To have a well known High Tory firebrand preach on the anniversary of both the Gunpowder Treason and William of Orange's landing at Torbay in 1688 was deliberately provocative. Sacheverell's sermon, entitled 'In Peril Amongst False Brethren', was nothing short of a full blooded assault on

Whiggery, Dissent, and the Glorious Revolution as well as a vindication of the High Tory doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance. Not content with this, and contrary to the ruling of the Court of Aldermen, the sermon was published and by the middle of December 1709 50,000 copies were being read and distributed. It would have been difficult for the government to ignore such a blatant affront and an impeachment before the House of Lords seemed the most effective way to censure Sacheverell. Furthermore, the original conception of the prosecution was vastly different from the ostentatious drama into which the trial developed.[16]

Godolphin's wrath was exacerbated by Sacheverell's oblique reference to him in the sermon as 'Volpone' and he pressed for impeachment. Though not as determined as Godolphin, Marlborough did not share the doubts of Cowper, Somers, and Boyle. Sunderland, along with Wharton, favoured impeachment and was intent upon condemning the Doctor's vindication of passive obedience and non-resistance.[17] In early-December the ministers agreed to proceed against Sacheverell and a further meeting then took place involving the Duumvirs and the Whigs. Marlborough proposed a prosecution[18] and 'when the ministers of state had debated for some time about the method of proceeding, and some were for leaving him [Sacheverell] to the ordinary judges, and some for calling him before themselves; others, and the Earl of Sunderland in particular, were of opinion that he ought to be impeached before the extraordinary judges in Parliament'. Somers advised moderation and caution but 'this opinion which tended to clemency was not agreeable to the Duke of Marlborough's friends, and especially to the Earl of Sunderland. The Lord Somers therefore came over to their sentiments'.[19]

The House of Commons resolved on 14 December 1709 that Sacheverell should be impeached for High Crimes and Misdemeanours and the next day John Dolben formally impeached him at the bar of the House of Lords.[20] Sunderland was a member of the Lords' committee to consider the methods of proceeding.[21] The Commons completed drawing up the articles of

impeachment on 9 January 1710, but the trial did not begin until Monday 27 February. The first three days of the trial were taken up with the prosecution case and of the Commons' managers Robert Walpole, James Stanhope, Sir Peter King, William Thompson all gave outstanding performances,[22] but all these were surpassed by the incomparable effort of Sir Thomas Parker which 'can rarely have been matched in any British political trial'.[23] Following Parker's contribution on 1 March it was decided to adjourn the remainder of the prosecution's case until the following day.[24]

From the beginning of the trial it was obvious that Sacheverell's cause had aroused great interest and stirred deep seated feelings within London. Large crowds had accompanied the Doctor to and from the proceedings at Westminster Hall, while, on 28 February, Daniel Burgess's Dissenting meeting house near Lincoln's Inn Fields had been attacked. The signs on 1 March were ominous. The crowds were very large and though the Queen had been cheered when she left the trial the Commons' Managers and other leading Whigs received a hostile reception. The trouble began in earnest at about 7p.m. with a full-scale assault on Burgess's meeting house. As the evening progressed it became obvious that the mob was being manipulated for specifically political ends against Whig and Dissenting targets. There is little doubt that the unrest was directed by London Tories of some social standing in order to exploit the anxiety about the 'Church in danger' to embarrass the government.[25]

Sunderland was working at his office in Whitehall when, at about 9p.m. on Wednesday 1 March, Cowper and Newcastle arrived to inform him that the mob was threatening their houses. At the same time news of the assault on Burgess's meeting house was received. Sunderland immediately informed the Queen of the disorders and she instructed him to employ her horse and foot guards to quell the unrest. When Sunderland expressed his concern at leaving her unguarded Anne answered that God would be her guard. Upon returning to his office Sunderland gave directions to the commander of the foot guards to

send some troops to Burgess's meeting house. Because the commander could not be found Sunderland interviewed the senior officer on duty, Captain Horsey, and it was only after Sunderland informed him that it was the Queen's express command and that he would receive written orders the following day that Horsey agreed to go. Sunderland directed Horsey to act with prudence and to send some troops to the Bank of England. Sunderland also gave orders to the J.P.'s to suppress the unrest at Burgess's and to apprehend the ringleaders, while the Duke of Bedford was ordered to raise the militia. Sunderland's orders to Bedford were less restrained than those to Horsey; the Duke being allowed to use any means to put down the unrest. In the early hours of Thursday morning Sunderland gave orders to prevent any attack on the house of John Shute's brother in Hatton Gardens as well as ordering the Lieutenancy and Sheriffs of London and Middlesex to attend a Cabinet Council at 6p.m. that evening.[26] It was largely due to the excellent discipline of the troops involved that the disorder was ended without a shot being fired and with a minimum of casualties. By 3a.m. an uneasy quiet hung over London.[27]

The riots were a severe shock to the ministry. Though there is no record of any Cabinet Council on Thursday 2 March among Sunderland's papers it is almost certain that any discussion would have been concerned with preventing further disorder in London and throughout the country. Sunderland received proposals from John Shute to prevent disorders outside London, while in the capital, on 8 March, which was the anniversary of Anne's accession, Sunderland gave orders to have troops and the trained bands ready to deal with the slightest hint of trouble. For the remainder of the month and during April Sunderland was vigorously engaged in maintaining order and prosecuting seditious behaviour in the provinces. In London he was responsible for preventing any repetition of the Sacheverell riots as well as bringing to trial and prosecuting those who had been arrested for their part in these disorders.[28]

On Thursday 2 March Lechmere completed the prosecution case against Sacheverell and the court was adjourned until the following day. The

defence began on the Friday with Sir Simon Harcourt carrying the burden more or less singlehanded and in fact his performance, despite being inferior in quality to Parker's, was the one for which the trial was most remembered. Harcourt was unable to attend the trial after the Saturday for the writ for the election at Cardigan in which he was involved had been returned. The rest of the defence performance was laboured and uninspiring. The last contribution came from Sacheverell himself on 7 March. In a speech, probably written by Francis Atterbury and other more subtle minds, that combined apology, self-justification and protest he performed admirably. His audience was spellbound either out of sympathy, admiration for his nerve or amazement at his awesome hypocrisy. The prosecution replied two days later and though they effectively demolished any defence which Harcourt had built up it was clear that, like the administration generally, they no longer held the initiative.[29]

When the prosecution had finished its case Nottingham rose to ask a question upon which Sunderland immediately suggested that in order to consider it the Lords should return to their own house.[30] This was agreed to and when the Lords had returned to their chamber Nottingham inquired whether in an indictment such as that against Sacheverell the words supposed to be criminal must be 'expressly specified'. It was decided to consult the judges who declared that the words must be specified. On Saturday 10 March the Lords debated the implications of the judges advice and Somers, Halifax, and Cowper carried the point that in passing judgement on Sacheverell the Lords should be guided by the laws of England and usages of Parliament. On Monday Sunderland was a member of a committee appointed to search and inspect precedents of impeachments involving High Crimes and Misdemeanours.[31] Bolton reported from the committee on the Tuesday and the Lords agreed by 65 votes to 47 that the words regarded as criminal did not need to be expressly specified.[32]

The first article of the impeachment was considered by the House of Lords on 16 March and during the debate it was observed that

'Lord Sunderland spoke but not to be heard you know which way.'[33] After a long discussion it was agreed that the Commons had made good their impeachment on the first article. The debate itself was an undistinguished affair and Sunderland's speech was one of many lacklustre performances. The next day the three remaining articles were approved without a division. On 18 March there was considerable wrangling over how the question about Sacheverell's guilt was to be phrased. Sunderland, Rochester, Guernsey, Cowper, Nottingham, North and Grey, Wharton, Buckingham, Jersey, and Anglesey were all involved after which it was agreed that the question should be: 'Is Henry Sacheverell, Doctor of Divinity, Guilty of High Crimes and Misdemeanours charged on him by the impeachment of the House of Commons?'[34] The Tory Lords tried unsuccessfully to have the question put separately on each article to each individual peer but this was defeated by a majority of twelve.[35]

The Lords declared Sacheverell guilty by 69 votes to 52 on Monday 20 March in Westminster Hall with Sunderland voting in the majority.[36] Significantly, Shrewsbury had argued in favour of Sacheverell during the debate and he voted against impeachment. This was merely a portent of the success which Harley had achieved. He had been negotiating with Somerset, Argyll, and Islay, while also working on Queensberry, Loudon, Roseberry and Orkney through Somerset and Mar. The reward of his endeavours appeared when, on 21 March, the punishment to be inflicted upon the Doctor was discussed. It was decided that he should only be banned from preaching for a year while the attempt to deprive him of any further ecclesiastical preferment was defeated by 60 votes to 59; Sunderland voted with the minority.[37] The intention to imprison Sacheverell was abandoned and apart from his suspension his sermon was merely burnt before the Lord Mayor of London. There was jubilation at the outcome and Sacheverell embarked upon a triumphal progress to take up the rectorship of Selattyn near Oswestry on the Welsh border.[38]

The reception given to Sacheverell's sentence and the flood of loyal addresses to the Queen revealed the popular hostility to the

administration which was believed to be undermining the position of the Church and unnecessarily prolonging the war for its own benefit. Consequently, with the advice of Harley, Anne was ready to make the first open move in the attempt to change the government. On 5 April 1710 Parliament was prorogued and Godolphin retired to Newmarket. Without prior consultation the Queen informed the Lord Treasurer that she had replaced the Earl of Kent as Lord Chamberlain by the Duke of Shrewsbury. Of further significance was the fact that on 6 April the Queen had a sour and fruitless audience with the Duchess of Marlborough; they were never to see each other again.[39]

Sunderland, Somers, and Godolphin were mortified at this change[40] and Sunderland was deeply concerned that the,

> Lord Treasurer... knew nothing of this of the Duke of Shrewsbury, though, I will own, I should have been much better pleased, if he had known of it, for as it is, it seems striking at every thing, however I think Lord Treasurer is perfectly in the right, that we must endeavour to weather it, as well, as we can, in order to preserve the Parliament, from being dissolved. I did assure Lord Treasurer that whatever he thought proper to be done, we would all stand by him in it, and I am sure it is the intention and resolution of all our friends to do so.[41]

Godolphin reciprocated Sunderland's assurances on behalf of the Whigs by complying with the request that Orford should be gratified by altering the Admiralty commission and that he should be made a Knight of the Garter.[42] Sunderland, anxious that Parliament would be dissolved to undermine the government's authority, pressed the Queen about whether there was to be a dissolution and he was assured there were no thoughts of this as yet.[43] Sunderland, Maynwaring, and Marlborough agreed that as Shrewsbury had been brought into the ministry they should try to come to terms with him and that Wharton should be sent to speak with Shrewsbury. Sunderland and Godolphin requested Wharton to visit Shrewsbury while at the same time

Sunderland agreed to meet Somerset where he met profuse expressions of loyalty. Though Marlborough was alarmed at the discussions with Somerset it would appear they were designed to buy time and to yield as little ground as possible. Sunderland had few illusions about Shrewsbury's sincerity and he almost certainly regarded Somerset in a similar light.[44] Sunderland was also pressing the Duchess of Marlborough to attempt a reconciliation with the Queen[45] which was 'absolutely necessary to save them [the Whigs], Lord Marlborough, Lord Treasurer and the whole from ruin'.[46]

Sunderland's emphasis upon maintaining the unity of the administration against their adversaries was highlighted by a further clash between the Queen and Marlborough over army patronage. The Duke was not prepared to promote Samuel Masham to the rank of Colonel and to make John Hill a Brigadier General. The Queen was determined on this point and the feud continued throughout May with the Secretary-at-War, Robert Walpole, attempting to reach a compromise solution.[47] Marlborough directed Walpole to consult with Sunderland and his other friends and after meeting with Sunderland, Godolphin, and Craggs, Walpole persuaded Anne to send Hill's commission to Marlborough to be delivered when the Duke saw fit.[48] To prevent any further difficulties Marlborough issued the commission immediately while Masham's was also approved. Marlborough had been forced to yield but Walpole, Sunderland, and Godolphin had prevented a public humiliation.[49] This success, however, was only temporary for it soon became clear that Sunderland was to be the first victim in the change of government.

On 11 May 1710 Shrewsbury told Godolphin:

> that his friends are expecting and pressing for other alterations, and one particularly, relating to Sunderland, that must bee insupportable to Marlborough and consequently to Godolphin. And therefore I [Godolphin] took the liberty to say that so plainly to Shrewsbury that upon it hee took up a little, and said that for his own part he could never press anything that could bee disagreeable to Marlborough and that he could live much better with Sunderland than with some others of his companions.[50]

By the beginning of June Lord Poulet told Godolphin that the Queen, Rivers and Somerset were the leading advocates for removing Sunderland though Shrewsbury was trying to defer any decision.[51] Neither Marlborough nor Godolphin were certain as to the game Shrewsbury was playing, but Maynwaring thought it was pure dissimulation.[52] There can be little doubt, however, that Shrewsbury and Poulet by divulging information were acting with the approval of Harley and with the specific intent of using the threat of Sunderland's dismissal to pressure the Whigs into negotiations about the formation of a new ministry.[53] In this he succeeded brilliantly as Godolphin informed Marlborough:

> Halifax, Somers, Sunderland, and generally the rest of the Whigs are so uneasy, that they are ready to make their court to Harley, who appears as ready to receive it, and is making advances and professions almost to everyone hee thinks our friends. He has been twice with Hamilton, he has sent twice to Boyle, and is exceedingly desirous to be thought moderate. Somers and Sunderland are always employing Halifax and Newcastle to him or to Shrewsbury.[54]

Whig willingness to negotiate with Harley is to be explained by their desire to save Sunderland but above all to prevent a dissolution of Parliament which they felt would result in a Tory dominated House of Commons and expose them to the wrath of their adversaries.[55] Despite being uncertain about Shrewsbury's motives the Duchess of Marlborough and the Duumvirs came to the same conclusion as their Whig allies and worked for the same end as the Junto.[56]

On 2 June Godolphin made his first direct approach to the Queen warning her of the implications of removing Sunderland and that it could not fail to affect Marlborough. She replied that the Duke was too reasonable to allow this to prejudice him and both he and Godolphin were aware of the repeated provocations given by Sunderland. The Queen agreed that Godolphin should write to Marlborough on this subject and the Lord Treasurer urged him to write to Anne asking for her support while he was engaged in serving both her and the country. On 6 June Godolphin repeated this request and also advised Marlborough

to inform Shrewsbury and the Queen that they should not presume too much upon his good temper. Godolphin also advised Marlborough to write a letter to Shrewsbury which could be shown to the Queen. Marlborough wrote to Shrewsbury on 19 June N.S. urging him to reflect on affairs at home and abroad and to do all he could to support Sunderland and to allow Parliament to run its course. The next day Marlborough penned his letter to the Queen requesting her to postpone Sunderland's dismissal until the end of the campaign. This last letter was delivered to Godolphin who was to consult the Duchess and they were to decide if it was to be shown to any of the Whigs.[57]

The Whigs themselves had also been active. Sunderland had a project to enlist the support of the Duke of Hamilton and his brother, the Earl of Orkney, but nothing came of it apparently due to the unenthusiastic response of the Duchess of Marlborough.[58] Robert Walpole was very zealous on behalf of Sunderland but his observation that 'the saving of Sunderland deserves the utmost industry, which alone can preserve the Parliament upon which the Whigs entirely depend'[59] clearly shows the dilemma facing the Whigs when their own preservation meant renouncing perhaps the most effective means to prevent Sunderland's removal.[60] At the request of Devonshire, Somers had written to Townshend about getting representations from the Emperor and the Dutch on behalf of Sunderland. Godolphin also suggested a similar communication from the States General to Marlborough. The Duchess of Marlborough wrote to the Queen on 7 and 13 June pleading with her to retain Sunderland while Devonshire requested Newcastle to intercede with Anne. There even appears to have been a scheme involving Maynwaring by which Godolphin was to assure the Queen that Sunderland, Somers, and the rest of the Whigs did not design anything personal against Mrs. Masham and that there would be no more disturbances.[61]

It was all to no avail. On 12 June the Queen contemptuously dismissed the Duchess of Marlborough's letter of 7 June and she summoned Somers to inform him of her intention to dismiss Sunderland. Next day Anne gave directions to Secretary Boyle about fetching the

seals from Sunderland and though he sought to avoid carrying out this task the Queen would not listen to any of his arguments. Godolphin then had an audience with Anne when he showed her Marlborough's letter but it had no effect. Godolphin then turned to Shrewsbury who was surprised at Marlborough taking Sunderland's dismissal so much to heart and showed no inclination to try to persuade the Queen to alter her resolution. The change in Shrewsbury's attitude towards Sunderland's replacement probably derives from Harley's realisation that it was no longer worth the trouble of deferring it. During the evening of 13 June the Queen informed Godolphin that she had directed Boyle about collecting the seals from Sunderland. Godolphin replied immediately pointing out the disadvantages of this alteration. The Queen answered, on Wednesday 14 June, that on Tuesday afternoon she had instructed Boyle to collect the seals from Sunderland the following morning and that Lord Dartmouth had been made Secretary of State in his place.[62] Dartmouth's appointment was something of a surprise for he proved to be the third choice. Poulet had declined the office and Anglesey was too much of a High Tory for Harley's Whig allies and so Dartmouth was chosen as a more moderate and acceptable Tory.[63] The Queen intended to give Sunderland a pension of £3,000 a year to which he answered that if he did 'not have the honour to serve his country he would not plunder it'.[64]

The decision to remove Sunderland caused Marlborough great unease and there seems little doubt that he intended to retire. Somers was amazed that Marlborough's letter to the Queen of 20 June N.S. had so little effect upon her and he, Halifax, Orford, Cowper, Newcastle, and Boyle were so perturbed that along with Godolphin they felt impelled to write a joint letter to Marlborough requesting him to remain at the head of the army. Sunderland also probably requested Marlborough not to retire in a letter he forwarded to him via Godolphin.[65] Somers also wrote a separate letter declaring that everything depended upon Marlborough being in command of the army at the start of the ensuing campaign. It was probably these efforts

combined with the Duke's belief in the necessity of preserving the existing Parliament which persuaded him not to resign. He, however, like the Duchess, was extremely angry at Sunderland's being forced out and this explains his observations to his wife: 'would not Lady Marlborough have some time ago thought anybody madd that should have believed it would ever have been in the power of Harley to have turned out Sunderland, and the Whigs to remain tamely quiet?...For my own part, I have nothing to advise, for if the Whigs suffers Sunderland to be removed, I think in a very short time everything will be in confusion'.[66] Marlborough's remarks are both strange and unfair. The Whigs had tried to prevent Sunderland's removal but they could not threaten resignation as this would lead to a dissolution[67] and Marlborough himself repeatedly stressed the importance of preserving the present Parliament.[68]

It had long been apparent that Sunderland's dismissal would have important consequences in both domestic politics and foreign affairs. James Brydges believed that Sunderland was unlikely to be the only change in the ministry and according to Horace Walpole the consternation at The Hague was unlikely to have been surpassed in London. The news was immediately inserted into the Paris Gazette and investors in the construction of Blenheim Palace were very uneasy. Townshend was directed to reassure Heinsius that Marlborough's credit was as high as ever (though the contrary was blatantly obvious), that there would be no further alterations, and that the war would be prosecuted with the same vigour. The Pensioner's anxiety was only partially assuaged by Townshend's efforts and he still remained concerned about the possibility of a dissolution of Parliament. The City and the Bank of England were also apprehensive and a deputation from the Bank sought an audience with the Queen. The group included the Governor, Sir Gilbert Heathcote, the Deputy-Governor, Nathaniel Gould, and Sir William Scawen and Francis Eyles. They complained that any further changes would have a detrimental effect upon public credit. The Queen answered that no further alterations were intended and Sir David Hamilton felt that the Queen was sincere when she gave this

assurance. Certainly Sunderland was the minister the Queen disliked the most and her reluctance to part with Godolphin would seem to vindicate Hamilton's assertion. Harley, however, knew that Godolphin would have to go and his task was to get Anne to agree. Robert Walpole was correct when he commented that Sunderland's dismissal was only the beginning.[69]

Though Shrewsbury had behaved equivocally in the Sunderland affair Marlborough still hoped that he might be the best means of preventing a dissolution. Shrewsbury had certainly revealed some unease to Godolphin about a new Parliament and Marlborough advised both Sunderland and Walpole to use Shrewsbury for their own ends. He also asked Sunderland to allow the Countess of Sunderland to remain as Lady of the Bedchamber to the Queen.[70] The desire to preserve Parliament and the attempt to establish a mixed administration are the respective motives of the Whigs and Harley which produced further negotiations between them. The stumbling block was the unwillingness of the Whigs to sacrifice Godolphin. Harley was determined to get the Lord Treasurer dismissed and though he had secured control of patronage the problem was getting the Queen to agree to this step. Harley gradually convinced Anne that she would have to give way and he suggested that Shrewsbury should replace Godolphin. The Duke declined this offer, but he urged Harley to put himself at the head of a Treasury Commission. On 30 July there was an explosive Cabinet meeting when Godolphin used harsh words to both Shrewsbury and the Queen. Anne finally agreed to a Treasury Commission with Lord Poulet at its head and Harley as Chancellor of the Exchequer. On 8 August Godolphin was dismissed.[71] Sunderland was shocked at this news observing to Marlborough that 'this last blow they have given in removing Godolphin, has perfectly stunned every body, and no part of it is more grievous than the trouble it must give Marlborough but I hope in God Marlborough will for the sake of the whole, have yet patience, though I believe nobody was ever more try'd'.[72] A fortnight later Sunderland again wrote to encourage his father-in-law. He observed:

> I... heartily congratulate the taking of Bethune, and hope in God you will have the remaining part of the campaign attended with your usual good success, though it is a grievous thing to think of the usage Marlborough meets with, at the same time, that he is doing what he is abroad with success. This proceeding is certainly without example and you may depend upon it, that the Whigs to a man, have a right sense of it, and will show it upon all occasions, and in whatever manner Marlborough shall think right, and I am sure if Marlborough, Godolphin, and the Whigs do act cordially and vigorously together, without suspicion of one another, which I am sure, there is no reason for, it is impossible but everything must come right again.[73]

With Godolphin's dismissal Sunderland assumed that 'Harley and Shrewsbury, are determined, to make a thorough buiness of it, and that the Parliament will be dissolved in a very few days'.[74] His prediction was premature by about six weeks for Harley faced financial complications which required his attention. As the political uncertainty grew during the Summer of 1710 the Bank of England began to restrict the government's credit facilities which meant it would be difficult to obtain the money to support the armies abroad. The Bank was very concerned about Harley's ability to maintain a stable administration but he managed to raise a loan of £350,000 from a group of Tory businessmen which would provide for the forces in Flanders. With this success the Bank became more co-operative and in mid-September they gave Harley a loan of £100,000. Harley's concern with financial problems helps to explain why Parliament was not dissolved but more important was his continued willingness to negotiate with the Whigs. He tried to persuade individual Whig ministers to remain in the administration even if Parliament was dissolved but he met with no success. On 10 September Godolphin, Cowper, Somers, Sunderland, Wharton and Orford agreed that if there was a dissolution the remaining Whig office-holders would resign.[75] Meanwhile, High Tory pressure on Harley to dissolve Parliament was mounting and though the Chancellor resented this intrusion he knew he would have to give way. In September Rochester replaced Godolphin as Lord-Lieutenant of

Cornwall and on 21 September Parliament was dissolved and an election was called. Devonshire, Somers, Cowper, Boyle, Orford, and Wharton either resigned or were dismissed. Henry St. John became Northern Secretary, Sir Simon Harcourt Lord Keeper, Rochester Lord President, Buckingham Lord Steward, Ormonde Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and Lord Raby, soon to be made Earl of Strafford, succeeded Townshend as Plenipotentiary at The Hague.[76]

Sunderland had been confident about the outcome of an election from early August when he had told Marlborough 'that by all the accounts from the countries, there is like to be a good election, so that the advisers of this dissolution, and the setters up of the hereditary right, as they call it, may possibly pass their times yet worse in a new Parliament, than they would have done in this'.[77] Neither the Duchess of Marlborough, Godolphin, or Lady Sunderland, however, shared his optimism,[78] yet it probably explains the vigour with which he campaigned.[79] He asked Marlborough to allow Scottish army officers to come over to help in the election. He advised Newcastle on the choice of candidates in Yorkshire and Lancashire and pointed out the unsuitability of one of Newcastle's nominees; a judgement confirmed by the candidate's subsequent conduct in the House of Commons. There were regular meetings at Sunderland's house in London and he tried to arrange a meeting of leading Whigs in London in order to prepare for the election. Sunderland and Wharton pressed Somerset, now disillusioned with Harley and radiating Whig zeal, to back James Stanhope. Significantly Somerset supported Stanhope's unsuccessful candidature at Westminster but with the help of Wharton Somerset had Stanhope returned for Cockermouth in Cumberland. At the end of September Sunderland was elected Recorder of Coventry and William Bromley was apprehensive that, though two Tories would be elected, the Sheriff, who had been advised by Sunderland, would not return them. In the event the Tories brought in two members for Coventry. Sunderland's efforts at Northampton were also unsuccessful as the two sitting Tory M.P.'s were again elected.[80]

The election was a disaster for the Whigs. The Tories successfully exploited the passions aroused by the Sacheverell trial and the clergy campaigned vigorously and aggressively on their behalf. The Dissenters were, by and large, fully behind the Whigs, but they could do little to combat the violent clerical storm. Both sides exploited the press to the full and there was a record number of electoral contests. Only in Yorkshire, Cumberland, and Northumberland did the Whigs hold their own while Whig magnates such as Wharton, Newcastle and Somerset had only moderate success. The Whigs were routed in Norfolk and severely chastened in Cornwall; the Whig vote plummeted in London where four Tories were returned; in Norwich the Whig vote fell by over 20% while at Hereford the Tories transformed a Whig lead of 39 in 1708 into a Tory majority of 105. In Scotland the Whigs were outnumbered approximately two to one by the Tories and as Sunderland predicted[81] the election of the Scottish peers had been disastrous with the return of 16 Tories as a result of the Squadrone boycotting the election. The Tory majority in the new House of Commons was about 151.[82] Sunderland, however, was already looking to the future.

It is typical of Sunderland's sanguine character that as the authority of the government collapsed in 1710 he was thinking about the Hanoverian Succession and what lay ahead in the next reign. In August 1710 Harley had dispatched Earl Rivers to Hanover and in response Sunderland advised Marlborough to cultivate the friendship of the Elector of Hanover. Marlborough, to the great satisfaction of his wife, kept Sunderland informed of events at Hanover and reaffirmed his determination to consult with Godolphin and Sunderland about what passed between him and the Allies. Marlborough sought Whig advice as to when he should come over to England and Sunderland arranged a meeting with Cowper to discuss this matter and to consider news from Hanover which was causing some alarm. The meeting took place on 26 October where it appears to have been decided to ask that Bothmer be sent over to England. Bothmer's intimacy with Halifax and

Sunderland was of great concern to Rivers and it may have been that he was trying to prevent his being sent to London. Rivers may also have been spreading rumours about the Whigs being Republicans for it was also agreed to assure the Elector about Whig support for the Hanoverian Succession and that the Whigs did not wish to establish a Republic or to render the monarchy elective.[83] Sunderland and the Whigs were determined that when the Elector came to the throne it was they he would look to for advice and support.

The wheel had come full circle; Sunderland and the Junto, as at the beginning of the reign, were on the outside. The swiftness of the collapse between November 1709 and November 1710 was the most frustrating and disappointing aspect of Sunderland's career to date. The man he had apparently consigned to the wilderness in February 1708 had, in less than two years, destroyed the fruits of almost a decade of unceasing toil. Sunderland had quickly identified the danger and had continually urged that the only way open to the Junto and the Duumvirs was to cement their union, set aside personal ambition and animosity, and to attempt to ride out the storm. He had done much towards this end. His loyalty to Marlborough and Godolphin was remarkable, he accepted his dismissal as Secretary of State without rancour or resentment, and his industry and vigour during the election seems unlikely to have been surpassed. All his efforts, however,could not prevent the fall of the government and the return of a Tory dominated House of Commons. Unlike the beginning of the reign, however, so long as Anne ruled and Harley was at the head of the administration it was inconceivable that the Junto would ever be able to recover their former authority. Consequently, Sunderland was now looking to a time when a new ruler would provide him with a new opportunity.

CHAPTER SIX: THE PROTESTANT SUCCESSION 1710 TO 1714

'The best counsel that could be followed'

The events of 1710 had been disastrous for the Whigs. They had been turned out of office and seen the Tories recover control of the House of Commons in the general election. The parallels with the predicament facing the Junto in 1702 are obvious and striking. They were again thrown back upon their slender majority in the House of Lords and once more, to begin with the main concern of the Junto was to weather the Tory storm which threatened to engulf them. Yet the vigorous aggression of their opponents throughout 1711 did have a dual aspect. It undoubtedly spelt danger for the Junto, but it also highlighted the most effective policy available to them and the best way to success. Tory extremism in 1710, as in 1702, revealed deep differences between the back-bench zealots in the House of Commons and the Prime Minister, Robert Harley, and it was soon clear that on the two most important questions of the next few years, the Peace and the Protestant Succession, there were major differences of opinion in the administration. The Junto, once more, were ready to exploit these fissures in order to attack and embarrass the government with that single-minded ruthlessness which had always characterised their conduct. The success they achieved, particularly after losing control of the House of Lords early in 1712, is a testimony to their organization and unity. Sunderland, with his fanatical devotion to the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover, was responsible for directing the Junto. He toiled ceaselessly, devised and co-ordinated strategy, and was ready to pursue any policy he felt would yield dividends. Despite a deep seated antipathy towards him he was ready to negotiate with both Harley and Nottingham both of whom he had driven from office earlier in the reign.

Sunderland was willing to join with the Scottish nobility at Westminster in an attempt to dissolve the union which he and his Whig associates had played such a prominent part in establishing. The energy and enthusiasm with which he identified himself with the new dynasty was so marked that it even caused some alarm at Hanover, though it is clear his assistance was essential to the Hanoverian cause in Britain. His contributions as a debater in the Lords were more regular and significant than ever before. No other Junto Lord could match Sunderland in the range of his activities and doubtless he was aided by being significantly younger than Halifax, Wharton, Orford and Somers. With his vitality, ruthlessness, vigour, determination, stamina, optimism, and perseverance in the face of daunting adversity he undoubtedly encapsulates the spirit of the Junto at this time. It is apparent that for most of the time from 1710 to 1714 Sunderland was the most prominent member of the Junto, but it would perhaps be going too far to describe him as the leader of this famous 'Whig gang'.

Despite having successfully re-organized the Queen's administration and obtaining a resounding electoral victory Robert Harley still faced considerable problems. The Tory majority in the House of Commons was large and potentially troublesome. Many backbenchers were eager to vilify the former ministry and to carry out a thorough purge of remaining Whig office-holders. They had little time for Harley's more moderate ideas. Neither the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor the Queen had much enthusiasm for such partisan policies, especially at a time when it was imperative to restore public credit. The commercial interests had been anxious at the extent of Tory extremism in the Commons and were apprehensive of the new ministry's ability to control Parliament. Harley did manage to calm the fears

of the financial community and confidence began to revive once there was closer co-operation between the administration and the Bank of England. From the beginning of 1711 the credit situation was gradually improving, largely due to the sense and skill of Harley.[1] It was difficult, however, to stifle Tory excess completely and the desire to censure the previous ministry was to find an outlet in the House of Lords.

As far as many Tories were concerned, after Marlborough, Sunderland was perhaps their chief target. At the beginning of 1711 a conference had been held at Rochester's house attended by the leading ministers and Nottingham who was at odds with the new administration. Nottingham argued that the former Whig ministry should be prosecuted and when Dartmouth inquired who this should include Nottingham, no doubt remembering the way Sunderland had driven him from office, replied, 'Lord Sunderland for one, and he was sure I [Dartmouth] could find matter enough in his office'.[2] Such sentiments were likely to be echoed by many Tories. The two issues on which they chose to attack the Whigs emphasise that Sunderland was a much sought after victim. As Secretary of State Sunderland had been responsible both for military policy in Spain and Palatine immigration into Britain and it is plain that in January and February 1711 the Tories were after Sunderland's blood.

On 2 January 1711 the Queen informed the House of Lords of the allied defeat at Brihuega in Spain in December 1710. After returning thanks for this message the Lords resolved to go into a committee to inquire into the war in Spain and Anne was requested to delay the departure of the Earl of Peterborough as Ambassador-Extraordinary to Vienna to allow him to assist the investigation. Three days later the House went into a committee. The Earl of Galway and Lord Tyrawly were examined on 6 January and the Queen was asked to transmit to the Lords papers concerning the Spanish war including correspondence between Stanhope and Sunderland. Lord Dartmouth delivered in some papers on 8 January amongst which was Sunderland's letter to Stanhope

of 14 February 1707. This letter was read the next day together with an extract of Sunderland's letter to Galway dated 18 April 1707. The Tory Lords wanted to investigate whether Stanhope had used the Queen's name when advising Charles III to take the offensive in January 1707. Sunderland, Wharton, Somers, Cowper, Marlborough and Godolphin argued that this matter should be deferred until Stanhope could be heard in person. The Whigs lost a motion to adjourn by 59 votes to 45 and Lord Ferrers then moved that the Earl of Peterborough had given a very faithful, just, and honourable account of the Councils in Valencia. This was agreed to and reported to the House. Two days later Galway was refused permission to deliver a written answer to the charges against him and he, Tyrawly, and Stanhope were held responsible for the setbacks in Spain and the defeat at Toulon because they had advised taking the offensive at a Council of War in Valencia in January 1707. Sunderland was one of the thirty-six peers who protested at both these decisions.[3]

Further copies of Sunderland's correspondence with the Commanders in Spain were delivered to the House the same day and were read on 12 January. On the basis of these letters Scarsdale moved:

> that it appears, by the Earl of Sunderland's letters, that the carrying on the war offensively in Spain, was approved and directed by the ministers, notwithstanding the design of attempting Toulon, which the ministers knew at that time was concerted with the Duke of Savoy, and therefore are justly to be blamed for contributing to all our misfortunes in Spain, and to the disappointment of the expedition against Toulon.[4]

In the debate which followed the Duke of Beaufort said 'he wondered any Lord in the ministry should approve and direct an offensive war in Spain at that juncture, and in particular he named the Earl of Sunderland'.[5] Cowper declared that the question was irregular and did not specify who was being censured. A long and rambling debate ensued during the course of which Sunderland owned,

> that he gave his opinion for an offensive war because, to the best of his understanding, it was the best counsel that could be followed. That it was the general opinion and desire of the nation that the Earl of Galway should march again to Madrid; that all the ministry then were unanimous in their opinions for an offensive war; and that many inconveniences might have attended dividing the army.[6]

The efforts of Sunderland and his colleagues were to no avail for the motion was agreed to by 68 votes to 48. Sunderland and the Whigs protested at this decision while a further resolution was passed commending Peterborough's services in Spain. On 24 January 1711 Galway was censured for allowing the Portugese troops to have the post of honour in the line of battle.[7]

The remainder of the Lords' investigation was largely concerned with the discrepancy between the number of troops Parliament had voted for the war in Spain and the number who were actually present at the battle of Almanza. The Tory Lords carried all before them and were even able to expunge part of the Whig protest against the condemnation which had been passed on the failure to ensure that all the troops designed for operations in Spain were actually on the Iberian peninsula. Lord Abingdon reported the resolutions of the committee of inquiry on 8 February 1711 and they were delivered to the Queen in an address.[8] It concluded by observing that:

> having laid before your Majesty this faithful representation of the mismanagements of those persons entrusted with your most important affairs, and to whose counsels the fatal miscarriages of the war in Spain are in great measure to be imputed; we have an entire confidence, that your Majesty will give such orders, and take such measures with regard to our present circumstances, as may retrieve the bad effects of that unhappy management, to the advantage of the common cause, and to the obtaining a safe and honourable peace.[9]

Sunderland and the Whigs made a final protest against the report.[10]

Sunderland was also under attack for the part he had played in encouraging the Palatine refugees to come into the country in 1709.

At Tory instigation the parishioners of St. Olave in Southwark, together with the inhabitants of other parishes, delivered a petition to the House of Commons complaining about the Palatines who had been brought into their parish. The petition was referred to an almost exclusively Tory committee and at the same time leave was given to bring in a bill to repeal the General Naturalization Act of 1709. Though the bill was to be rejected the Commons pressed on with the Palatine case. The report was received on 11 April 1711 and Sunderland was named as having urged the Commissioners of Trade to consider the best place to settle the Palatines; as having requested the Mayor of Canterbury to accept Palatines into that city and as being responsible for the loss of £1,487 18s. 11½d. in an unsuccessful attempt to establish a Palatine community on the Scilly Islands. The House agreed to the report and it resolved that the petitioners had upheld their complaint; that the bringing over the Palatines was extravagant, unreasonable and of dangerous consequence to the Church and State; and that whosoever advised the bringing over the poor Palatines into this kingdom was an enemy to the Queen and this kingdom'.[11] Some M.P.'s wanted to go further in condemning Sunderland but more moderate views prevailed and after several adjournments the matter was allowed to drop.[12]

The offensive against the Whigs was not limited to the House of Lords. Jonathan Swift assailed them in the press and in January 1711 Robert Walpole was finally dismissed as Treasurer of the Navy. In February the October Club was formed amongst back-bench Tory M.P.'s. One of the chief aims of the club was to strike at the Whigs and to expose Whig corruption. The intensity of the Tory challenge probably explains the readiness of the Whigs to use any means which came to hand to ease the pressure upon them. A Place bill had recently passed the Commons where it had met little resistance from the Court, probably because it had been decided to reject it in the upper House. Sunderland, aware as he had been at the beginning of the reign, of the uneasy association between the Court and the more extreme Tories hoped to use this issue to increase the tension which existed and to

court popularity in the House of Commons. The bill was read for the first time on 2 February 1711 and in the debate Sunderland commented 'the Commons have of late years sent up this bill for form-sake, and only to throw the odium of it being lost upon the House of Peers; and therefore your lordships ought to at least give it a second reading, to let the Commons know that if they should send it up once more, the Lords will take them at their word and pass it'.[13] Some Whig peers forced a division but it was agreed to throw out the bill.[14]

The zeal of the more extreme elements within the Tory party was also a matter of concern for Harley and by the Spring of 1711 the situation in the Commons was such that the success of the ministry's financial policy was threatened. The hostility of the October Club to what they regarded as the pusillanimity of the administration was only surpassed by their detestation of the Whigs, and during February and March 1711 they kept up the pressure for a fully partisan policy. Harley initiated counter-measures by infiltrating the club with his own supporters, but it was the attempted assassination of Harley by Antoine de Guiscard on 8 March which paradoxically eased Harley's difficulties. His popularity within the Tory party revived, but his rivalry with Henry St. John intensified. The Whigs hoped to exploit Harley's problems with his Tory supporters and perhaps set up a coalition government. In early-May Sunderland, Somers, and Halifax approached Harley and upon the death of the Earl of Rochester, on 2 May 1711, the Queen secretly consulted Somers and Cowper who advised her to make Harley Lord Treasurer. Arthur Maynwaring was probably justified in concluding that Harley had fooled the Whigs for on 23 May Harley was made Earl of Oxford and Mortimer and six days later he became Lord Treasurer. The establishment of the South Sea Company as a financial rival to the Whig Bank of England increased Oxford's popularity with the Tories and it was clear he could ignore any Whig proposals.[15] On 12 June 1711 Parliament was prorogued and Oxford's power was fully revealed in the ministerial changes which followed. Among his allies Robert Benson became Chancellor of the Exchequer, Buckingham was made Lord President, and Poulet Lord Steward.

At the end of the 1710-1711 session Oxford was clearly dominating Parliament. The Tories in the Commons had rallied to him while the debates in the Lords over Spain and the Palatines showed that the Whigs had lost control of the House. It is also apparent, however, that the Junto, having survived the worst of the Tory onslaught were ready to take the offensive themselves to try to recover some of the ground they had lost. The first sign of the Whigs bestirring themselves came in the passage of the Linen bill through the Lords during May and June 1711 when the Junto backed an ostensibly bipartisan measure to impose a duty upon exported British linen. The bill would be prejudicial to the Scottish linen industry and exacerbate the growing Scottish discontent with the union. This would hopefully sow discord between Oxford and the Scottish peers whose support was essential if the Lord Treasurer were to retain control of the House of Lords and allow the Whigs to assert their authority again. Throughout Sunderland's behaviour was deliberately provocative and this is the start of the policy which was to bear fruit at the end of the year when an attempt was made to allow the Duke of Hamilton to sit in the House because he possessed a British peerage created after the Union.

Prior to the union linen production had been the most successful branch of Scottish manufacturing industry and the sale of exports to England had been so great that exclusion had been threatened under the terms of the Aliens Act of 1705. Anything detrimental to the linen industry was likely to cause substantial unrest in Scotland. The bill was introduced into the Commons in April 1711 and after being amended by a select committee it was sent up to the Lords on 23 May. It was read for the first time the following day and ordered to be considered in a committee of the whole House on 1 June. The debate in the committee centred on the clause in the bill which stopped the export of unmanufactured linen yarn from Scotland to Ireland. It was felt, however, that this would be very prejudicial to Irish linen manufacture and there was pressure for an amendment. Somers spoke on behalf of Irish interests along with Guernsey, Abingdon, and

Anglesey. Hamilton, Atholl, Shrewsbury, Buckingham, Balmerino, Godolphin, and Islay opposed any alteration. It was noted that neither Oxford nor Halifax spoke in the debate and the most remarkable contribution came from Sunderland. In reply to Hamilton's request that, despite whatever promises had been made to the Irish, care should be taken of the Scottish linen manufacture, Sunderland said that he preferred 'the interest of Ireland to any one county in England'.[16] Balmerino felt that Sunderland's 'free dealing' turned the debate and it was carried by 34 votes to 21 that unmanufactured linen should be allowed to be exported to Ireland. Lord Delawarr reported the bill and its amendments from the committee and after having been read twice it was sent down to the Commons for their approval. The most significant aspect of the bill was the export duty which exposed Scottish manufacturers to severe competition from German and Austrian cloth in colonial markets. The duty was to be lifted in 1717 and though it did not ruin the linen industry Scottish discontent at the union increased as a consequence.[17] The Junto were determined to keep hold of the initiative.

The question of peace with France gave the Whigs a more immediate and successful means of challenging Oxford's ascendancy and it was an opportunity they eagerly seized. The issue was of great concern to the Whigs for they were the party which was identified with a determined and aggressive commitment to the continental struggle against Louis XIV. The Junto eagerly embraced any strategy which could change or at least modify the basis upon which peace was being negotiated. Offers were made to both Oxford and Nottingham, promising Whig support in return for adjusting the peace preliminaries. Sunderland was prominent in these approaches and was prepared to go to any length to implement Junto policy. It was he who conducted the negotiations with Oxford yet his hostility to Oxford was manifest in the warning he gave to him in the House of Lords that the ministry's peace policy might ultimately prove to be the Lord Treasurer's undoing.

It was generally accepted that when the new administration took office in 1710 that it would try to agree peace terms with France. To begin with Oxford's government had been unable to carry out a radical peace policy, but preliminary discussions did take place involving the Earl of Jersey and the Abbé François Gaultier, the Marquis de Torcy's London agent. These preliminary talks took place on the basis of proposals outlined by Jersey: Britain and France were to reach a secret understanding irrespective of Britain's allies, except the Duke of Savoy whose interests would receive special attention; Philip V was to retain Spain and the West Indies while in return Britain would secure great commercial advantages in Europe and America; a new Barrier Treaty, more acceptable to Britain, was to be settled with the Dutch; and the agreement with France was to be the preliminary to a Jacobite restoration at the Queen's death. This last point was not, however, agreed ministerial policy. To cover this betrayal of the allies there were to be two-tier negotiations. The official negotiations would take place in the Dutch Republic, while there were to be secret talks in London and Paris. Britain would appear to support all the allied demands though a secret agreement arranged beforehand with France would only be disclosed to the allies in stages. These terms were first revealed to the Queen and the Cabinet in April 1711 and in July Matthew Prior was sent to France to assist the conversations with the French. The following month Prior returned to London with Gaultier and Nicholas Mesnager. Mesnager spent two months negotiating with Oxford and Henry St. John, though it was Oxford who dominated the administration's search for peace, and in late-September the preliminary articles, containing the secret agreement between Britain and France as well as the terms to be shown to the allies, were signed.[18]

The Whigs were very concerned at the progress Oxford was making. Sunderland writing to Marlborough, congratulating him upon his outmanoeuvring the Duke of Villars and forcing his way through the 'Ne Plus Ultra' defence fortifications, remarked:

> I heartily congratulate with you upon it, for whatever malice and faction will allow some people to think of it here, I am sure whenever they don't prevail it must be looked upon as one of the greatest actions has happened this war and what I hope will go a great way towards securing us from an ill peace which some, I fear, are very impatient for.[19]

Their anxiety over the peace proposals was so great that the Whigs were ready to approach Oxford with an offer to assist the passage of a bill against the practice of Occasional Conformity, a measure they had defeated three times between 1702 and 1704, which was being pressed by the High Tories, and in return they wanted Oxford to re-organize the ministry and revise the peace preliminaries. Sunderland was responsible for presenting this suggestion to Oxford. On 9 November 1711 the Queen wrote to her Lord Treasurer, 'I cannot imagine what Lord Sunderland proposes to himself in making you a visit, but I am very easy about it, not doubting you will manage him as is best for my service'.[20] The offer proved to be unacceptable and the Whigs now turned to their old adversary the Earl of Nottingham. Nottingham resented his exclusion from office by Oxford, but was also genuinely apprehensive at the conduct of the negotiations with France and was determined to oppose the peace when Parliament met. In return for his support on this issue the Whigs agreed to back a bill against the practice of Occasional Conformity.[21]

Oxford deferred the meeting of Parliament until 7 December 1711 because of his unease at the reception the announcement concerning the Peace would meet. In her speech the Queen divulged that 'both place and time are appointed for opening the Treaty of a General Peace'. As usual an address of thanks for the Queen's speech was moved, which occasioned a debate in which Nottingham proposed an addition 'that no peace could be safe or honourable to Great Britain, or Europe, if Spain and the West Indies were alloted to any branch of the House of Bourbon'. Guernsey argued that such an addition should be debated at some other time and he was supported by Lord North and Grey and Oxford himself. Buckingham overruled this objection and Wharton supported Nottingham. Sunderland observed,

> my Lords... is it possible, that any member of this illustrious House should be unprepared to debate an affair, which, for these ten years past, has been the principal subject matter of our consultations? Do we not sit in the same House and are we not the peers who have constantly been of opinion, that no safe and honourable peace can be made unless Spain and the West Indies be removed from the House of Bourbon? It is true I see some new faces among us, but even that Lord who sits on the Woolpack.., may well remember that, in the late reign four Lords were impeached for having made a partition treaty.[22]

Marlborough, Cowper, Halifax, and the Bishop of Salisbury all spoke in favour of Nottingham's amendment to the address which was carried by 62 votes to 54. Sunderland was a member of the committee to draw up the address. Nottingham reported the address from the committee the following day when the ministry tried to have his amendment removed. Upon the division Sunderland and Abingdon were appointed tellers. The latter was reluctant to count, whereupon Sunderland said, 'if he [Abingdon] did not do his duty he would his and tell without him'.[23] Both men proceeded to their work and the attempt to alter the address was defeated. In her reply the Queen declared, 'I should be sorry anyone would think I would not do my utmost to recover Spain and the West Indies from the House of Bourbon'. This was an obvious slap in the face for Nottingham and the Whigs. Robert Walpole had proposed a similar amendment in the Commons, where, though the division went in favour of the government, eleven Tories did support Walpole's motion. This not only served to reveal the divisions in the Tory party, but also probably marks the emergence of the Hanoverian or 'Whimsical' Tories in the lower House. A week later Nottingham introduced a bill against Occasional Conformity and, with Whig acquiescence, it quickly passed both Houses.[24]

The absence of several Scottish peers from the Lords had contributed to the ministerial defeat on the address to the Queen. The Junto's policy of driving a wedge between Oxford and his Scottish supporters was proving successful and it was the unwillingness of the

upper House, and the Junto in particular, to allow the Duke of Hamilton to take his seat in the Lords as Duke of Brandon, a British peerage conferred after the Union, which paved the way for the victory of 7 December 1711. Oxford, aware of the importance of the Scottish votes to the ministry in the House of Lords, was prepared to allow a full-scale debate on the matter on 20 December. The Junto, jubilant at their recent success, were determined to use this issue to recover their supremacy in the Lords.

Counsel was heard on both sides and the debate centred on the interpretation of the twenty-second article of the Treaty of Union, which established Scottish representation at Westminster, and the precedent of the Duke of Queensberry's elevation to a British peerage as Duke of Dover. The Whigs tried to avoid the issue of Queensberry, with Sunderland arguing that it was 'a case never decided only connived at for a time'.[25] Oxford spoke on behalf of Hamilton and requested that the opinion of the judges should be sought. This was opposed by Wharton and Sunderland as 'a matter of their privileges [and] had nothing to do with that'.[26] Oxford's motion was rejected by fourteen votes. On the question of the twenty-second article of the union the Whigs had a stronger case. Halifax argued it imposed a limitation upon the number of Scottish peers allowed to sit in the Lords. The final division, on the resolution 'that no patent of honour granted to any peer of Great Britain who was a peer of Scotland at the time of the Union can entitle such peer to sit and vote in Parliament or to sit upon the trial of peers', was carried in favour of the Whigs by 57 votes to 52; Sunderland voted with his colleagues in the majority.[27] Scottish resentment at the ministry's failure deepened. Oxford, in an attempt to solve this problem, persuaded the Lords to reconsider the Hamilton question in January 1712, but the attempt to alter the decision of the House was unsuccessful. It was only at the end of February 1712 that Oxford could once again rely upon the support of the Scottish nobility.[28]

The setbacks in the Lords in December 1711 threatened Oxford's control of the upper chamber and especially the ability of the ministry to carry the peace successfully through Parliament. Furthermore, the Queen's confidence in Oxford was shaken. Oxford responded by inducing Anne to create twelve new Tory Peers who would restore the government's majority. The new Lords included three suspected Jacobites, Bruce, Bathurst and Lansdowne; two relatives of Oxford, Hay and Foley, together with two of his allies, Mansell and Trevor; the remaining creations were Compton, Mountjoy, Paget and Middleton. These promotions were announced in the London Gazette on 31 December 1711, along with the news that Marlborough had been dismissed as Captain-General. The Duke was under pressure from an inquiry by the Commissioners of Public Accounts into charges of corruption against him. The forthcoming report of the commissioners and Marlborough's opposition to the ministry on 7 December 1711 were sufficient to allow Oxford to get the Queen and the Cabinet to approve Marlborough's removal from the head of the army.

The new peers had an immediate effect in the House of Lords. On 22 December 1711 the Whigs and Nottingham secured the appointment of a committee, including Sunderland,[29] to address the Queen that her plenipotentiaries at the imminent peace congress in the Dutch Republic should have particular instructions to work with the allies to preserve their union and to obtain a just and lasting settlement for all. The same day Parliament was adjourned for the Christmas period. The Commons agreed not to meet again until 14 January 1712, but the Whigs, anxious to retain the initiative, decided that the Lords should sit again on New Years day. The new peers entered the House on 4 January 1712 and on the same day the Queen's answer to the address of 22 December 1711 was delivered. Anne acidly informed the Lords that, 'the assurances I gave at the opening of this session were sufficient to convince everyone that I would not send my plenipotentiaries without giving them the instructions desired by this address'. She then requested the House to adjourn until 14 January. Somers objected that this was unprecedented and that a committee should be appointed to search

their records. He was supported by Nottingham, but Scarsdale and Ferrers recommended complying with the Queen's request:

> Then Lord Sunderland rose up in a passion and said he was amazed Lords should so call out for the question and not give themselves time to look into their books. Nobody likewise had more respect for the Queen than he, but anything that was done irregular could never be imputed to the Crown, but to the ministry, and 'twas of dangerous consequence to let such advice pass without any examination for who know what designs a ministry had to carry on. If this was suffered to pass into a precedent in one House and not in t'other 'twas but for them to advise to have a command to have that House adjourned for a week, a month or for the time that would serve their turn.[30]

Sunderland also aroused Poulet's wrath by ridiculing his proposal to see whether the House had prejudiced its privileges when they returned after obeying the Queen's command. Sunderland was backed by Godolphin and answered by Oxford. The new peers, however, carried the day and it was agreed to adjourn until 14 January.[31]

The Junto had finally lost control of the House of Lords, but they were still determined to oppose Oxford's peace plans and were intent upon displaying their loyalty to the Grand Alliance in public. Both the Elector of Hanover and the Emperor were very apprehensive that Britain might make a separate peace with France. This worry, combined with the failure of a Hanoverian protest because the Faculty of Advocates in Edinburgh had accepted a Jacobite medal in June 1711, led to a decline in relations between the Elector of Hanover and the British government. In November 1711 the Elector sent his most experienced diplomat, Hans Casper, Baron von Bothmer, to London with instructions to work against the peace settlement and to exhibit openly the differences between Hanover and London. Bothmer delivered the Elector's formal protest against the peace preliminaries to Henry St. John on 28 November and a week later this paper was published in the Whig Daily Courant. This revelation and this Hanoverian intervention in British domestic politics caused a

sensation and placed the Elector of Hanover firmly on the side of the Whigs. The Emperor likewise was anxious at recent developments in Britain's conduct particularly when in November 1711 his representative, Count Gallas, had been forbidden the Court and his recall was desired because he was openly consorting with the Whigs and protesting too vehemently against the peace. In response the Emperor sent Prince Eugene to atone for this incident and to prevent any peace that did not include Spain. Eugene was to go so far as to offer 30,000 Austrian and Imperial troops for use in the peninsula during 1712.[32]

On 1 January 1712 there was a dinner at Lord Hervey's house in St. James's Square where Bothmer was able to meet and discuss politics with Sunderland, Somers, Halifax, Wharton, Marlborough, Godolphin, Cowper, Devonshire, Portland, and Scarborough. Three weeks later Prince Eugene dined at Sunderland's house and on 25 January there was a splendid dinner and ball at the Earl of Portland's house where Sunderland, Marlborough, Devonshire, Bolton, Hervey, Townshend, Godolphin and Dorchester met the Imperial resident, Hoffman. Great hopes had surrounded Eugene's visit, but he soon learned that the ministry would not drop the preliminary articles and indeed was determined to wreck the whole Grand Alliance. The objections from Hanover and Vienna made little impression in London, while Bothmer's association with Marlborough and the Whigs merely served to irritate the government. Eugene left for The Hague in March 1712 and 'neither he nor Bothmer believed that the Oxford ministry had any intention of renewing the Grand Alliance and both men were convinced that an Anglo-French alliance was the preliminary step to restoring the Prince of Wales'.[33] Eugene was unimpressed by the opposition to Oxford, believing that differences between Marlborough, Godolphin, and Sunderland on the one hand and Somers, Cowper, and Halifax on the other rendered any anti-ministerial policy ineffectual. Eugene's analysis is very questionable, for the opposition had effectively challenged the ministry in December 1711 and serious doubt is cast by Eugene's observation that the ministry could easily be overthrown. This was at the time when Oxford had just proved himself to be, in

Wharton's words, 'the strongest man in England' for 'he had challenged the Junto Lord's, the toughest and most sophisticated party men of the period, in their strongest of strongholds, the Upper Chamber, and he had beaten them to their knees'.[34] It was the strength of Oxford's position rather than divisions within the opposition that made any of their policies seem ineffective.[35]

The events of 1712 demonstrated the inadequacy of Eugene's assessment of the strength of Oxford's ministry. In January Robert Walpole was expelled from the Commons and sent to the Tower on charges of corruption and in the same month the Duke of Somerset was dismissed as Master of the Horse. In February the Barrier Treaty of 1709 was condemned and those who had negotiated and signed it were declared enemies to the Queen. At the same time the Whigs achieved their only success in the Lords during this session. The Utrecht peace negotiations had opened on 18 January 1712 and the terms presented by the French caused an outcry. In the Lords Sunderland, Halifax, Cowper, Orford and Godolphin were named on a committee to address the Queen concerning the French proposals. The address condemned the French suggestion that the Queen's title should be acknowledged only when the peace was signed. Anne was assured 'that this House will stand by and assist your Majesty with our lives and fortunes in carrying on this war in conjunction with your allies, till a safe and honourable peace can be obtained for your Majesty and your allies'. The Queen gave her thanks for the address.[36]

Oxford's authority in Parliament clearly shows in his resolve and ability to push through the peace policy. He was insistent that Britain would not engage in the 1712 campaign in Flanders and it was Oxford who was primarily responsible for the infamous 'restraining orders'. In May 1712 St. John directed the Duke of Ormonde, the new British commander, not to engage in any offensive action, a policy which enabled the French to defeat the allies without British involvement. Britain's desertion of the allies was made even clearer at Utrecht when John Robinson, Bishop of Bristol, informed

the allied delegates that the Queen now felt at liberty to conclude a separate peace. Both the allies and the Whigs were outraged at this betrayal of the allies and the latter attacked the ministry over the 'restraining orders', but suffered heavy defeats in both Houses of Parliament. On 6 June 1712 the secret preliminary articles were revealed to Parliament and debated the following day. The Whigs particularly disliked the proposal, made necessary by recent deaths in the French royal family which brought Philip V close to the succession to the French throne, that Philip should renounce his claim to France and only rule in Spain. Twenty-four Whig peers protested against this suggestion, but the House decided by 90 votes to 54 to expunge the protest from the Journal of the House. Parliament was adjourned on 21 June 1712 and Oxford was so powerful and the Whigs were so desperate that they were encouraging the allies to invade England. Neither the Elector of Hanover nor the Dutch would countenance such a proposal with the Oxford ministry so obviously in a dominating political position.[37]

The apparent futility of the Whig opposition may help to explain Sunderland's absence from the House of Lords from the end of March 1712 to the adjournment of Parliament in June.[38] There is no direct evidence to account for Sunderland's failure to attend the House, but interestingly enough a year previously it had been observed: 'I hope Lord Sunderland is not so much out of order as some of my letters make him. If so he has layed the politics too much to heart'.[39] It is also clear that Sunderland was untypically pessimistic about the opposition's prospects in 1712. He told Nottingham:

> As to the present posture of our affairs they seem to be such that, the quieter we are at present the better. For these people have by corruption, and one way or other, got such a majority in both Houses that, till the nation open their eyes which will never be till the peace is actually made and proclaimed, and then they will soon see the villainy and ruin of it though they are at present intoxicated with the expectation of it. Till that is it seems

> to be running our heads against a wall to stir any thing. What those that wish well to their country have to do is to be upon the watch for any favourable accident that may happen, either by the death of the King of France, the Pretender etc., or by some division among what is called the Tory party, which may separate them from the ministry.[40]

By November, however, Sunderland was becoming more positive and hopeful as he again informed Nottingham:

> if we are informed right from all parts in the country, there begins to be a great alteration in the minds of the people and their eyes begin to open... The Parliament is now put off to the 13th of January, and by what we hear is not likely to sit as soon even as that. However, it were very much to be wished that our friends would come to town generally sooner than they seem inclined to do, and in particular your Lordship would do so. For as the ministry keep off the Parliament so long in order to prepare things the better, that whatever they have a mind to impose will be swallowed, so those that wish well to their country should take the like pains before that time to open people's eyes, and to show them the snares that are laid for them.[41]

If Sunderland had been ill, the most likely explanation for such a long absence from Parliament, it may be that the ostensible futility of the political situation in 1712 triggered off or at least contributed to his illness. Sunderland's sanguine temperament was, however, bound to re-assert itself. Even if he had been present in the Lords at this time the ministry's dominance was such that he would not have been able to do much to improve the fortunes of the Junto.

Sunderland's disenchantment was also shared by Marlborough, who was so dissatisfied with the present state of affairs that he decided that it would be best for him to go into exile. In normal circumstances Sunderland would not have approved such a step, but it was probably his sense of frustration combined with the hope that Marlborough would be able to topple the ministry by invading England

which induced him to endorse his father-in-law's decision. In January 1712 the Duke had been censured by the Commons upon receiving the report of the Commissioners of Public Accounts. The House had voted that 'the taking of several sums of money annually by the Duke of Marlborough from the contractor for foraging the bread and food wagons in the Low Countries was unwarrantable and illegal'. Marlborough was not impeached, but he was still apprehensive that further charges would be brought against him if he remained a potential rallying point for the opposition within Britain. He made his decision to go abroad following the death of Godolphin on 15 August 1712; it was basically for political reasons. Marlborough hoped he might eventually lead an allied invasion of England which would thwart Oxford's peace policy and secure the Protestant Succession. Nottingham was amazed at this decision and pleaded with Sunderland to try to persuade Marlborough to remain in England. In reply, Sunderland admitted that to begin with he too had been surprised,

> but upon talking with my Lord Duke upon it, I must own, he gave me such reasons for it that I could not answer. First in relation to himself, he said that if one did put one self in his place one might easily imagine the uneasiness of being under perpetual persecution, both in Parliament and out of it, that he has a mind to make his court, or to save himself from persecution. That as to the public, he really thinks it will be for the service of that for him to be out of the way for sometime. For as one of the first motives that induced the present ministers to begin their villainies to England was with a design to get rid of him, so when he is out of the way they can't say, that he is heading any faction against the Queen, nor have any ground to frighten either her or others with telling them, that he must come into play again if the public measures are altered.[42]

For political support at home during his absence Marlborough depended upon Cadogan, James Craggs senior, and Sunderland, all of whom corresponded with him while he was in exile.[43]

The bleak and discouraging political prospects in England may help to explain why, from the end of 1712 onwards, Sunderland and the Junto increasingly turned their attention towards the Hanoverian Succession. Under the terms of the Act of Settlement of 1701 the Electress Sophia and her heirs had been designated next in line to the Crown of Great Britain in the event of William III and Anne dying without issue. By 1712 there was little doubt that the Queen would not produce an heir of her own body and, though the Elector of Hanover viewed the prospect of ascending the throne of Britain with a keen sense of anticipation, he was determined not to do anything that might prejudice the interest of his House and he especially sought to avoid any policy which might jeopardise the succession by arousing the Queen's hostility. Sunderland, however, was eager to seize the opportunity to ingratiate himself with the heir to the throne by making it perfectly obvious that the Whigs were the only reliable support for the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover. The Whigs were seeking a reinsurance policy to restore them to power in the next reign. At the same time they also wanted Hanoverian assistance in their present political struggle. The hope of reviving his political fortune played a major part in restoring Sunderland's enthusiasm for the political fight and he flung himself wholeheartedly into espousing the Hanoverian cause with his usual zeal and application while importuning the Electoral Court to give additional support for the Whigs. Sunderland's enthusiastic devotion to Hanover and his pleading for help were so intense that it raised doubts at Hanover which were to hinder his progress early in the new reign.

By the beginning of 1713 Sunderland had fully recovered his optimism, energy and aggression. His ardour seems to have been too much for the more cautious Hanoverians, for on 13 January 1713 the Baron de Grote was commended upon restraining 'the excessive forwardness and vivacity of Lord Sunderland'.[44] Four days later Robethon once more advised de Grote 'it is very proper to put a stop

to the frequent visits of Lord Sunderland without disobliging him however'.[45] Both Sunderland and the Junto in general were regarded with a certain scepticism at Hanover. At the end of 1712 Junto proposals, including a scheme to establish the Electress Sophia in England, while Anne was still alive, by virtue of the Treaty of Utrecht, met an unenthusiastic response. A Hanoverian suggestion that Parliament should be pressed to secure a pension for Sophia and to ensure that the Pretender should be excluded from the succession, even if he became a Protestant was dropped apparently on the advice of the Junto. The Elector's adviser, Jean de Robethon, told de Grote that with these orders 'je me flatte que Sunderland et Halifax seront content'.[46] The Junto also persuaded Bothmer to promise pensions from Hanover in order to buy the support of impoverished Scottish peers in the House of Lords. The Elector agreed to give Lord Fitzwalter £600 and de Grote was to assure Sunderland that he would be reimbursed for the £300 he had already advanced to Fitzwalter. In March 1713 a memorial was sent from Hanover requesting the advice of Sunderland, Somers, Townshend, and Halifax about what steps the Hanoverian Court should take upon the Queen's death and what procurations, patents, or orders should be ready to be sent at the same time. The reply, drawn up by Lord Chief Justice Parker, Somers, and Cowper, was dispatched by Sunderland to Bothmer with an appeal that the Electoral Prince should be sent over to England even without an invitation from Parliament. Sunderland argued that this was 'absolument necessaire' and 'l'advis unanime de tous les amis qui m'ont charge de vous l'ecrire'.[47] The Elector, who was determined not to offend the Queen, refused to consider this suggestion.[48] Sunderland and the Whigs received more bad tidings with the conclusion of the peace negotiations.

These had begun at Utrecht in January 1712 and were finally brought to an end on 31 March 1713 with the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht by Britain, France and the Dutch Republic. During the final stages of this agreement the rivalry between Oxford and St. John had become increasingly bitter. They had strongly disagreed on how

the peace talks should be concluded while St. John's elevation to the peerage as a Viscount, instead of as an Earl, permanently soured his relations with the Prime Minister. Bolingbroke's challenge to Oxford in 1712 was an obvious failure and, though he retained considerable influence over the discussions at Utrecht, the Treaty was clearly Oxford's handiwork.[49] Under its terms Louis XIV recognized the Queen's title and the Protestant Succession, and agreed to the expulsion of the Pretender from Lorraine. In the Mediterranean Britain retained Gibraltar and Port Mahon which made her the dominant naval power in the area. Louis XIV also promised to destroy the fortifications at Dunkirk which had been a base for French privateers. Across the Atlantic Britain's possessions of St. Kitt's, Acadia, Newfoundland and Hudson's bay were recognized by France. Britain was given the Asiento monopoly of the slave trade in Spanish America for thirty years. Commercial treaties were to be negotiated with France and Spain that would give Britain exclusive trade rights.[50]

Parliament met on 7 April 1713 and in her speech from the throne the Queen announced the signing of the peace Treaty and she declared that there was perfect amity between her and the Electoral Court. This pronouncement upon Anglo-Hanoverian relations was designed by Oxford to outwit the Whigs whose increasingly close connection with the Hanoverians was probably causing the Lord Treasurer some unease. The dexterity of Oxford's move is well attested to by the Whigs themselves. Sunderland, Halifax, Townshend, Somers, Orford, Cowper, and Parker deliberated for two days on the best response they could make to Oxford's move. All they could come up with was to exploit the situation created by the announcement by having the Electoral Prince come over to England. At the beginning of August 1713 Sunderland even went so far as to suggest that the Elector should visit England, but, if not, certainly the Electoral Prince should be sent over. Whig unease is evident in Sunderland's letter. He observed:

> but if he [the Elector] will neither come himself nor send the Electoral Prince I assure you that all our friends of all ranks will consider themselves as abandoned. Perhaps this will not be relished at Hanover, but I would not be a faithful servant to the Elector and the Protestant Succession if I did not acquaint you with the just state of the affair.[51]

The idea of seeking a parliamentary invitation to the Electoral Prince to enter the kingdom and the request of a pension was thought to be unwise. L'Hermitage, the Dutch resident in England, advised Hanover, 'et de plus Md. Sunderland m'avoué de bonne foi, que cela pouvoit donner prise à My L. Oxford de faire rejetter cette proposition parce que les deux partis en differentes occasions en avoient declinés, et que comme il pouvoit venir selon, il étoit mieux laiser la chose sans la tenter'.[52] Once again the Elector was unwilling to gratify Whig demands, but Sunderland and his associates must have been encouraged by the divisions which appeared in the ministry once the peace was settled.[53]

The short parliamentary session of 1713 provided the background to the growing tensions and animosities within the Tory Party. Oxford and Bolingbroke were openly at odds, Dartmouth and Bolingbroke were hardly on speaking terms, and Anglesey was increasingly estranged from the government.[54] These rivalries produced a resolute and relentless Junto onslaught on the ministry. The initiative lay with the Whigs who criticised the peace, exploited Scottish hostility to the union and harried the ministers over the Pretender's residing in Lorraine. Oxford was facing another serious challenge for the leadership from Bolingbroke and it appears that the Junto tried to intimidate Oxford in Parliament to try to force him into an agreement with them. Sunderland played a prominent part in the Whig attack in the Lords, skirmishing with both Oxford and Bolingbroke. He acted as the link with the Scots in formulating the attempt to dissolve the union and the opposition to the Malt Tax. Sunderland's ruthless assiduity is clearly visible throughout the session and it culminated

with his meeting with Oxford in July 1713 in an attempt to extract concessions from the Lord Treasurer.

The news of the signing of the Treaty of Utrecht was warmly received in the House of Commons where an address of thanks was immediately voted to the Queen for her speech. The House of Lords responded differently; Sunderland, Halifax, Wharton, Townshend, Nottingham and Guernsey opposed an address of thanks arguing that the articles of the treaty should have been presented to the House first. Halifax wondered how the Lords could be expected to approve something of which they were completely ignorant. Oxford replied that the thanks of the House were merely for the success of the Queen's endeavours and a copy of the articles of peace was available to anyone who desired to see it. The address was carried by 75 votes to 43.[55] During the debate Peterborough, in an obvious reference to Marlborough, alleged quite accurately that there had been attempts to make a Captain-General for life. Sunderland, though aware that Peterborough's claim was true, felt compelled to defend his father-in-law and 'took it up saying it was a thing of great consequence if true, therefore he [Peterborough] would do well to prove it'.[56] Peterborough, unable to substantiate his charge, made no answer. Sunderland was also involved in 'repartees' with Bolingbroke. Whilst making his first speech in the Lords the Secretary of State condemned the factious opposition to the Utrecht settlement, to which Sunderland replied 'there might be faction in a ministry with as much more danger as they had power in their hands'.[57]

Undeterred by the setback over the address to the Queen the Whigs continued their offensive and were now ready to exploit Scottish disenchantment with the Union which they had helped to fuel. The Linen duty, the refusal to allow the Duke of Hamilton to sit in the Lords as Duke of Brandon, and the increased Salt Tax of 1712 had all served to increase Scottish disillusion. The breaking point came in May 1713 when extremist Tory pressure in the Commons forced the ministry to introduce a bill to extend the Malt Tax to Scotland in contravention of the Treaty of Union. The Earl of Findlater sought leave to bring

in a bill to dissolve the union, though guaranteeing the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover. Mar, Islay, Argyll, Loudon, and Balmerino spoke to the same effect while Sunderland maintained 'that though he had a hand in making the Union yet if it had not that good effect which was expected from it he was likewise for dissolving it'.[58] Nottingham, Halifax, and Townshend were reluctant to approve this motion unless effectual guarantees were provided for the succession. Sunderland, and perhaps Wharton as well, was unhappy at this temporizing of his colleagues and it seems it was only Argyll's aggressive speech which persuaded many Whigs to support Findlater's motion. With Sunderland and Clarendon acting as tellers the proposal was defeated, after the inclusion of proxies, by 71 votes to 67.[59] Whig irresolution, however, was primarily responsible for the opposition failure. Two Whig Bishops, each carrying two proxies, left the chamber thus depriving the Whigs and the Scots of six votes. No attempt was made to introduce a similar motion in the Commons for the Whigs were too outnumbered for any hope of success.[60] The Scots and the Whigs now turned their attention to opposing the Malt Tax.

The Whigs held a meeting to discuss how far the Malt Tax constituted a breach of the union and, afterwards, Sunderland visited Balmerino promising support if the Scots would propose delaying the commitment of the bill until, in a debate on the state of the nation, the articles of the union relating to the tax could be considered. Sunderland also requested Balmerino to oppose the imposition of the bill on England as well as Scotland. The Scots accepted the Whig offer for, in a very full committee of the whole House on 8 June 1713, the Scots, Whigs, and Nottingham declared that the Malt Tax could not be applied to Scotland without a breach of the union. In an attempt to conciliate the Scots Oxford answered that though the tax might be put upon malt it could be remitted by the Crown later and not levied. Sunderland answered that 'he wondered such expressions as tended to establish a despotic dispensing power should come from that noble Lord'.[61] Oxford retorted 'that his family had never been for promoting

and advising arbitrary measures as others had done'.[62] Taking this as a reflection upon his father Sunderland vindicated him and added 'that the other Lord's family was hardly known in those days'.[63] The ministry, however, carried the division by 64 votes to 54; proxies were not called for as they were known to be equal. The Malt bill was reported from the committee by Lord Delawarr and it was resolved that it should pass. A protest had been discussed beforehand by Balmerino, Sunderland, Halifax and Nottingham, and most of the Scots nobility along with Sunderland, Scarborough, Somerset, and Lonsdale, representing the Whigs entered a protest into the Journal that the Malt bill was a violation of the union.[64]

The outstanding opposition success of the session was the defeat of the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty, though this victory was primarily due to Tory defections in the House of Commons. There was vigorous opposition to the treaty from British commercial and trading interests who conducted an extensive campaign in the form of petitions and deputations to Parliament. The Whigs were quick to see the possibilities offered by this opposition and they adopted the cause of the merchants and manufacturers. Somers, Halifax, Cowper, and Nottingham led the attack in the Lords, but it was in the Commons that the decisive struggle took place. Bolingbroke was determined that the treaty should pass and, despite increasing opposition from Tory M.P.'s, he persisted in trying to force it through the House. On its second reading the bill carried by only 202 votes to 135; the House was barely half full and there were clearly many abstentions. The bill was defeated in a division on the 8th and 9th articles of the treaty by 194 votes to 185. It had been opposed by the leading Hanoverian Tory, Sir Thomas Hanmer, and his decision greatly influenced Tory M.P.'s. The rejection of the Commercial Treaty was a severe setback for the ministry.[65]

The Whigs followed up this success on 30 June 1713 when Wharton moved an address to the Queen that she would use her pressing instances with the Duke of Lorraine and other friendly states not to receive or allow the Pretender to remain within their dominions.

Sunderland seconded Wharton and Oxford had little choice but to declare the ministry's willingness to support the motion. Sunderland was named in the committee which drew up the address. In reply the Queen promised to renew her efforts with the Duke of Lorraine, but she also observed that if there were less dissension at home that would be the best way to secure the succession. Neither Oxford nor Bolingbroke was present in the Lords when the Queen's answer was delivered and Buckingham complained that he had not heard of any attempts being made to remove the Pretender from Lorraine. Sunderland, with the support of Nottingham, carried a motion to deliver a second address to Anne expressing surprise that her endeavours had not had their full effect, while promising the full support of the House for her efforts to comply with their request. The Lord Steward reported that the Queen had received this second address graciously, though Oxford and Bolingbroke were to ignore the issue of the Pretender's residence in Lorraine until the end of the year.[66] Parliament was dissolved in July 1713 and a general election was called.

Sunderland could feel pleased with the opposition's conduct during this short parliamentary session. He told Bothmer, 'we exert ourselves more this session, and with greater success, than we had reason to expect'.[67] The pressure in Parliament at the same time as Bolingbroke's most serious challenge for the leadership of the Tory party explain Oxford's willingness to talk with the Whigs. In July he met with Sunderland, Somers, Halifax, Cowper, and Orford.[68] Nothing came out of this meeting, probably because in August Oxford had re-organized the ministry and strengthened his own position, while Bolingbroke's authority was diminished. As a consequence Oxford needed to pay less attention to any Whig proposals.[69]

The general election of 1713 was fought out in August and September. The Whigs hoped to widen the divisions amongst the Tories by using the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty as an election issue. The Tories on the other hand had the full backing of the Court and

the Clergy and were able to utilise the enthusiasm with which the Treaty of Utrecht had been received. The Tories were outstandingly successful in Cornwall, Staffordshire, and London. The Whigs did badly in boroughs, where in previous elections they had held their own. In Scotland the Court carried the election of the sixteen Scottish representative peers with ease, but most of the Scottish M.P.'s returned to Westminister belonged to the ranks of the opposition.[70] There is little evidence of Sunderland's activity in these proceedings though in all likelihood he would have campaigned with his usual vigour. Sunderland did help Nottingham to get his son elected in Rutland by getting the Duke of Rutland's support for Lord Finch.[71] As usual Sunderland was optimistic about the outcome of the election as he told Nottingham:

> upon the whole there are a great many alterations for the better which one may hope, with the misled ones who will come to their senses at last, will yet save this nation for nothing but the extravagant majority the Court had most part of last Parliament can possibly support such an administration. A great deal will turn upon the part Lord Anglesey and Sir Thomas Hanmer will act. I don't much doubt the first from his good sense after what passed at the end of last session. For the latter, I have heard so many different accounts of his last journey to London that I don't know what to judge of him. I hope your Lordship does correspond with Lord Anglesey, in the present interval of Parliament, because by it you will know how far you may depend upon him, and by it will contribute very much towards fixing him.[72]

The Tories, however, achieved another outstanding electoral success outnumbering the Whigs by approximately 363 seats to 150.[73]

Sunderland was not greatly dismayed at the outcome of the election for he was now convinced that the fortunes of the Whigs would improve with the accession to the throne of the Elector of Hanover which, given the Queen's poor health, could not be long delayed.[74]

The new Hanoverian envoy in London, Baron de Schütz, informed Robethon that Sunderland 'does not despair of the affairs of this country as many others do'.[75] Sunderland continued to press Hanover for help. He once more sought money to buy the favour of poor Scottish peers in the Lords and to assist the Whigs to carry the elections to the Common Council of London. Hanover, unfortunately, was still reluctant to grant Sunderland's requests and must have found his efforts considerably irritating.[76]

Though Bolingbroke's bid for the Tory leadership in the summer of 1713 had failed he was still intent on replacing Oxford and he was ready to capitalize on the divisions within the Tory party. Bolingbroke aimed at widening his following in the House of Commons while ingratiating himself at Court with Lady Masham. This strategy was assisted by the apparent lethargy of the Lord Treasurer who was absent from Windsor for regular periods. The Queen's illness at Christmas emphasised the immediacy of the question of the succession, which the Tories had great difficulty coming to terms with. The Treaty of Utrecht had permanently soured the British government's relations with Hanover; the willingness of leading ministers to approach the Pretender merely exacerbated the situation. While Thomas Harley was sent to Hanover to reassure the Elector of the Queen's resolution to stand by the Act of Settlement, both Oxford and Bolingbroke, independent of each other, were in contact with the Pretender. By March 1714 both of them had realised that the refusal of James to renounce the Catholic faith had put an end to any possibility of a Stuart restoration. Oxford and Bolingbroke tried to curry favour at Hanover, but the Secretary of State was more concerned with uniting the Tories around himself and to entrench the Tory party so firmly in both Church and State that the new monarch would be forced to come to terms with him and the Tories. Meanwhile the struggle for power involving Oxford and Bolingbroke continued unabated.[77]

Anne's declining physical condition and the omission of any reference to Hanover in her speech from the throne at the opening of the session on 2 March 1714 increased the misgivings at Hanover about the prospects of securing the British Crown. The Elector and Bothmer agreed that something would have to be done. Marlborough was given full powers to defend the Hanoverian claim should the Pretender invade England on the Queen's death. In response to appeals from the Whigs and Hanoverian Tories the Elector approved the question which Schütz put to Lord Chancellor Harcourt in April 1714, on behalf of the dowager Electress Sophia, as to whether the Electoral Prince could be summoned to sit in the House of Lords as Duke of Cambridge. The Privy Council felt obliged to issue the writ of summons, but to show the Queen's displeasure Schütz was forbidden the Court and his recall was pressed at Hanover. Wisely George decided not to send his son to England and he publicly repudiated Schütz.[78] The opposition was dejected at the turn of events and Kreyenberg told Bothmer that Sunderland, Townshend, Halifax, and the Hanoverian Tories 'all agree that if the Elector does not choose to send the Electoral Prince it will be proper to declare so in order that the Elector may take advantage of it in this Court, and that our friends may consider of something else and the conduct they are to follow to keep up the spirits of their party'.[79]

The anxiety of the opposition over the intentions of the administration produced another determined and vigorous attack on the ministry. It centred upon the government's failure to do anything about the Pretender who was still residing in Lorraine and the failure to succour Britain's Catalan allies who were resisting Bourbon aggression. Sunderland led the Whig assault on both these points and he aimed at causing maximum embarrassment for the ministers for having neglected the Lords' address of 1713 to have the Pretender removed from Lorraine.

On 17 March 1714 Sunderland, Wharton, Cowper, Nottingham, and Halifax pointed out the danger to the Protestant Succession if the

Pretender was suffered to remain in Lorraine. It was agreed to address the Queen on four points: for an account of what had been done to force the Pretender out of the Duchy and the response the Duke had made; for a report of the peace negotiations with an account of what measures were being taken to render the peace universal; what instances had been made to restore the Catalans to their ancient privileges; and a statement of all money granted by Parliament since 1710 for the war in Spain and Portugal. At the beginning of April the papers relating to the Catalans were read and Sunderland, Wharton, Halifax, and Cowper represented that 'the Crown of Great Britain having drawn in the Catalans to declare for the House of Austria and engaged to support them these engagements ought to be made good'.[80] Despite Bolingbroke's efforts, it was resolved to address the Queen to continue her endeavours to ensure 'that the Catalans may have the full enjoyment of their just and ancient privileges continued to them'.[81] Sunderland, Wharton, Townshend, Halifax and Cowper were included in the committee to draw up the address.[82] The opposition now turned to the Pretender.

On 5 April 1714 Sunderland remarked:

> that notwithstanding the earnest application last session by both Houses to her Majesty, to use her utmost endeavours to get him [the Pretender] removed from thence [Lorraine], yet he was assured by Baron Fostner, the Duke of Lorraine's minister, some weeks before his departure, that to his certain knowledge no instances had yet been made to his master for that purpose.[83]

Bolingbroke replied that he had made such representations in the Queen's name to which Halifax answered that Baron Fostner had said the same to him only four days ago so that Bolingbroke must be mistaken at least in point of chronology. It was decided to address the Queen to insist upon the removal of the Pretender from Lorraine in the event he should attempt to land in Britain and to get the Emperor and other Princes to guarantee the Protestant Succession. Wharton then proposed 'whether the Protestant Succession was in danger

under the present administration?' The debate lasted seven hours and the government only managed to defeat the motion by 76 votes to 64. Significantly a group of prominent Hanoverian Tories including Anglesey, Carteret, Orrery, Ashburnham, Abingdon and the Archbishop of York voted with the Whigs. A similar motion was defeated in the House of Commons.[84]

The Duke of Bolton reported the address from the Lords' committee and upon consideration several amendments were made. The House affirmed by 55 votes to 43 that it should be left to the discretion of the Queen about the timing of a proclamation against the Pretender. Lord Trevor proposed a further alteration, arguing that to offer a reward for apprehending a criminal who had not yet committed the crime could not be authorised in law. Sunderland answered that since it was a point of law whether it was permissible to offer a reward for the arrest of a person dead or alive most of the Lords were not sufficiently competent to decide this matter. It was decided to change the promise of a reward for detaining the Pretender dead or alive to 'apprehend and bring the Pretender to justice'. The rest of the address remained unchanged. In answer to the address the Queen asserted that at present she saw no reason for issuing a proclamation against the Pretender and that the Hanoverian Succession would be strengthened if an end were put to the fears and jealousies which had been promoted. An address of thanks was ordered to be drawn up. When the report of this address was being considered Sunderland moved to have the words 'not without reason' or 'justly' added while the Duke of Leeds and Lord North and Grey suggested including the word 'industriously'. The Whigs strenuously opposed this Tory proposal, but it was agreed by 63 votes to 61 to add 'industriously'. The address affirmed the support of the House for the Queen 'in all proper measures for supporting her Majesty's government and for strengthening the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover as the only effectual means to put an end to those fears and jealousies which have been so universally and industriously spread throughout this kingdom'.[85]

With the consideration of the peace treaties Sunderland was nominated to the committee to draw up an address of thanks to Anne for the peace which delivered the country 'from the heavy burden of a consuming land war unequally carried on and become at last impracticable'. The Queen was also advised to use her efforts to complete the settlement of Europe on the basis of the principles contained in her speech from the throne. The address was approved by the Commons and delivered as a joint recommendation from both Houses of Parliament.[86]

The storm in Parliament over the succession, the request for the writ for the Electoral Prince as Duke of Cambridge, and the Commons' criticism of the peace with Spain convinced Bolingbroke that firmness was absolutely necessary. The reconciliation established with Oxford at the beginning of the session was abandoned. Bolingbroke had already begun to root out prominent Whigs in the army and the success of this policy encouraged him to go even further. He saw a bill to close Dissenting schools and academies as a means to unite the Tories. The Schism bill was piloted through the Commons by his subordinate Sir William Wyndham and it passed the House with large majorities.[87] In the Lords Hanoverian Tories such as Anglesey and Abingdon rallied to support the Schism bill, but Nottingham and the Whigs were implacably opposed to its being approved. In a committee of the whole House on 9 June 1714 Halifax urged that the Dissenters should be allowed to educate their children in their own schools. His argument was endorsed by Sunderland and Cowper among others, but Bolingbroke, Anglesey, Abingdon, Buckingham and Harcourt spoke against Halifax's proposal which was defeated by 62 votes to 48.[88] Two days later the opposition's attempt to prevent the extension of the bill to Ireland was narrowly beaten by 75 votes to 74 with Sunderland and Anglesey acting as tellers.[89] There was a protest by thirty-three peers, including Sunderland, Somers, Halifax, Cowper, Townshend, Wharton, Nottingham, and Orford.[90] Ironically enough the bill came into effect on 1 August 1714, the very day the Queen died.

Bolingbroke had gratified both the Queen and the Tories with the Schism bill yet he was still not in complete control of either the ministry or Parliament, while Oxford was fighting an effective rearguard action using his influence with the Queen. Bolingbroke was also under fire in the Lords owing to the more dubious aspects of the Spanish Commercial Treaty. The treaty was a particularly unsatisfactory arrangement which neglected British mercantile interests and discontent with amendments made at Madrid led to an inquiry in the House of Lords.[91] On 2 July 1714 the Queen was addressed to lay 'an account before this House in what method the third, fifth and eighth articles, which are ratified and substituted in the room of the third, fifth, and eighth articles of the Treaty of Commerce concluded at Utrecht were proposed, treated and agreed in order to the ratification of them'. The Queen merely replied that the amendments made at Madrid were considered and that she 'judging that these differences were not so material as to deserve that the Treaty of Commerce should be any longer kept open, ordered a warrant, in the usual form, to be prepared for the immediate ratification of the treaty'.[92] This answer was clearly designed to shield Bolingbroke so Sunderland complained that 'if the House was to receive such answers from the Crown they were of no use and might walk out and never come in again'.[93] The Lords appointed a committee, which included Sunderland, to address the Queen to have the treaty altered to 'render the said trade practicable and beneficial to your Majesty's people'.[94] Before the inquiry could make any real progress the Queen, at Bolingbroke's instigation, prorogued Parliament on 9 July 1714.[95]

With the end of the parliamentary session the struggle between Oxford and Bolingbroke entered its final phase. Bolingbroke continued pressing the Queen to dismiss the Lord Treasurer and she finally gave way on 27 July 1714. At the same time it was plain that Anne's health was declining rapidly and it was essential to appoint a new Lord Treasurer to prevent Oxford returning to office under the terms of the Regency Act. At a committee of the Council on 30 July

Harcourt proposed that Shrewsbury, who was then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, should succeed Oxford. The Queen agreed and he was appointed later the same day. Sunderland, expectant, impatient, and anxious, told Nottingham of this development. He continued:

> The Queen was very much out of order all day yesterday and this morning she was seized with a fit of apoplexy which continued upon her above two hours. She then so far recovered as just to know people and to speak with difficulty. They have since applied all the remedies, even the most violent, but without any effect, so that all the physicians agree she will die tonight or tomorrow. They have declared this to the Council which sat all day at Kensington. I am now at Monsieur Bothmer's who has desired me to send this express to you, to beg you without loss of time to come up immediately. We have sent to our other friends that are within reach. It is of the last consequence and therefore for God's sake don't delay a moment.[97]

On 31 July the Queen's worsening condition led to the summoning of the Privy Council where 'there was a very great appearance of Whig Lords particularly Lord Somers, Cowper, Sunderland, Somerset, Argyll, [and] Sir Richard Onslow'.[98] Hanover was kept informed of proceedings and on Sunday 1 August 1714 the last Stuart ruler of Britain died; the future now lay with George, Elector of Hanover.

The last four years of Queen Anne's reign had been a difficult time for Sunderland. Up to 1710 his career had been characterised by almost continual success but from then until the Queen's death provided a marked contrast and was the most severe political crisis he had yet faced. Sunderland, however, came through this period with characteristic zest and vigour even though on occasion the

despondency and gloom of apparently fruitless opposition cast shadows even upon him. Sunderland's strength of purpose, his ruthless determination, his devotion to the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover, his readiness to shoulder the responsibility for encouraging others when all seemed in vain and to pursue any policy to attack the government was a powerful example. Sunderland had made an outstanding contribution to the Whig cause when the tide was with them, but when it turned his efforts were little short of magnificent. He saw clearly that his future, together with that of the Whig party, lay with the accession of the Elector of Hanover. He was determined that the Whigs should demonstrate their loyalty and commitment to Hanover so that the new King would have no doubt that they were his only true and reliable friends in Britain. Sunderland had pointed the way to salvation, but the very depth of his zeal and enthusiasm was to prove his undoing for it unnerved the more moderate souls at Hanover, in the same way his Whig principles had alienated the Queen, and instead of reaping the reward of his endeavours he encountered doubts and suspicions about his character. That he was able to overcome these reservations relatively quickly was in part due to his experience during Anne's last years, for Sunderland himself, as a consequence of the setbacks and disappointments, emerged as a much more subtle and calculating politician. It was almost as if he had been studying the schemes and intrigues of Oxford for in the new reign he was to show that he too could apply the principles of Court management which had been of immense value to his great rival.

CHAPTER SEVEN: THE SERVICING OF AMBITION AUGUST 1714 TO APRIL 1717

'inclination for power is natural to all who think they have it within their reach'

The accession of George I in August 1714 had been eagerly awaited by the Whigs. They anticipated full royal support in proscribing their Tory opponents and establishing their own political ascendancy. Sunderland was confident that his probity, ardour, and militancy in promoting the Hanoverian Succession would be amply rewarded. His omission from the Regency Council and his appointment as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland were deep and bitter shocks. Sunderland had little enthusiasm for the Viceroyalty of Ireland and any nominal interest in that office disappeared as the difficulties, limitations, and frustrations that accompanied it became apparent. Sunderland's failure to obtain the post he coveted, the Northern Secretaryship, derived from the resentment of the King and his Hanoverian entourage at Sunderland's constant demands for assistance during Anne's last years together with their apprehensions of his partisan political opinions. It is clear, however, that there was no attempt to deny Sunderland either favour or access to the King and as the reign progressed Sunderland was able to dispel the King's fears and to increase his own authority and influence. By 1716 Sunderland, with his forthright espousal of Hanoverian foreign policy, was one of the most powerful and important of the King's English ministers. His standing was such that with the consent of the King and the assistance of the Secretary of State for the South, James Stanhope, he was able to attempt to install himself as the King's chief minister. Sunderland did not intend a thorough reorganization of the administration for he merely wanted to diminish the power and

significance of Charles, Viscount Townshend and John, Duke of Argyll who appeared an increasingly dangerous threat to his own position. Sunderland carried out his plan with subtlety, cunning, and dissimulation leaving little doubt that he had recently matured into a skilled and experienced politician yet he also made a disastrous miscalculation. He revealed the accusations he had made at Hanover that Townshend and Robert Walpole were setting up the Prince of Wales against the King. This disclosure so incensed Townshend and Walpole that they were unwilling to acquiesce in Sunderland's supremacy. Consequently, Sunderland, instead of controlling the Whig party, had split it apart.

I THE REGENCY COUNCIL AND THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AUGUST TO SEPTEMBER 1714

'A great disappointment to Lord Sunderland'

Sunderland was among the members of the Privy Council who assembled at Kensington Palace following the Queen's death on 1 August 1714. Under the terms of the Regency Act of 1706 a Council was to govern the country until the new ruler could arrive from Germany. The list of Regents nominated by George was announced 'and my Lord Sunderland looked very pale when the names were read'[1] for he, Marlborough, Wharton and Somers were left out of the interim government. Five of the members were included by virtue of offices held in the Queen's last ministry and among the rest were: Abingdon, Anglesey, Argyll, Bolton, Carlisle, Cowper, Devonshire, Halifax, Kent, Montrose, Roxburghe, Nottingham, Orford, Pembroke, Scarborough, Somerset, and Townshend. The oath of allegiance was taken and George was proclaimed King at St. James's; on 5 August 1714 the Regents opened the new session of Parliament. After the Lord Justices' speech had been read to both Houses, Sunderland was chosen as a member of the Lords' committee to draw up an address of thanks which he reported to the House. It congratulated the King

upon his succession and urged his presence in the kingdom as soon as possible. A Civil List of £700,000 a year was then voted along with the arrears owing to Hanoverian troops who had served in the recent war. It was also agreed to renew the reward of £100,000 for the apprehension of the Pretender should he attempt to land in Britain.[2]

George I left Hanover at the end of August 1714 and after journeying via The Hague he arrived at Greenwich on 8 September. He was received by the Archbishop of Canterbury at the head of the Regency Council and then proceeded to St. James's Palace. The first priority facing the King was to establish a new administration. Though the influence of George's Hanoverian counsellors, Baron Bothmer and Jean de Robethon in particular, in deciding the composition of the new ministry has recently been questioned[3] there can be little doubt as to the importance of their views. Bothmer had been associated with the Whigs for a considerable time and he used his authority on their behalf. It seems he was under the impression that Sunderland did not wish to be Secretary of State and was very surprised when Cadogan informed him of Sunderland's aspirations. To give Sunderland the Northern Secretaryship would have meant disobliging Lord Townshend who 'as negotiator of the Anglo-Dutch treaty of Barrier and Succession of 1709 had rendered services which George held to be of the greatest importance for the cause of Hanover'.[4] Bothmer hoped that Sunderland would be satisfied with the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland, but this office was clearly a 'great disappointment to Lord Sunderland'.[5] Among the other appointments Cowper became Lord Chancellor, Halifax First Lord of the Treasury, Nottingham President of the Council, Marlborough Captain-General and Master General of the Ordnance, Stanhope Secretary of State for the South, Orford First Lord of the Admiralty, Somers was given Cabinet rank without portfolio, Walpole was made Paymaster of the Forces, Pulteney Secretary-at-War, Shrewsbury Lord Chamberlain, Montrose Secretary of State for Scotland and Roxburghe Scottish Lord Privy Seal.[6]

It is not difficult to understand why Sunderland was excluded from the Regency Council and passed over for the Secretary of State's office. Hanover had always been rather embarrassed by his zeal on their behalf and his regular demands, during the close of Anne's life for money and for a member of the Electoral family to be sent to reside in Britain, had been regarded with suspicion by the Electoral Court which wished to avoid unnecessarily antagonizing the Queen. Sunderland was probably regarded as being too ambitious and too staunch in his Whig ideals which was probably misinterpreted as Republicanism. In 1688, prior to his arrival in England, William III had felt that Republicanism was a strong force[7] and furthermore 'the radical element in Whig ideology had been much publicized on the continent'.[8] On at least one occasion Sunderland himself had to reassure Hanover that the Whigs did not intend to establish a Republic in England. Sunderland also had an unwarranted but influential reputation on the continent for extreme Whiggery and Count Wratislaw's anxieties concerning Sunderland's supposed Republicanism could only have served to increase the doubts at Hanover.[9]

Though the King and his Hanoverian ministers were wary of Sunderland, it is evident that there was no deliberate attempt to keep him away from George I or force him into the political wilderness. He had access to the King and the monarch was ready to bestow favours upon him. Sunderland was also too prominent a politician even as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and was too loyal to the Hanoverian cause, for the King to be able, or even to want, to render him politically ineffective. Bothmer did consult Sunderland about ministerial appointments and his views on Shrewsbury were not without weight for the Duke was deprived of the offices of Lord Treasurer and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Sunderland was regarded as one of the leading members of the Cabinet together with Cowper, Marlborough, Halifax, Nottingham, Townshend, Somers and Stanhope. When loyal addresses were delivered to the King in September 1714 that of the borough of Bewdley was presented by Lord Herbert of Cherbury who was introduced

to George by Sunderland. Sunderland was named as Carver at the King's coronation and at the actual coronation ceremony 'the Lords who bore the regalia were in turn the Earl of Salisbury with St. Edmund's staff; the Lord Viscount Longueville with the spurs; the Earl of Dorset with the sceptre and cross; the Earl of Sunderland, the Earl of Pembroke, and the Earl of Lincoln with the three swords'.[10]

II LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND SEPTEMBER 1714 TO AUGUST 1715

'Nothing else in view but to promote worthy men and do all the good he can in his administration'

Sunderland made no attempt to disguise the contempt and disdain that he felt for his new office. He never visited Ireland during his tenure as Lord Lieutenant. His intention to remain in England was obvious from the beginning, but initially he did exhibit some interest in Irish affairs. He presided over a comprehensive purge of the Irish administration, but his ignorance of Ireland and Irish politics was a major weakness. He relied heavily upon the counsel and recommendations of his Irish advisers and on most occasions he had little alternative but to endorse their proposals. The one instance when he acted on his own initiative, and against the advice of the Irish Lord Chancellor, Alan Brodrick, by seeking to persuade Sir Richard Levinge to accept a judge's post, resulted in a humiliating failure. Sunderland merely approved the suggested promotions in the Irish Church. Likewise in formulating policy his ideas were submitted for consideration in Dublin and in the face of Irish hostility and objections he was willing to give way and modify the administration's programme. Sunderland was totally unqualified to initiate or take the lead in most aspects of Irish government and he had to follow the suggestions of others. By the end of March 1715 he had had enough. He gave up transacting Irish business, claiming

that he was prevented from doing so by illness. From then until August he intervened only in matters of outstanding importance and in which he had a decisive voice.

The Lord Lieutenant was the executive of the Irish administration. He carried out the duties of a monarch, though he was usually only resident in Ireland for the parliamentary session held every two years. In his absence Lords Justices were nominated and they were responsible for the government of the kingdom. The Lord Lieutenant relied upon the assistance of the Irish Privy Council, which was perhaps the most important element in the administrative structure, and it usually included the most significant ministerial supporters. The Viceroy was served by a large number of secretaries, clerks, and messengers, the most important of whom was the Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary as he was usually known. He was nominated by the Lord Lieutenant and usually gave up the office when a new Viceroy was created. Sunderland chose Joseph Addison as his Chief Secretary and Charles Delafaye as his private secretary. They had both worked with Sunderland when he had been Secretary of State in the previous reign and they were tried and trusted associates. Above all both had extensive knowledge of Irish affairs; Addison had sat in the Irish House of Commons as M.P. for Cavan and had been Lord Wharton's secretary when he was Lord Lieutenant between 1708 and 1710.

The most important features of the Irish administration were finance, the army and the judiciary. It was the army which helped the Viceroy and the judiciary implement their decisions, though it was the financial organization which had the largest number of employees. The Court of Exchequer was the central financial body and it was composed of the upper exchequer, which received all government funds and controlled payments, and the lower exchequer which was ostensibly a debt collecting agency. In reality 93% of the revenue was collected by the Revenue Board. In general terms the administration was small, organizationally inefficient, and archaic; there was considerable bribery and corruption together with large scale absenteeism. In fact, 'the Irish administration lurched into

the eighteenth-century like a leaky brigantine, struggling to make headway and shipping water as it went along'.[11]

The Lord Lieutenant played a key role in the Irish legislative process. Under Poyning's Law legislation had to be approved by the British Privy Council before it could pass through the Irish Parliament. After being accepted the proposal would be sent back to the Irish Parliament and, having been accepted by both Houses, the finished bill would be presented to the Lord Lieutenant who would discuss it with the Irish Privy Council and then dispatch it to London. The Viceroy was also responsible for the management of the Irish Parliament. He usually relied on the party leaders in the House of Commons to carry out political supervision and they had to be cajoled into doing his bidding rather than being directed. These men had great bargaining power in any negotiation and normally they were Irish politicians, though men such as Edward Southwell and Charles Delafaye were able to play an active and effective role by virtue of their familiarity with Ireland. Knowledgeable Irishmen were essential to a new Lord Lieutenant as most English politicians, Sunderland was typical in this respect, were profoundly ignorant of Irish proceedings. Sunderland relied upon the views of Alan Brodrick, who was soon made Irish Lord Chancellor, Lord Tyrawly, the Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Ireland, William King, Archbishop of Dublin and a Lords Justice, William Conolly, Chief Commissioner of the Irish Revenues, John Forster, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, and William Whitshed, Chief Justice of the King's Bench.[12]

At the start of George's reign the Whigs in Britain commenced upon a wholesale purge of the Tories from office and Sunderland and his Irish Whig associates were eager to do the same in Ireland. Sunderland, Addision, and prominent Irishmen, probably including Brodrick and Foster, met in London in late-September and early-October 1714 in order to decide how to proceed. It was agreed to make major changes in the Irish Privy Council. To begin with Addison drew up a list of the Council as it stood at the Queen's death. Remarks were made alongside the names of the most suspect members

together with proposed additions to the Council. Addison then drew up a further paper and Sunderland marked those who were to be removed while enlarging the list of members to be added. Sunderland then presented this document to the King, who approved it, and a final statement was prepared including the alterations that had been settled and this constituted the new Privy Council. A copy of this memorandum was then sent to Dublin and the new Council was sworn in by the Lords Justices on 9 October 1714.[13]

After completing the membership of the Privy Council Sunderland and his advisers turned to the judiciary. The Lord Chancellor, Sir Constantine Phipps, was to be turned out and 'Monsieur Brodrick est propose a la consideration de Vostre Majestè pour la place de Chancelier d'Irlande, C'est un gentilhomme d'un tres grand bien, tant en Angleterre, qu'en Irlande... et qui a toujours esté un des plus zeles, pour les interets de Vostre Majesté, et de sa succession'. William Whitshed was to be made Chief Justice of the King's Bench, Joseph Dean, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and John Forster Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; 'touts trois des personnes de grand bien dans le pays, tres abiles, et tres qualifies pour ces postes'. Mr. Justice Macartney was restored to his place as a puisne judge and Jeffrey Gilbert, John Pocklington, Sir John St. Leger and Sir Richard Levinge were to be made judges, though the moderate Tory, Gilbert Dolben, was to be retained 'sans l'esperance qu'il pourra se comporter bien a l'avenir'. George Gore was to be Irish Attorney-General and Mr. Rogerston, Solicitor-General. All these proposals were drawn up in French by Sunderland and then submitted to the King for his approval.[14]

The warrants appointing Forster, Whitshed, Dean, and Brodrick passed the Privy Seal on 30 September 1714 and on 9 October Phipps was deprived of the Great Seal which was entrusted to Dean until Brodrick arrived from England five days later. All the other judicial changes went through without any difficulty, apart from the attempt to get Levinge to accept a judge's place. That he should agree to this idea was seen as being important since it would remove a

potential troublemaker from the Irish House of Commons. In November 1714 Brodrick and Whitshed told Sunderland that Levinge would not undertake a judicial appointment and urged that a place should be given to Sir Henry Luther. In response, Sunderland told the Archbishop of Dublin: 'I should have been glad that Sir Richard Levinge had accepted of being one of the judges, and will yet hope that he may possibly alter his mind, since that place will not be disposed of for some time'.[15] The Archbishop was still prepared to try to persuade Levinge to accept the position, whereas Brodrick disapproved entirely, believing Levinge should not have any employment in the administration. The Lord Chancellor repeated his views early in the new year, but Sunderland was still prepared to persevere, much to Brodrick's increasing annoyance. In February 1715 it appeared that Levinge might give way, but he stuck to his decision and Sunderland's patience was soon at an end. It was decided that Serjeant William Caulfield should have the post that had been offered to Levinge.[16]

The Irish Church was another area in which the faithful were to be rewarded. In consultation with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Tension, Sunderland put forward Timothy Goodwyn for the bishopric of Kilmore and Ardagh, Edward Synge for the bishopric of Rapho, and Dr. Nicholas Forster for the bishopric of Killaloe. The Lords Justices' approved these promotions and they were implemented between November 1714 and January 1715. The Archbishop of Dublin was another source of information on clerical matters for Sunderland and he no doubt endorsed King's opinion that it was necessary to diminish Tory influence throughout the Church hierarchy. King submitted the names of the worthy who merited a Church living and Sunderland gave his consent.[17]

Sunderland's reliance upon Irish counsel is admirably illustrated by the changes that took place among the revenue commissioners. To begin with it was Forster who instructed Sunderland about the directions which ought to be given to the commissioners concerning the

disposal of offices. The list of names which Sunderland sent to William Conolly in January 1715, with a recommendation to be employed in the revenue service, was immediately questioned by Conolly, Sir Thomas Southwell and Mr. Medlicott. Sunderland was only prepared to renew his instances on behalf of Sir John Eccles and Colonel Sandford; the other proposals were left entirely to the discretion of the Irish. Conolly then told Sunderland that Eccles was to be made Collector at Dublin Port and Sandford Collector of the Excise at Dublin and though it had not been possible to appoint another of Sunderland's nominees to a collectorship at Cork a place had been found at Athlone. The Lord Lieutenant's request that Mr. Badham should be retained as Collector at Younghall on pain of good behaviour was accepted and after examining the charges thought to be prejudicial to Mr. May, another of Sunderland's suggestions, they were found to be groundless. Sunderland approved these arrangements.[18] Similarly, with the new Sheriffs who were created in October and November 1714 the Lord Lieutenant merely observed: 'It was a great satisfaction to me to see so good a list of Sheriffs, and particularly that you had been able to fix upon a right man for Galway'.[19]

The difficulties which Sunderland's predecessor, the Duke of Shrewsbury, had faced in controlling the Irish Parliament emphasised the importance of effective parliamentary management.[20] Once again, however, Sunderland was not in a position to take the initiative. Brodrick told him that William Conolly should be put forward as the administration's candidate for the Speakership of the House of Commons. Forster supported Brodrick as he felt that the Attorney-General was not up to the duties expected of a Speaker. When Conolly agreed to serve, Sunderland remarked, 'I am very glad that upon Mr. Attorney-General's declining the office of Speaker Mr. Conolly has been persuaded to accept it, since no man will be more capable than he of going thro' it and of serving his King and Country'.[21] It was also necessary to tighten the administration's control of the House of

Lords and no doubt Oxford's peerage creations in England in 1712 served as a precedent for Sunderland and the Irish. The idea of peerage promotions had probably first been discussed by Sunderland and the Irishmen in London in 1714. Whitshed sent suggestions to Sunderland with Brodrick and Sir John Percival the two most prominent names on his list. The aim was twofold: to reward those of proven fidelity and to produce a complacent House of Lords. Sunderland approved most of Whitshed's recommendations and the Chief Justice then told Archbishop King, Forster and Dean. Sunderland then advised Brodrick that 'the King having determined to make the peers mentioned in the enclosed list Barons of Ireland, in case it be to their liking, as by what I have heard there is reason to think it is, I must desire your Lordship will please take some proper way of knowing their sentiments and what titles they would have'.[22] Sunderland also directed Whitshed to assist settling the details of the new creations. Sunderland received further nominations in January and March 1715, while Brodrick and Percival were created Lords Middleton and Percival respectively in April 1715. On 20 August 1715 Sunderland informed the Archbishop of Dublin that the King had approved the second set of peerage promotions.[23]

The changes in the Irish administration, the promotions in the Irish Church, and the measures taken to discipline the Irish Parliament would have been unthinkable if Sunderland had not been able to exploit the knowledge and experience of leading Irish Whigs. Sunderland's authority as Lord Lieutenant might have been enhanced if he had been willing to go to Ireland. It is, however, unlikely that, even with a sounder understanding of Irish affairs, he would have questioned the proposals and recommendations for promotion made in Ireland for they were unlikely to include any whose Whig credentials had not been sufficiently attested. Circumstances were different when it came to formulating policy. The Irish administration and its British superiors did not always agree over what measures should be carried out and it was here that differences arose between Sunderland and his Irish advisers. Sunderland's position was very weak and he was forced into a subordinate

role having to give way to the whims and objections emanating from Dublin. He could not tolerate such a relationship and two alternatives suggested themselves: either proceed to Ireland to try to stamp his authority on proceedings or abnegate his responsibilities as Lord Lieutenant.

On 28 December 1714 Sunderland directed Conolly, Whitshed, Brodrick and Forster to consider what heads of bills should be prepared by the Irish Privy Council. To save time and money he urged that the bill for the additional duties should be one of them and that it should have 'a retrospect and charge stock in hand for without it the duties will fall much short of what they have formerly produced and will be of little advantage'.[24] The Irishmen felt it would be unwise to include such a clause in a money bill begun by the Privy Council when a proposal of this nature should have come from the House of Commons. Sunderland told Brodrick, 'the reasons your Lordship gives against charging stock in hand appear to me very strong and I doubt but they will have the same weight with others'.[25] The sending over a bill to renew the additional duties was, however, approved to Sunderland's satisfaction, while the idea of a charge on stock was dropped.[26]

Sunderland was still concerned that the additional duties alone would be insufficient to meet the 'exigencies of the government'.[27] Conolly, in reply, argued that in a few years the duties would meet the administration's financial needs and he made it clear that the Irish Parliament would not approve any proposition for borrowing money which Sunderland had tentatively suggested. Sunderland was still not convinced, but Conolly stood firm, declaring that the duties would yield double in the second year and though some parts of the civil and military list might be postponed the prejudice would not be great until the arrears were discharged. By this time Sunderland realised it was futile to continue pressing his point. He told Conolly:

> the business of the funds must be left entirely to you and our other friends in Ireland. I shall therefore say no more of it than that any scheme of running the establishment into debt or postponing payments would be no means for the King's honour or to the satisfaction of those employed under him. But I still entertain better hopes and persuade myself that before the meeting of the Parliament our friends will have contrived the methods of raising a sufficient supply to secure us from these inconveniences and themselves from the reproach of having been wanting in any point of duty and assistance towards his Majesty.[28]

Conolly reassured Sunderland that there would be no great arrears and that the establishment was unlikely to be run into debt or that Sunderland would be inconvenienced in any way.[29] Sunderland had been forced to give way over the revenue and he also had to make concessions concerning the troops which the British government wished to subsist in Ireland.

In the early-eighteenth-century Ireland was seen as a particularly convenient location for stationing troops who could not be maintained elsewhere. 'To put it crudely, Ireland was regarded by the English administration as little more than a garrison.'[30] In January 1715 Sunderland told Brodrick, Tyrawly, and Conolly, that as all the troops who had returned from Flanders could not be maintained upon the English establishment a force, which would make the army in Ireland up to 12,000 men, was to be sent to the kingdom. Furthermore, 'that as these forces were not provided for beyond Michaelmas last they should be put upon the Irish establishment from that time, but not to be any charge to that kingdom till the time of their landing there'.[31] Dublin was willing to accept Sunderland's proposals on the understanding that infantry alone would be dispatched and that they were to remain there while the kingdom was maintaining them.[32]

Encouraged by the positive response from Ireland Sunderland then suggested that the troops should be put on the Irish establishment from

the previous Michaelmas. This notion was totally unacceptable in Ireland. Sunderland told Tyrawly that it would be dropped and that had it been left to him no such thought would have been entertained from the start. After considerable effort Sunderland prevailed with the Treasury to issue an order,

> by which those seven batallions are not to come upon the Irish establishment till the 25th March [1715], and before that time they will, or most of them, be in Ireland or far advanced on their march that way. I must desire your Lordship [Tyrawly] to inform our friends of this transaction, that they may see what endeavours are used to do them service, which was effectually done in this case, and be convined that neither the King nor anybody else would endeavour to impose upon them anything that should be unreasonable or impracticable.[33]

There was delight in Ireland at this news and a week later Sunderland advised Tyrawly that the troops were embarking for Ireland and orders were to be sent to put them on the Irish establishment from Lady Day.[34] Sunderland, however, had again been forced to yield his ground and some members of the Irish administration must have wondered how he had managed to acquire such a formidable reputation as a politician and an administrator.

The difficulties which faced Sunderland in his attempt to manage the Irish administration, and principally his subjection to opinion in Dublin, destroyed any vestigial interest he had in that kingdom. The state of politics and the pressure of business at home had been the initial excuse for his not venturing to Ireland, but, though willing to transact Irish business, the disputes over the revenue and the army led to precipitate action by Sunderland. At the beginning of April 1715 there were widespread rumours that he was unwell. On 12 April Addison assured the Archbishop of Dublin that Sunderland had merely gone into the country to recover from a feverish indisposition. Addison felt compelled to write again that Sunderland had gone to Bath and that his distemper was 'nothing but the cholick occasioned by a too frequent use of vomits to which the physician added the drinking

of small beer in too great quantities when he has found himself a little heated'.[35] Sunderland may have been unwell and, if so, it was probably caused by his dissatisfaction and irritation at being burdened with the Lord Lieutenancy, though it is more certain that his alleged illness was a facade behind which he concealed his refusal to carry out his duties as Lord Lieutenant. From now on Addison, in London, assumed responsibility for Ireland. Sunderland, however, did not abstain completely for he was prepared to intervene when he felt it was necessary.[36]

One such occasion arose when the Chief Baron of the Exchequer, Joseph Dean, died in May 1715. Lord Chancellor Cowper recommended Jeffrey Gilbert to succeed, while Lord Chief Justice Parker nominated Sir Richard Levinge. Sunderland had already been embarrassed by Levinge and was now determined that no favour should be granted to him. On 4 May Sunderland requested Stanhope to dispose of the matter quickly in order to prevent Sir Richard obtaining the post 'which certainly would be as great a blow to the King's service in Ireland as could happen, there not being one Protestant gentleman in Ireland that I know of, that has not the worst opinion of him in the world'.[37] Sunderland approved Cowper's nomination and directed him to consult with Stanhope, Townshend, and Marlborough. He then told Parker that he could not support his request on behalf of Levinge as 'it would be of the greatest prejudice to the public service'.[38] Parker tried to get Sunderland to change his mind, but met with no success. Gilbert's appointment was delayed by the question of who would replace him and Sunderland instructed Addison to consult Marlborough and Cowper. Addison met Marlborough twice in the first week of June and he informed him how important it was to get Gilbert made Chief Baron of the Exchequer and that Sunderland was implacably opposed to Levinge. On 16 June the King signed the warrant appointing Gilbert and he was sworn in for that term. Sunderland expressed his satisfaction to Cowper at the promotion and thanked Stanhope for his help.[39]

Sunderland was also active in helping to counter the threat posed by the Jacobites in 1715. On 24 July he directed the Lords Justices

to send three of the regiments which had recently arrived in Ireland to Scotland. He instructed Lord Tyrawly to remove unreliable officers from their commands and asked the Lords Justices to inform him how the Protestants in Ireland were provided with arms and ammunition; what method they proposed to provide the necessary stores which were to be distributed in an emergency; about the condition of forts, castles, garrisons and ordnance stores and what had been done to put them in good order and repair. The Lord Justices gave the necessary orders to embark the troops for Scotland in July and they arrived on 27 August.[40] Similarly, when Sunderland received news in July 1715 that 'honest men' were being turned out of the Irish Revenue service and 'ill ones' retained, he directed Conolly to inquire into this allegation and he enclosed a letter to the Commissioners of the Revenue to dismiss any officers whose loyalty was suspect. It turned out that there was some substance to these reports and though changes were made in the revenue service it was felt essential to retain moderate Tories who provided valuable services; Sunderland approved the alterations that were made.[41] Ten days later Sunderland informed the Lords Justices that owing to his health the King had excused his going to Ireland and that he was to be succeeded by Lords Grafton and Galway. On 31 August 1715 Sunderland became Lord Privy Seal, the post having become vacant on the death of Wharton in April 1715.[42]

III THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE WHIG ASCENDANCY SEPTEMBER 1714 TO MAY 1716

'and recover the reputation of this Kingdom'

The first eighteen months of the new reign were characterised by a vigorous and unrelenting attack by the Whigs upon their political adversaries. The Tories were driven from office and their leaders arraigned by Parliament for their part in the Treaty of Utrecht. The 1715 rebellion also proved advantageous for it allowed the Whigs to

stigmatise their Tory opponents as Jacobites and to complete their exclusion from power. The Whigs bolstered up their own authority by passing the Septennial Act which extended the maximum life of the House of Commons from three to seven years. Sunderland derived great satisfaction from the renaissance in Whig fortunes, while at the same time his own reputation and influence grew following the setbacks of 1714. He overcame the forebodings of the King and the Court and his standing improved dramatically. George came to rely upon Sunderland more and more in domestic politics and he was increasingly the recipient of royal favour. Sunderland's growing power at Court was complemented by a strengthening of his grip over the Whig party and greater influence in the Church. It became increasingly obvious that it was Sunderland who would be likely to reap the fruits of political superiority.

The Whigs were determined to enfeeble and demoralise their opponents. By October 1714 twenty-five Tory Privy Councillors had been dismissed and by the beginning of 1715 only four Tory Lords Lieutenant remained in office. Nearly all the county commissions were remodelled by Lord Cowper. Tories were removed from important places at Court, in the judiciary, the army and navy boards, the Admiralty, the Board of Trade and the revenue departments. Parliament, which had not been summoned after the King's landing at Greenwich, was dissolved on 5 January 1715 and the royal proclamation for the new Parliament was unashamedly pro-Whig. The writs for the election were issued on 15 January and were returnable two months later. The Tories were confident of their chances but the loss of the four London seats to the Whigs was an ominous sign and was to influence significantly the results in other large boroughs. In all, the Tories lost nineteen county seats in England and Wales yet it appears that their defeat in 1715 was largely due 'to the electoral system rather than the electorate'.[43] It was the seats in which the representative system was unbalanced that the Tories suffered the bulk of their losses. Nevertheless, the 'results were a great tribute to the industry, alertness and organizing ability of the ministry'.[44] A Tory majority

of 240 had been transformed into a Whig lead of 65, not including the Scottish seats. Despite having made major gains in Scotland, the Whigs there were already split. The two factions centred around the Squadrone and the Duke of Argyll; Whig representation was divided between them. In the election of the Scottish representative peers the Court list was carried, with the help of some intimidation, almost unanimously. The Tory cause had not been helped by the Pretender issuing a manifesto which was sent to prominent figures in England, including Sunderland.[45] There is little evidence about Sunderland's activities during the course of the election though it is undeniable that he would have been active, enthusiastic, and industrious on behalf of the Whigs. He certainly anticipated the forthcoming Parliament with delight telling the Archbishop of Dublin: 'We have, God be praised, as good a prospect of a Parliament here as there ever was'.[46] The Tories, however, were not the only ones who had seen significant changes since George I came to the throne in 1714.

The Whig party also underwent considerable changes particularly in the composition of its leadership. The Junto literally disintegrated; Wharton died in April 1715 followed by Halifax in October of the same year and finally Somers in April 1716. Orford remained at the Admiralty and he was in fact to be the last survivor of the Junto, after Sunderland's death in 1722, not dying himself until 1727. With the vacuum at the head of the Whig party a new and younger generation of Whigs came to the fore. The most prominent of them were Charles, Viscount Townshend, Robert Walpole, and James Stanhope. Townshend and Walpole had been political allies since their entrance into Parliament, a connection which had been strengthened by Townshend's marriage to Walpole's sister Dorothy in 1713, and they stood at the head of the Whig interest in Norfolk. Though a member of the House of Lords Townshend's most significant contribution during Anne's reign was his negotiation of the Anglo-Dutch Barrier Treaty in 1709 and it was his diplomatic experience which resulted in his appointment as Secretary of State for the North in 1714. Robert Walpole, despite

being second to Townshend at this time, had built up a good reputation as a politician and an administrator. He was regarded as a capable manager of the House of Commons, he had been one of the prosecuting counsel at Sacheverell's trial, and had served as Secretary-at-War under Marlborough. At George's accession he had been given the post of Paymaster General of the forces and following Halifax's death he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. James Stanhope had spent most of the previous reign as a soldier and a diplomat in Spain and from 1706 to 1710 he had been in regular correspondence with Sunderland, when he was Southern Secretary, and they had developed a close and effective working relationship which laid the foundation for their partnership under George I. Though much of his time had been spent abroad, Stanhope, like Walpole, had been a member of the prosecution against Sacheverell and after his return to England in 1712, as Sunderland had done, he had devoted himself to the Hanoverian Succession. Stanhope's diplomatic and military experience helped him to secure the post of Secretary of State for the South.[47] The Whigs, despite their newly established authority faced difficulties of their own.

The election of 1715 saw the Whigs recover a majority in the House of Commons for the first time since 1710 but it was noticeable that they were no longer the tight-knit and coherent group they had been under Anne. Marlborough had wanted the position of Groom of the Stole but had been fobbed off with the offices of Captain-General and Master General of the Ordnance and he blamed Townshend and Walpole for his not being made Groom of the Stole. Furthermore, there were jealousies among leading Whigs in the army. Argyll bitterly resented Marlborough's military reputation and was vehemently opposed to Marlborough's protégé, Cadogan.[48] As a result Sunderland, with his strong ties with both Marlborough and Cadogan, must have regarded Argyll as a potential enemy, especially when it is remembered that the Argyll faction in Scotland was the chief rival of Sunderland's Scottish allies, the Squadrone. Sunderland, meanwhile, had animosities

of his own. He held Townshend responsible for his relegation to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland and was incensed at Townshend's appointment as Secretary of State and the arrogant and disdainful way he was treated by Townshend. It was noted that Sunderland 'had no good will to the Lord Townshend by whom he thought himself unworthily used and, as he called it, treated like his footman'.[49] Not only were there personal differences between Townshend and Sunderland but also important disagreements on foreign policy which were reflected in the divisions in the Whig party. Sunderland, as he had been from the start of his political career, was convinced that Britain must play an active and energetic part in the affairs of Europe. Townshend, and a section of the Whig party, had begun to question the merits of this policy particularly when it seemed that British resources and interests were being sacrificed to further Hanoverian ends.[50] Sunderland had no time for these anxieties as he told Townshend in 1716:

> I must not omit too acquainting your Lordship that the King is very much surprised at the strange notion that seems at present to prevail, as if the Parliament was not to concern themselves in anything that happens in these parts of the world [Hanover], which he looks upon not only as exposing him to all kind of affronts, but even to ruin. And, indeed, this notion is nothing but the old Tory one, that England can subsist by itself whatever becomes of the rest of Europe, which has been so justly exploded by the Whigs ever since the Revolution.[51]

Sunderland's commitment to George's foreign policy both as Elector of Hanover and King of Great Britain explains his growing influence with the King and also accounts for his close alliance with Stanhope who shared Sunderland's views on foreign policy.[52]

Parliament assembled on 17 March 1715 and four days later the Lord Chancellor read the King's speech to both Houses. In a conspicuous reference to the late ministry the King observed: 'I... thank my faithful and loving subjects for that zeal and firmness that hath been shown in defence of the Protestant Succession against all the

open and secret practices that have been used to defeat it and I shall never forget the obligations I have to those who have distinguished themselves upon this occasion'.[53] Sunderland was a member of the committee to draw up an address of thanks, which Bolton reported on 22 March. It provocatively declared that the King, with the help of Parliament, would be able to 'recover the reputation of this kingdom in foreign parts, the loss of which, we hope to convince the world by our actions, is by no means to be imputed to the nation in general'.[54] Despite some opposition the address was carried by 66 votes to 33. The Commons were especially determined to pillory the former administration and Robert Walpole moved the address of thanks which condemned the previous ministry and proclaimed that its leaders would be brought to account.[55]

The attack on the leading Tories had been conceived long before Parliament met. In December 1714 Strafford had been recalled from the Dutch Republic and he was summoned before the Privy Council in January 1715. At this meeting Nottingham told Strafford that he should deliver up all his papers relating to the peace negotiations at Utrecht. Strafford prevaricated replying that he had done his duty at the conferences and that he had only been the second delegate at these discussions. When he had withdrawn, it was argued that Strafford should be told that the King would give immediate orders for securing his papers. Sunderland was 'of the same opinion and also that other persons should be sent, with such as the Earl of Sunderland should appoint, to seal up all boxes etc., with his baggage'.[56] Sunderland's suggestion was accepted and Stanhope and Townshend accompanied Strafford to his house and removed two boxes of papers.[57]

These papers were almost certainly among those which Stanhope delivered to the Commons in April 1715. The documents were referred to a select committee under the chairmanship of Walpole. On 9 June Walpole read the committee's report and two days later Bolingbroke was impeached, though by this time he had already fled to France. Shortly afterwards Oxford and Ormonde were likewise impeached for High

Treason, while Strafford was impeached for High Crimes and Misdemeanours. The articles against Oxford came up to the Lords on 9 July and Lord Coningsby impeached him at the bar of the House. An attempt was made to adjourn the consideration of the articles until the following Monday, but Sunderland, Nottingham, Argyll, and Townshend maintained that they should be examined immediately. This was agreed to by 86 votes to 54. It was then moved to consult the judges to see if the charges constituted treason. This suggestion was opposed by Sunderland, Cowper, Argyll, Montrose, Nottingham, Townshend, Dorset, and Islay and it was rejected by 84 votes to 52. The House decided to commit Oxford to the Tower, but when he pleaded to be allowed to remain at his own house due to ill-health it was carried with the support of Sunderland and Shrewsbury. In August Oxford petitioned the Lords to have access to the papers which had been delivered to the secret committee. Sunderland was a member of the Lords' committee which granted Oxford's request. Bolingbroke was soon joined in France by Ormonde and both were declared guilty of High Treason by an Act of Attainder. Strafford, like Oxford, remained to face his accusers, but before real progress could be made the outbreak of the Jacobite rebellion shifted attention elsewhere.[58]

There had been widespread unrest, particularly in the south and west of England, throughout the summer of 1715 and in July the King informed Parliament that he had received information of a projected invasion; both Lords and Commons expressed their indignation and affirmed their loyalty to the Crown. Prominent Jacobite suspects were arrested and the arms and horses of Papists were seized in London and in other towns. The militia were called out and troops were stationed at Oxford and other disaffected places in the west of England. By its action the government extinguished any hope of a rebellion in southern England and the rebels were forced to concentrate upon Scotland and the Anglo-Scottish border. The Earl of Mar launched the rising in Scotland on 26 August and by September the Jacobite army had captured Perth, though at the same time troops sent to

Scotland by Sunderland from Ireland had arrived. The Duke of Argyll was given command of the government forces and he concentrated his army at Stirling in order to prevent Mar advancing into the Lowlands. Jacobite hopes suffered a severe blow in August with the death of Louis XIV which deprived them of effective foreign support, while the British government could apply to the Dutch for the 6,000 troops promised as aid under the terms of the Barrier Treaty. Part of Mar's army managed to join up with Jacobites in the north of England, but after advancing into Lancashire they were surrounded at Preston where they surrendered on 14 November 1715. The day before Mar and Argyll had faced each other at Sheriffmuir and though the encounter was indecisive it was clear that the initiative now lay with Argyll. By the time the Pretender arrived in Scotland the rebellion was largely at an end and all he could do was to re-embark with Mar for France on 4 February 1716.[59]

It was Stanhope and Townshend, the two Secretaries of State, who bore the main administrative burden during the rebellion.[60] Sunderland, however, was responsible for sending important re-inforcements to Scotland and he had also made inquiries into unrest at Bath.[61]

He drew up a plan in the event that:

> the rebellion had produced a war in this country [England] to have the kingdom divided into several districts or associations of several counties together, and to be put under some person of the best interest and estates in each division, and well affected to the government, who was to have power of raising forces etc., and so to have had several armies in the several parts of England as auxiliaries to the Grand Army.[62]

Sunderland's zeal to bring those responsible for the Treaty of Utrecht to account and his steadfastness to the House of Hanover during the rebellion cannot have failed to have impressed the King.

During the course of the unrest in January 1716 the King notified Parliament that the Pretender had landed in Scotland. Sunderland and Townshend were the most prominent members of the Lords' committee which

was appointed to draw up the address of thanks to the King for his speech. Sunderland's influence is clearly discernible in the tone of the address. It declared that the House was convinced,

> that it is not only requisite for the security, but also for the future ease and interest of your Majesty's subjects to exert themselves on this occasion, in a more than ordinary manner, to put a speedy end to these present disorders and to prevent those calamities which must attend a lingering rebellion within the kingdom, and to discourage its being supported by any assistance from abroad. And that we will, to the utmost of our power, assist your Majesty not only in subduing the present rebellion, but in destroying the seeds and causes of it, that the like disturbances may never arise again to impair the blessing of your Majesty's reign.[63]

The Whig offensive was to be resumed against the Tories and their arguments that all Tories were Jacobites at heart now had greater credence thanks to the rebellion.

The Jacobite Lords, who had been captured at Preston, had been impeached for High Treason in January 1716. They were found guilty and condemned to death on 20 February in Westminster Hall. Their executions were ordered for 6 March, but there was great pressure upon the government to grant a reprieve. When the matter was debated in Parliament the ministry succeeded in adjourning the discussion in the Commons by a slender majority, but in the Lords on 27 February Annandale moved to address the King to grant a respite to the prisoners and he was seconded by Nottingham and Aylesford. Townshend and the Whigs tried to get the issue adjourned, but they were defeated and the motion was approved by five votes. Sunderland, Cowper, Orford, and Townshend then proposed an addition to the address that no reprieve should be given without 'en tirer quelque eclairesment sur le fait de la conspiration et obliger ces seigneurs condemnez d'en declarer ce qu'ils scavoient'.[64] The House would appear to have rejected this idea for there is no such clause in the Lords' address of 22 February 1716.[65] The government did,

however, carry a motion that the King should only defer judgement where the Lord in person appeared to merit such consideration. In the event, only Derwentwater and Kenmure were executed, the others either escaped or were pardoned.[65]

The intervention of Nottingham and Aylesford on behalf of the Jacobites gave the Whigs an opportunity to get them dismissed and there were rumours that Sunderland would replace Nottingham as Lord President. More significantly, in April 1716, Devonshire introduced a bill into the Lords to repeal the Triennial Act arguing that the danger and uncertainty of the times required the extension of the maximum life of the House of Commons from three to seven years. There was strong opposition to the bill but it passed the House with large majorities. In the Commons the opposition had little hope of defeating the bill and its third reading was approved on 7 May by 264 votes to 121. Sunderland took no part in the debates in the upper House owing to the illness and death of his wife on 15 April. Tory proscription was now complete and the Whig supremacy seemed assured.[66]

As the Whigs were establishing their predominance Sunderland's authority was growing rapidly. Sunderland's political attitudes both in foreign and domestic policy gratified George I immensely. Sunderland was allowed to remain in England while he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and his appointment as Lord Privy Seal in August 1715 is the first clear indication of the King's favourable disposition towards Sunderland. Though George I would have been impressed by Sunderland's willingness to prosecute the leaders of Queen Anne's last ministry Sunderland's leniency towards Oxford in August 1715 would almost certainly strike a responsive note with the King; it may not be just a coincidence that Sunderland became Lord Privy Seal in the same month. It was Sunderland who drew up the King's speech to Parliament on 9 January 1716. In March 1716 a bill was introduced into the Commons to allow Sunderland 'to take in England, the Oath of office as one of the Vice-Treasurer's and receivers

General and Paymaster General of all his Majesty's revenues in the kingdom of Ireland, and to qualify himself thereby for the enjoyment of the said office'.[67] The bill was approved by Parliament in April 1716. In June it was rumoured that Sunderland was to be awarded the Green Ribbon of Perth and Mar and the next month he was created sole Vice-Treasurer and Treasurer at War in Ireland.[68] By mid-1716 it was apparent that Sunderland had eased the apprehensions that the King had for him at his accession and was on the way to becoming the King's most important English minister.

Sunderland, in conjunction with his ally Charles Trimnell, Bishop of Norwich, was gradually asserting his primacy over the Church of England. At the start of 1715 Sunderland and Cowper were active in distributing Church livings and during 1715 and 1716 Sunderland was increasingly associated with William Wake, successively Bishop of Lincoln and Archbishop of Canterbury. At the end of 1715 Sunderland and the Bishop of Norwich helped to obtain the bishopric of Bangor for the Whig controversialist, Benjamin Hoadly.[69]

By 1716 it was obvious that Sunderland was the rising power in the Whig party and recognition of this fact led the Duke of Newcastle to unite his political fortunes with those of Sunderland. Newcastle was related to both Sunderland and Townshend, and it was Sunderland along with the Earl of Lincoln, who had introduced Lord Pelham, as Newcastle then was, into the Lords as Viscount Houghton and Earl of Clare on 21 March 1715. To begin with Newcastle was primarily connected with Townshend, but by June 1716 he had clearly shifted his allegiance to Sunderland to whom he looked for directions. When Marlborough suffered a paralytic stroke at the end of May 1716 Sunderland was in touch with Newcastle instructing him how to proceed in and out of Parliament.[70]

IV SUNDERLAND'S DRIVE FOR SUPREMACY MAY 1716 TO APRIL 1717

'it is hard to conceive how so much villainy and infatuation could possess the heart of any man'

By the summer of 1716 circumstances were very much in Sunderland's favour. Unfortunately, his authority was not undisputed and there were leading Whig politicians who would not tolerate being subordinate to him. Townshend and Argyll were two men who were likely to suffer a political eclipse as a result of Sunderland's growing power and were also likely to prove major obstacles to his assuming the leadership of the Whig party. Sunderland had important grievances both personal and political against both men. Sunderland resented Townshend's position as Secretary of State together with his overbearing attitude and they disagreed about how far Britain should be willing to support Hanoverian foreign policy. Argyll had helped to bring down Sunderland and the Whig government in 1710 and he was an enemy of Sunderland's political allies both in England and Scotland. Furthermore, there was also the danger that these two politicians might unite against Sunderland as seemed increasingly probable during 1716. Sunderland, with the support of the King, Stanhope, Newcastle and Cadogan, felt confident that he could oust Argyll and Townshend and establish his position as the King's leading minister. He used Townshend's reluctance to further Hanoverian interests in Europe and the tensions which existed between the King and Prince of Wales to turn the King against the Secretary of State in the same way he had used Argyll's devotion to the Prince of Wales to have George I bring about the Duke's dismissal from office. Sunderland, however, made one miscalculation by revealing the arguments he had used with the King against Townshend and this guaranteed that he would not be at the head of a united Whig party.

The King was determined to visit Hanover in 1716 even in the face of the combined opposition of Sunderland, Stanhope, Townshend, Devonshire, Marlborough and Cowper. In the absence of the King the

Prince of Wales would act as Regent and not only would the Prince have greater power, but the influence of his Groom of the Stole and favourite adviser, the Duke of Argyll, would in consequence be enhanced; a position which he would undoubtedly use to the detriment of Sunderland, Marlborough, and Cadogan. Even more alarming were reports that 'the strict friendship struck by the Duke of Argyll with Mr. Walpole and Lord Townshend has produced a very good effect and entirely strengthens their interest. And the Duke of Marlborough being unlikely to come again to business, has, as is said, weakened all that side of interest'.[71] If the combined strength of the Argyll and Townshend factions worked against him and dominated the Regency Administration this would be a major setback to Sunderland's aspirations and so he decided to strike quickly and decisively against his opponents. Sunderland and Cadogan, upon the news of Marlborough's stroke in May 1716, went to visit the Duke at St. Albans where they planned their strategy; Argyll was to be dealt with first.[72]

Sunderland's position was strengthened by the backing he received from the King's Hanoverian ministers who were now disillusioned with Townshend and Walpole because of the latter's opposition to German interference in English politics. Sunderland, Cadogan and the Hanoverians tried to secure the dismissal of Argyll, who had engineered the resignation of Montrose as Secretary of State for Scotland in 1715, and hoped to replace him with Roxburghe. The King was willing to appoint Roxburghe, but this alteration was prevented by the intervention of Townshend, Walpole, and Stanhope. Sunderland then tried to check Argyll indirectly by reducing the powers which the Prince of Wales could exercise as Regent. Sunderland drew up a list of prerogatives which the King reserved to himself, while the Prince acted in his absence, and when the Prince objected to the restraints Sunderland was ready to have him omitted from the Regency Council. Faced with this prospect the Prince eventually agreed to Sunderland's proposals to curtail his power. In the conduct of foreign policy the Prince was not allowed to make any decisions without the King's personal

approval. The Prince was unable to make any important civil or military appointments and in Parliament he was, as far as was possible, to withhold the royal assent to bills until the King returned from Hanover. Encouraged by this success Sunderland once more turned his attention against Argyll who had urged the Prince not to accept any limitations upon his authority as Regent. In using this opportunity Sunderland again obtained the approval of the King who on this occasion was unwilling to tolerate any opposition. Argyll and his brother Islay were removed from all the offices they held under the Crown and the Prince of Wales was forced to dismiss Argyll as his Groom of the Stole. Argyll's removal was viewed as a blow to Townshend and Walpole, but Sunderland was unable to proceed against Townshend because of the King's departure for Hanover.[73]

Sunderland's triumph over Argyll demonstrated the intimacy and strength of his relations with the King and this revelation was of great significance for the Southern Secretary James Stanhope. Stanhope had been on good terms with Townshend and Walpole and together they had defeated Sunderland's first attempt to remove Argyll, but Stanhope, who believed in bold and assertive action in foreign policy, was becoming more and more concerned about Townshend's reluctance to promote Hanoverian interests in the Baltic.[74] Stanhope, conscious of Sunderland's power and aware that he and Sunderland agreed that it was necessary to support the King's Hanoverian interests in Europe, was, like Newcastle, ready to shift his allegiance to Sunderland. At the end of July 1716 Sunderland wanted leave to visit the continent to continue his schemes against Townshend. He wrote to Stanhope:

> the King having been so good as to allow me to go to Aix-la-Chapelle, this latter season, to drink the waters I have since mentioned it to the Prince who has been pleased to allow me the same liberty. I acquainted his royal highness that, it would be necessary to appoint commissioners to execute the office of Privy Seal during my absence... and that Mr. Southwell, Mr. Vernon... and Mr. Andrew Charlton... would be very proper persons. He was pleased to agree to it, and ordered me to write to you... Lord Townshend also writes to you about it.[75]

The King readily agreed to Sunderland's nominations and Stanhope advised Sunderland that after he had taken the waters at Aix 'you should take a tour to Hanover. I can offer you as good a lodging as you will find there and a hearty welcome'.[76]

The willingness of the Prince and Townshend to assist Sunderland's departure seems inexplicable given his recent conduct, yet the fact was that Sunderland, with great cunning, had allayed their anxieties about his behaviour. Like Robert Walpole, Sunderland recognised the extent to which Princess Caroline influenced the Prince of Wales and he successfully cultivated his interest with her.[77] Caroline told Lady Cowper that she preferred Sunderland to Townshend and that Sunderland had 'owned to her that he had been for the restrictions and said I shall be the same whenever I see the like occasion. He owned he was for displacing the Duke of Argyll but not in the manner they did'.[78] Sunderland convinced Robert Walpole of his friendship and Walpole informed Stanhope at the end of August:

> Lord Sunderland left us and will soon be with you. We parted with all the professions and assurances of mutual friendship and union that was possible. He seemed indeed sensible of the ill consequences of the measures he had engaged in, and seemed to return to his senses, and do his best endeavours to set things right again when he had set them wrong.[79]

Likewise, 'Lord Sunderland took leave of Lord Townshend with a thousand protestations that he would do nothing to hurt any of them, and that his main intention in going was to persuade the King to come soon back'.[80]

Before he left for Europe Sunderland and Cadogan visited Marlborough at Bath in the first week of August and it appears that 'nothing was talked of... but the great changes that were to be done when the King came over'.[81] Sunderland was impatient to leave England as he told the Duchess of Montagu, 'I never was more concerned than at my being detained by business in England a week longer than I designed'.[82] Sunderland and Cadogan, who was being sent to The Hague to watch Horatio Walpole, the minister and plenipotentiary at the Dutch capital, departed on 25 August 1716 and arrived in Brussels on 16 September N.S.; five days later Sunderland reached Aix-la-Chapelle.[83]

Sunderland and Stanhope, meanwhile, dissembled with Townshend and Walpole. Stanhope was trusted implicity by the ministers in England, for they were unaware that he was now allied with Sunderland, to such an extent that a private means of communication was set up between them using Stephen Poyntz an under-Secretary of State. At the beginning of September Stanhope informed Townshend and Walpole, through Poyntz:

> you may be perfectly eased of any apprehensions from one quarter, since 'twas with difficulty that I prevailed this morning for leave, that Lord Sunderland should come hither after drinking the water of Aix, and you will easily imagine if it had not been granted where the fault would have been laid, so I really did press it and obtained it with difficulty.[84]

In early-October Sunderland wrote to Townshend hoping 'matters go on smoothly and quietly with you at home. I shall always endeavour to contribute all in my power towards their doing so... I beg your Lordship to present my humble duty to their Royal Highnesses'.[85] Further assurances of loyalty were sent in October[86] and Stanhope told Townshend that 'my Lord Sunderland you will imagine is not idle and truly so far as I can contribute to determine him my endeavours will not be wanting'.[87]

Sunderland arrived at Hanover at the end of October and set about undermining Townshend's position. One of the strongest weapons Sunderland possessed was the jealousy which existed between the King and the Prince of Wales. As Guardian of the realm the Prince made full use of the meagre opportunities which had been left to him by Sunderland. He regularly attended Cabinet meetings, mastering the business that was discussed, and extensively and ostentatiously courted public goodwill. Bothmer felt that the Prince was abusing his authority and reported to Hanover that he was courting such dissident Whigs as Argyll, together with Tories and even Jacobites.[88] Sunderland played on the King's apprehensions by accusing Townshend and Walpole of 'having entered into engagements with the Prince and

the Duke of Argyll and formed designs against the King's authority'.[89] It was this argument which proved the key to Sunderland's success, for as Townshend observed:

> I found myself removed from being Secretary, by a person so near the King as Lord Sunderland grounded on a charge of the highest nature... These are all the reasons I have yet heard for my disgrace. Lord Sunderland, indeed, did sometime ago write me a letter in one of his frenzy fits, in which he lays down very extraordinary notions, as such doubts as he will find very impracticable as far as they relate to this country upon the subject of the northern affairs: but I made him no answer to his letter.[90]

As Townshend mentioned in this letter Sunderland had also exploited the difference of opinion between himself and Townshend over foreign policy to turn George I against the Northern Secretary. As Elector of Hanover George was a member of an anti-Swedish coalition in northern Europe. His chief concern was to obtain control of the duchies of Bremen and Verden from Sweden in which he was eager to employ the British navy, though Britain was nominally at peace with Sweden, to further his ends. George also wanted French support for his northern policy because of his deteriorating relations with Russia. He was determined to conclude the treaty which Stanhope and Dubois, the French foreign minister, had been negotiating in the summer of 1716. Townshend had begun to have doubts about the use of British resources to further Hanoverian ambitions and he did not share the urgency of the King and Stanhope to get the alliance with France completed at The Hague. Sunderland, with his unreserved commitment to the King's interests abroad, was able to secure the help of Bernstorff to increase the pressure on the King to replace Townshend as Secretary of State. When Stanhope demanded an explanation from Townshend about the delays in London and The Hague in completing the treaty with France[91], Sunderland told Townshend:

but upon my arrival here, and Mr. Secretary Stanhope's having acquainted me with the treaty itself, and every step taken in it; I was entirely convinced that no negotiation had ever been managed with more pains and prudence, nor no treaty ever brought to a conclusion more glorious, nor more advantageous to the King and England; especially under the circumstances Europe is like to be in, by these proceedings of the Czar, the King of Prussia, etc. which very probably may make France, take a pretence from these delays, to avoid signing at last, and what is more yet is, that the occasions of this delay, leave it in the power of France to say it is not their fault. I am sincerely concerned at anything that may be prejudicial to the King's service, and particularly at anything that may not rightly be understood among those in his service, that always have, and always ought to act cordially together; and that is the single reason why I say anything upon so unpleasant a subject. I must therefore be so plain as to tell you that I never saw the King resent anything so much as this affair, in which he thinks, not only Mr. Secretary Stanhope but himself not well used; and indeed I think, it wants to be explained.[92]

The King, as a consequence of Sunderland's efforts, was prepared to dismiss Townshend and in December a courier arrived from Hanover with the news that the Secretary of State had been relegated to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland.

After disposing of Argyll and Townshend, Sunderland was now concerned with uniting the other Whigs around him. Apart from transferring Townshend to Ireland the only other ministerial change in England was taking the Privy Seal out of commission and giving it to the Duke of Kingston. Sunderland was intent upon gaining control of Scotland as a further check to Argyll. Roxburghe was made Secretary of State for Scotland, the Duke of Montrose took over the Great Seal, and Lord Polwarth became Lord Treasurer.[93] On 15 December N.S. Stanhope wrote to Walpole that the King was uneasy having received;

> many advices, which came neither through my hands nor Lord Sunderland's. But I cannot help observing to you, that he is jealous of certain intimacy's with the two brothers [Argyll and Islay]. I hope his Majesty's presence in England, and the behaviour of our friends in the Cabinet, will remove these jealousies. No man can contribute more to this than yourself, and I must tell you that my Lord Sunderland, as well as myself, have assured the King that you will do so. You know that ill offices have been done you here which might have made some impression if my Lord Sunderland and I had not in good earnest endeavoured to prevent it.[94]

Walpole's attitude was not promising as he revealed to Sunderland when thanking him 'for the good offices you have done me with the King and must think myself very unhappy that they were not necessary, with this comfort that I hope his Majesty will one time be convinced that I have served him with zeal, fidelity, and integrity'.[95] Sunderland now committed a fatal mistake.

In order to get Orford's support Sunderland wrote to him and recounted the accusations he had made to the King concerning the association of Townshend and Walpole with the Prince of Wales and Argyll. Orford, who was violently opposed to using the navy in the Baltic to serve Hanoverian ends, immediately showed the letter to Townshend.[96] Townshend could hardly contain his anger and resentment. He wrote to Simon van Slingelandt:

> the fatal consequences of any misunderstanding between the King and the Prince are so very obvious and the bare insinuation of such a design as is implied in Lord Sunderland's letter, is a charge of so high and extensive a nature, that it is hard to conceive how so much villainy and infatuation could possess the heart of any man as to suggest such an infamous accusation, not only without evidence, but without the least colour or pretence... And I defy my Lord Sunderland, or anyone else, to produce one single instance of my having made an ill use of the confidence with which his royal highness was pleased to honour me, or of the Prince's having invaded the regal prerogative

in any the minutest branch, or having deviated in any particular of his behaviour, since his Majesty's leaving England... So that upon the whole, I am satisfied you will agree with me in thinking, that after being turned out of the Secretary's office in such a manner, my accepting the Lieutenancy of Ireland, under the circumstances abovementioned, would have appeared to the world like a confession of some degree of guilt, and a tacit compounding for pardon.[97]

It was the discovery of the charges Sunderland had made against Townshend and Walpole that introduced such bitterness into the dispute and made it unlikely that the Whigs would be able to remain a united party.

With the threat that Townshend would not accept the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland and with the added danger that Walpole, who was so prominent in managing the House of Commons, would stand with him, Sunderland realised that his letter to Orford had been a grave error. When the King left Hanover in January 1717 Sunderland and Stanhope met Cadogan at The Hague to decide what to do next. They decided to try to persuade the Dutch, who were deeply concerned by Townshend's dismissal, to urge him to accept the Irish Viceroyalty. Stanhope wrote to Walpole that he and Sunderland were ready to do all they could to make Townshend easy. Three days later Baron Duyvenvoorde informed Townshend that Sunderland and Stanhope had assured him 'que si vous avez la complaisance de ceder en ceci à la volonté du Roy en acceptant la Vicerouaté d'Ireland, S.M. vous donnera dans peu de temps toutes les marques de sa faveur, que vous voudrez demander ou souhaiter'.[98] As for Sunderland's letter to Orford, Duyvenvoorde declared:

> my Lord Sunderland, M. Stanhope et M. de Bernstorff m'ont fort assourée que my Lord Sunderland n'a rien contribué contre vous. J'espére qu'il pourra vous persuader de ceci, et que tous ceus qui sont interessez dans la lettre qu'il a eu l'imprudence d'écrire à vous oublient ce qui y est contenu, a fin que la paix et l'union soient retablies dans le parti, et que les malintentionnez ne profitent pas de vôtre désunion.[99]

The King also assisted Sunderland when he arrived back in London and had a long interview with Townshend and Stanhope. After Townshend had been assured that he need not go to Ireland he kissed hands as Lord Lieutenant;[100] the reconciliation seemed unlikely to endure for very long.

With Townshend's removal from the Secretaryship Sunderland appeared to have established his ascendancy. Bonet observed that Sunderland 'agira derriere le rideau et sans avoir de department pour les affaires celui qu'il a de Vice Tresorier d'Irland'.[101] Though he did not hold an office which conferred Cabinet status Sunderland was present at Cabinet meetings.[102] It was confidently asserted that 'Lord Sunderland is looked upon by everybody to be the greatest man at Court'.[103] Similarly, 'Lord Sunderland is thought to be at the head of all councils'.[104] The Duke of Argyll, who had experienced Sunderland's power at first hand, told his brother, the Earl of Islay that Sunderland 'seems to have more power than I'm afraid is consistent with the welfare of the King and Country'.[105] There is little doubt that at the beginning of 1717 Sunderland was the King's first minister, but he would not preside over a united Whig administration for very much longer. The affairs of northern Europe once more provided the stimulus for dissension.

The difficulties which Charles XII was facing in raising finance to allow Sweden to continue fighting in the Northern War led to his ministers in London, Paris, and The Hague entering into discussions with the Jacobites. In return for financial support they promised military assistance for a Jacobite insurrection in Scotland. The British government was kept well informed of these negotiations and in January 1717 at a Cabinet Council it was decided to apprehend the Swedish minister in London, Count Gyllenborg, together with his papers. It was then agreed to request the States General to arrest Baron Görtz, Charles XII's adviser, who was then at The Hague; to stop the mail boats from England for twenty-four hours; and to inform the British resident at Stockholm of these developments.[106]

On 3 February 1717 the Lords of the Committee decided to begin preparations for sending a fleet to the Baltic, to maintain the army at full strength, and to prohibit the export of corn to Sweden. Sunderland's administration reacted so strongly because of the growing opposition to the King's Northern policy; it was feared that reductions in the army might be insisted upon and grants for a fleet refused. There was also the possibility that Walpole and Townshend might use the issue to embarrass the government. The announcement of a Jacobite plot to Parliament in February resulted in loyal addresses to the King from both Lords and Commons. As yet Walpole and Townshend had done nothing to alarm the ministry.[107]

While the House of Lords was debating the Mutiny bill in March 1717 Townshend began to oppose the administration and it is likely that his behaviour encouraged the Tories for, on the third reading of the bill, they began to object to its contents. Their complaints were answered by Sunderland, Cowper, Devonshire, and Newcastle and the bill passed by 32 votes to 9. The Tories, however, raised further difficulties over the unrest at Oxford upon the Prince of Wales's birthday on 30 October 1716. Once the Mutiny bill had passed the ministry were prepared to allow an inquiry into this episode, but Sunderland, Cowper, Kingston, Parker, Coningsby, Cadogan and Townshend managed to emasculate Tory attempts to make an issue out of the disturbances during the debate on 3 April 1717. Though Townshend had supported the government on this point he appears to have been directly responsible for Tory assertiveness in March and early-April 1717.[108]

On 3 April 1717 the Commons were moved to grant supplies to secure the kingdom from the Swedish menace. The proposal was debated four days later in committee and 'the House were greatly displeased at the manner of making this demand, and more at two persons now at the head of affairs Lord Sunderland and Stanhope whom they think are servile ministers to the King's German ministers'.[109] The supply was granted in the committee by the narrow majority of 165 votes to 150 and the next day the report to the House was only agreed to by

154 votes to 150. Though Walpole voted with the government he took no part in the debate and with Townshend's recent conduct this was sufficient provocation. On 9 April Townshend was dismissed as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland and this was followed by the resignations of Walpole, Pulteney, Methuen, Orford and Devonshire. In the reconstituted ministry Sunderland became Secretary of State for the North, Stanhope First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Joseph Addison Southern Secretary, Newcastle Lord Chamberlain, James Craggs junior Secretary-at-War and Bolton Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.[110]

Sunderland's advance between 1714 and 1717 was rapid and remarkable. At first the King and his advisers regarded him with trepidation and unease. Sunderland wasted little time in convincing the King that his fears were unfounded and George I's conversion was confirmed by Sunderland's appointment as Lord Privy Seal in August 1715. Because of Sunderland's willingness to support Hanoverian ambitions in Europe and because of Sunderland's obvious devotion to the Hanoverian Succession in Britain George began to trust him more and more. Sunderland with his growing power at Court was able to win over important Whig politicians such as Stanhope and Newcastle and Sunderland felt sufficiently assured to try to establish an unquestioned ascendancy as the King's chief minister. He adroitly outmaneouvred and displaced Argyll, but the methods he employed against Townshend proved prejudicial to Sunderland's own authority. By using the resentments in the royal family and Townshend's reluctance to approve the employment of British resources in the Baltic Sunderland was able to persuade George to dismiss the Secretary of State. Unfortunately, when the accusations Sunderland made at Hanover, that Townshend and Walpole were conniving with the Prince of Wales, became known it was almost certain that Walpole and Townshend would be unwilling to accept Sunderland

as leader of the Whig party. Furthermore, Sunderland's blatant Hanoverianism alienated a section of the Whig party which was ready to follow Townshend and Walpole when they resigned. Sunderland was now Prime Minister, but his position in Parliament was precarious and it remained to be seen how he would deal with this difficult and dangerous political situation.

CHAPTER EIGHT: PRIME MINISTER APRIL 1717 TO JUNE 1720

'le Comte de Sunderland qu'on peut regarder
comme le premier ministre d'etat'

The split in the Whig party was the first for nearly twenty years; a combination of Tories and dissident Whigs now threatened the security of Sunderland's administration. It was clear, however, that it would not be easy to create a durable alliance between the two opposition groups. The Tories wanted to replace the existing Whig government with a coalition of Whigs and Tories which they hoped would lay the basis for a Tory political recovery. Walpole and Townshend were not interested in promoting the Tory cause, but merely sought to force their way back into office on their own terms. Sunderland's task was twofold: he had to consolidate his influence with the King and he had to try to dominate both Houses of Parliament. Sunderland's strength at Court was based upon his connection with the Duchess of Kendal and his skilful cultivation of an increasingly intimate and enduring relationship with George I. This culminated in Sunderland's appointment as Groom of the Stole in February 1719. By these means Sunderland obtained royal approval for his ruthless and vindictive persecution of the Prince of Wales. He was also able to outmaneouvre Bernstorff, when the Hanoverian minister opposed his government in both domestic and foreign policy, and he had the full authority of the Crown behind the administration's policies. Similarly, Sunderland quickly established his authority over the House of Lords and, apart from the acquittal of the Earl of Oxford, his mastery of the upper chamber was complete. Sunderland was responsible for carrying the ministry's programme through the Lords. He decided when legislation should be introduced, whether it should be amended, and if it was to be deferred. His contribution in debate was usually decisive and his control of the House was perhaps only equalled by

Walpole's ascendancy in the Commons when he was at the head of the administration after Sunderland's death. It was in the House of Commons, however, that Sunderland's authority was most precarious and ultimately it was his inability to impose his will on the lower House that forced him to come to terms with Walpole and Townshend. Sunderland lobbied, bribed, and intimidated Whig M.P.'s; negotiated with both Jacobite and Hanoverian Tories; and exploited Stanhope's success abroad as well as re-organizing his ministry in an attempt to solve this problem. To begin with, while he was consolidating his power and searching for a solution to the problem of managing the Commons, Sunderland pursued a cunning and restrained policy. In particular throughout 1717 he refused to embark on any scheme which would cause unease about the status of the Church of England for it was bound to arouse strong feelings amongst the Tory party. Likewise in secular affairs Sunderland's aim was to damp down and dispose of awkward issues, such as the trial of the Earl of Oxford, as quickly as possible and with the minimum of disturbance. It was only from late 1718, when he was convinced that he was strong enough at Court and in Parliament, that Sunderland felt he could give way to his soaring ambition and introduce the Peerage bill, the repeal of the Septennial Act and the University Reform bill which were intended to establish an unparalleled political supremacy. His attempt broke down because his following in the Commons was not substantial enough to carry through such an extremely opportunist programme. Though his government only suffered one serious political reverse Sunderland was convinced that he would have to settle with Walpole if he was to have any security in the Commons. His power and influence were undiminished and Walpole and Townshend returned to office on his and not their own terms. Sunderland's authority now seemed complete. He had solved the problem of controlling the Commons and he was master of both Court and Parliament with his only serious rival subordinate to him.

I SECRETARY OF STATE: APRIL 1717 TO MARCH 1718

'servile ministers to the pleasures of
the King's German ministers'

With the accession of George I the Secretary of State for the northern department was of greater importance than his southern counterpart since he was responsible for German affairs. Sunderland's ambition to be northern Secretary had been thwarted in 1714, but by April 1717 he was able to acquire this office with little difficulty. One of the attractions of the post was that it would allow him to demonstrate his support for the King's Hanoverian interests which he knew was certain to increase the King's esteem and regard for him. Sunderland's activity in foreign affairs was not to be as significant as he had perhaps hoped for he was to be preoccupied with domestic politics. Furthermore, Stanhope's outstanding ability as a diplomat meant that he, rather than Sunderland, was better suited to carry the responsibility for the government's foreign policy. Sunderland's activities as Secretary of State involved topics of considerable importance yet the negotiation of foreign alliances and the search for peace in Europe was Stanhope's sphere of activity. That Sunderland was Prime Minister and responsible for domestic politics and that Stanhope was foreign minister was confirmed in the exchange of offices of 1718. The evidence of Sunderland's concerns as Secretary is deficient both for Sweden and Prussia, though in the case of Sweden the tense relations between her and Britain when Sunderland was in office probably accounts for this lack of material. Yet the documentation which is available indicates Sunderland's unreserved support for George's interests both as Elector and King.

The activities of the Secretary of State have been examined in detail for the period when Sunderland was Secretary of State for the South. The Hanoverian connection gave greater authority to the northern Secretary, but, apart from this, there had been little change since 1710. Both Secretaries were responsible for domestic affairs

and abroad Sunderland's sphere of activity included the Empire, Germany, the Dutch Republic, Scandinavia, Poland, and Russia. Sunderland also dealt with naval matters in the Baltic and North Sea.[1]

The alliance which had been signed with the Emperor in June 1716 had not dealt with the arrears that Britain owed for the service of Imperial troops in Spain in the War of the Spanish Succession and which were estimated at £100,000. In exchange for this payment the British government wanted to add a separate article to the Treaty of Westminster in which the Emperor declared that the Pretender and his followers were forbidden entry to Imperial territory.[2] In May 1717 the British envoy at Vienna, Abraham Stanyan, pressed the Imperial government to send orders to the Austrian Netherlands to have suspected Jacobites expelled. There were long delays, owing to the cumbersome workings of the Austrian administration, and even when the orders had been drawn up Stanyan and Sunderland thought they were unsatisfactory.[3] The arrears which Britain owed to the Emperor were settled at £130,000, but the British ministers made it plain that payment depended upon Imperial agreement to the separate article against the Pretender. Sunderland sent a draft of the article to Stanyan to be concluded at Vienna.[4] There was great reluctance to name the Pretender, but Sunderland repeatedly instructed Stanyan to insist that he must be expressly mentioned in the article and Stanyan and St. Saphorin declared that an Austrian refusal on this matter could prejudice British assistance to the Emperor in his disputes with Spain.[5]

In October 1717 there was an attempt at Vienna to have these negotiations transferred to London, but Sunderland told Stanyan that this was mere chicanery and the talks had to be resolved in the Imperial Capital before the British Parliament met on 21 November.[6] The Imperial ministers still sought to avoid a direct reference to the Pretender and a decision was deferred until they received the advice of the Imperial diplomat, Pendtenriedter, who was then negotiating with Stanhope in Britain.[7] Sunderland's ultimatum and Pendtenriedter's opinion that the British would not yield over the Pretender led the Imperial Court to give way and on 8 December N.S. 1717

Stanyan informed Sunderland that the Emperor had agreed to the secret article as it had been sent from London.[8] The Austrians, however, demanded that in any future treaty with Britain for the support of the Hanoverian Succession the word 'Protestant' should be excluded from the agreement and that the article concerning the Pretender was to be distinct from the settlement of the arrears.[9] The secret article was ratified in London at the end of December 1717 and on 7 January 1718 a committee of the Lords met at Sunderland's office where the ratifications were exchanged; the arrears were paid on 13 January.[10]

The Jacobite question also complicated diplomatic relations between Britain and the Dutch Republic. Early in 1717 Sunderland's ministry had requested the Dutch to arrest the Swede, Baron Görtz, who was implicated in a projected Jacobite insurrection in Scotland. Görtz had fled The Hague, but he was detained at Arnhem as a prisoner of the States of Gelderland. Görtz's papers and his secretary, Gyllenborg, were secured in the Dutch Capital.[11] Sunderland was eager to have Görtz moved to a more secure place than Arnhem; he wanted access to Görtz's papers and sought to persuade the United Provinces to join the British embargo of trade with Sweden.[12] Heinsius was determined not to provoke the Swedes and endanger Dutch interests and he was reluctant to grant any of Sunderland's demands.[13] Sunderland was intent upon keeping up the pressure upon the Dutch, but Charles Whitworth, the envoy at The Hague, doubted whether they would meet Sunderland's requests or even keep Görtz under arrest for much longer.[14]

In the face of Dutch intransigence Sunderland believed that it would be advisable to make some concessions. The British government announced that it was willing to accept a formal declaration from the Regent of France, who was mediating between it and Charles XII of Sweden, that if the Swedish King disowned Count Gyllenborg, who was under house arrest in London, and Görtz, then Gyllenborg would be allowed to return to Sweden and Britain would discuss arrangements for the release of Görtz with the States General.[15] A week later

Sunderland advised Whitworth that upon receiving the King of Sweden's declaration George I was ready to free Görtz, providing he did not remain within the Dutch Republic and was immediately dispatched for Sweden.[16] The British proposals were given a mixed reception by the Dutch.[17] In early-July 1717 George I was given the promised declaration by the Regent and Count Gyllenborg was sent back to Sweden.[18]

By this time, however, the provincial assembly at Gelderland had become impatient and this combined with pressure by Görtz's friends, secured his release on 2 August N.S. 1717.[19] Sunderland directed Whitworth to express the King's resentment at this decision and two days later he ordered the envoy not to concern himself about Görtz apart from insisting that he should not be allowed to enter the other six provinces of the Dutch Republic.[20] Görtz remained at Zutphen for some time and in the autumn he obtained a pass from Peter the Great and returned overland to Sweden.[21] As Görtz's secretary, Gyllenborg, was detained at the expense of the British government Whitworth secured his release at the beginning of September 1717.[22] Though Sunderland would have preferred Görtz to have been confined even longer than he was, his arrest had prevented him causing further trouble; but Anglo-Dutch relations were severely strained by the Dutch refusal to antagonise Sweden.[23]

The tensions between the Maritime powers were exacerbated by Dutch reluctance to back Britain's aggressive naval policy in the Baltic. No Dutch ships had sailed with Admiral Byng in the spring of 1717,[24] but Sunderland was resolved to have the support of the Republic the following year and was ready to seize any opportunity to bring them to a more aggressive posture in northern Europe. At the beginning of October 1717 he ordered Cadogan and Whitworth to sustain the States of Holland in their decision to grant letters of reprisal to their merchants against Swedish privateers and, if the States General did not approve this resolution, Whitworth was nevertheless to press the States of Holland to prosecute their decree with vigour. Whitworth reported the possibility that the States General might send a fleet

to the Baltic in the spring of 1718 in order to protect their commerce and Sunderland told him to encourage the States General to take such a step.[25] Sunderland and Whitworth were encouraged by the enthusiasm of the States of Holland towards dispatching a fleet to the Baltic and it seemed very likely that the States General would approve. The States General were ready to grant the necessary money and to appoint Admirals for the naval force, but the final decision had not been taken when Sunderland was replaced as Secretary of State by Stanhope in April 1718.[26] The Dutch did finally agree to send a fleet to the Baltic in 1718.[27]

Sunderland's bellicosity towards Sweden is also evident in his dealings with Denmark during his period as Secretary of State. The British fleet under Byng had sailed for the Baltic at the end of March 1717, reaching Copenhagen roads on 22 April N.S.[28] Sunderland had instructed the British envoy at the Danish Court, Lord Polwarth, to press the speedy equipping of the Danish fleet and to make every effort to assist preparations for an attack on the Swedish naval base at Karlskrona. Similar directions were issued to Byng.[29] The Danes appeared to respond positively to Polwarth's efforts, but, upon observing the fortifications of Karlskrona, Byng felt that the Danes would not undertake an assault.[30] Instead they suggested an alternative expedition against Gotland and though Sunderland told Polwarth to encourage the Danes, he did not expect to achieve anything significant that summer. His belief was well founded, for at the end of July the project on Gotland was laid aside.[31] Sunderland had already given Byng leave to send some ships back to Britain and on 26 July he ordered the Admiral to send all but ten of his ships home as soon as possible. Ten warships were felt to be adequate to deal with the Swedes and Byng immediately complied with his orders, sailing home himself in November.[32] Sunderland had left little doubt about his support for the King's interests abroad, but it was to be at home that his efforts were to be really employed.

II CONSOLIDATION AND CONCILIATION APRIL 1717 TO NOVEMBER 1718

'the new faction against the whole administration and indeed against the King himself'

Sunderland was immediately aware of the danger which faced his ministry. The opposition's success in carrying a motion that a High Churchman, Dr. Andrew Snape, should preach to the House of Commons and the government's narrow victory in the charges of corruption brought against Lord Cadogan demonstrated, for the present, that Sunderland must act cautiously in both Church and State. The proposed repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts was dropped, Convocation was prorogued to avoid serious clerical unrest arising from the Bangorian Controversy, and Sunderland was willing to gratify the Archbishop of Canterbury in ecclesiastical promotions. Sunderland's policy helped to retain the support of the Whig Bishops in the House of Lords and avoided arousing Tory passions. In state affairs Sunderland also followed a moderate course giving way during Oxford's trial when it was clear the government could not carry the House of Lords with it on this question. In late 1717 the administration also yielded to Walpole's supply proposals when it would have been unwise to try to carry their own recommendations. Sunderland also tried to achieve a reconciliation with the Prince of Wales, but the Prince's personal hostility to Sunderland and his unwillingness to accept the Prime Minister's terms led Sunderland to pursue a harsh and vindictive policy to the heir to the throne which, if it achieved little, highlighted Sunderland's strength at Court and his influence with the King. By early 1718 the debates in the House of Lords over the Mutiny bill and the bill for Forfeited Estates gave the first clear indication that Sunderland had recovered from the setback of Oxford's trial and was now dominating the chamber. In the Commons, however, the situation still remained unsatisfactory. Sunderland's lobbying of Whig M.P.'s had paid only temporary dividends and his attempt to drive a wedge between the opposition Whigs and the Tories and then to

reach an agreement with the latter failed. Consequently, in March 1718, Sunderland reorganized the government and this, together with the approval of the Commons for the ministry's foreign policy, seemed to indicate that Sunderland was now strong enough, both at Court and in Parliament, to proceed with his scheme for a unique political superiority.

Ever since the passage of the Occasional Conformity Act in 1711 and the Schism Act of 1714 the Whigs had assured the Dissenters that they could expect relief under the new dynasty. The first years of George I's reign proved to be a disappointment, but by early 1717 the Dissenters had good reason to be optimistic.[33] Sunderland was by now ready to consider the repeal of the penal laws against the Dissenters, along with a bill to reform the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. The subject may have been mentioned to the Archbishop of Canterbury as early as 23 January 1717, but certainly by March Sunderland was discussing his intentions with Lord Cowper and Archbishop Wake, while Stanhope was sounding opinion amongst Whig M.P.'s. There was opposition among Whig M.P.'s and upon the Episcopal bench; Bishop Nicolson of Carlisle was strongly opposed to repeal and he seems to have expressed the sentiments of a majority of the Bishops. Sunderland was still prepared to go ahead with his plans for, on 13 May 1717, he requested Cowper to attend a meeting of the Lords of the Committee at the Cockpit and that he 'should bring with you the University bill the King having spoke to me again about it'.[34] Sunderland was also canvassing support among Whig M.P.'s The same day, however, Walpole and the Tories succeeded in carrying a motion that Dr. Andrew Snape, a High Churchman, should preach to the House of Commons on 29 May. This indicated that Sunderland was not in control of the lower chamber. It was a setback for the ministry and put an end to Sunderland's attempt to assist the Dissenters for the present.[35]

Sunderland was determined to prevent any unrest involving the Church. Unfortunately, on 31 March 1717, the Bishop of Bangor preached his sermon 'My Kingdom is not of this World' before George I.

Hoadly had already argued that the State could remove any clergyman who opposed the Civil power and that the authority of the Bishops came from the Crown not God, but he now went even further by replacing the visible Church by unlimited private judgement. 'Such a sermon might have been preached by an extreme Dissenter, but it was an astonishing performance when delivered by a Bishop before King George I. Not surprisingly, it provoked one of the greatest religious controversies of the century'.[36] His opinions were naturally anathema to nearly every Churchman and a multitude of replies from Anglican divines attacked Hoadly and when the Lower House of Convocation complained about his opinions it seemed likely that it would merely intensify the internecine strife which had bedevilled relations between the two Houses of Convocation since 1701. Sunderland was desperate to avoid such a development and he wrote to Archbishop Wake: 'If this evening between six and seven be a convenient time for your Grace, Lord Chancellor, Lord Parker, the Bishop of Norwich, and Mr. Stanhope will be at my house at that time to have the honour of meeting you, the King having ordered them and me to wait upon you to consider the affair of the Convocation.'[37] Convocation was prorogued on 17 May and did not meet again for business until 1851. This decision of Sunderland's strained relations between the Prime Minister and his clerical allies and accounts for the public denial that he had been responsible for the prorogation.[38] Sunderland's statement was obviously an attempt to calm unease at the government's action, while the promotion of Edward Chandler to the Bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield was a conciliatory gesture to Archbishop Wake.[39]

By 1716 the longevity of the Bishop of Worcester was a subject of considerable speculation and with his death seemingly imminent the Bishop of Norwich wrote to Sunderland in February 1717 advising the translation of the Bishop of Oxford to Worcester when Bishop Lloyd died. Wake wanted the Bishop of Lichfield to replace Lloyd and to install his own creature, Dr. Edward Chandler, at Lichfield.

The Bishop of Sarum was ready to speak to Sunderland on Chandler's behalf, but the Bishop of Norwich was very cool in his response to Chandler's entreaties.[40] The resilience of the Bishop of Worcester prevented a decision for a further five months, but on 7 August 1717, Sunderland wrote to Wake that he had 'put the King in mind of his intention, when the Bishop of Worcester was last ill, of removing thither the Bishop of Lichfield, and promoting Dr. Chandler to Lichfield, and the King seems determined to do so'.[41] Lloyd finally died on 30 August and Sunderland and Wake agreed to translate the Bishop of Lichfield to Worcester and to nominate Chandler as his successor. The translation was completed at the end of September and Chandler was consecrated Bishop of Lichfield on 17 November.[42] The proceedings in Parliament in the summer of 1717 must have convinced Sunderland that he would also have to act cautiously in dealing with the Lords and Commons.

Just before Stanhope moved to the upper Chamber in July 1717 he had carried through the Commons Walpole's Sinking Fund scheme, which was designed to reduce the national debt.[43] For the rest of the year, however, the initiative lay with the opposition in the lower House. In May an attack was launched on Lord Cadogan for mismanagement and possible embezzlement of funds at the time when Dutch troops were transported to Britain to suppress the 1715 rebellion. The government was forced to allow an investigation. Sunderland began to rally the Whigs in the Commons and this, combined with Tory reluctance, merely to serve the interests of the opposition Whigs, helped the ministry to dispose of the inquiry. The accusations were considered in a committee of the whole House on 4 June 1717 and after preliminary debate the government moved that the Chairman should leave the chair which was approved by 205 votes to 194.[44] Sunderland recorded the names of the Whigs who had voted for and against Cadogan in this division[45] in order that disciplinary measures could be taken against those who had opposed the government because, as he told the Duchess of Marlborough, 'it's certain the King does resent that day's proceedings [4 June], more than ever he did anything in his life, for

though the question was upon Lord Cadogan, that was but a leading one to others, that were settled by the new faction against the whole administration and indeed against the King himself'.[46]

In making this observation Sunderland certainly had in mind the attempt the opposition would make to exploit the renewal of the trial of the Earl of Oxford. Oxford showed that his imprisonment had not dulled his political acumen for he delayed petitioning the House of Lords until the resentment against him abated and his Whig opponents were divided.[47] Oxford presented his appeal to the peers on 22 May 1717. On the following day it was suggested that the impeachment had been determined by the intervening prorogation and a committee was appointed to search for precedents. Lord Trevor reported from the committee and the question was put whether Oxford's case had been decided. Buckingham, Argyll, Nottingham, Abingdon, Aylesford, Islay, and North and Grey joined those who declared that it had, while Sunderland, Coningsby, Harcourt, and Trevor were among those who maintained the negative of this. The motion was rejected by 87 votes to 45.[48] It was then decided when the trial should commence. Buckingham proposed 6 June and was seconded by Lord Ferrers. Sunderland answered:

> That no man had any greater regard to the privileges of the peerage, or would do more to maintain them than himself; that he had a hearty concern for the sufferings of those who had the misfortune to lie under impeachments: that he had already complained, in the case of the Earl of Strafford, of the delays of the Commons in these prosecutions because he thought the whole peerage concerned therein: but that there might be just reasons for these delays; and therefore, to preserve a good correspondence between the two Houses, he was either for sending a message to the Commons to know whether they were ready for the trial of the Earl of Oxford, or to fix the 13 June for the said trial.

The motion for 6 June was thrown out by 85 votes to 44. It was then agreed, without dividing, that the 13 June should be set for the start

of the trial and a message to this effect was sent to the Commons.[49] On 12 June a message was sent back to the Lords desiring a further postponement of the trial. Sunderland moved that the Commons should be allowed a further fortnight, but he was opposed by Devonshire who argued that twelve days were enough. The House approved Devonshire's proposal by 76 votes to 57.[50]

Sunderland in the meantime was trying to undermine Walpole's association with the Tories. Walpole was in an embarrassing predicament because he had been the leading advocate of Oxford's impeachment, but if he was to retain the goodwill of the Tories he would have to support the attempt to get Oxford acquitted. Sunderland decided that Walpole should once again chair the Commons' committee concerned with Oxford's prosecution and Walpole, along with some other M.P.'s, was summoned to a meeting at Secretary Addison's office on 13 June to settle the impeachment proceedings.[51] Walpole, however, avoided the maximum discomfort by absenting himself from the committee's meetings.[52]

Oxford's trial began in Westminster Hall on 24 June 1717. When Sir Joseph Jekyll appeared at the bar of the House to make good the first article of the impeachment Lord Harcourt moved that the Lords' should adjourn to their own House. Having done so Harcourt proposed that the Commons' should first give judgement upon the charges of High Treason against Oxford before they considered the other articles. Lord North and Grey seconded Harcourt, but Sunderland told the House 'that the Commons had ever been permitted in cases of impeachments to choose their own methods of proceeding and that it was likewise the practice in all other inferior courts. That in this case it would be unreasonable to compell the Commons to skip over the first ten articles which might clear up and very much conduce to strengthen the evidence on the 11th and 12th'.[53] A long debate ensued in which Argyll and Islay reflected severely upon the Prime Minister. It was finally resolved by 86 votes to 56 to put Harcourt's motion, which carried without a division. The Commons protested immediately, requesting a conference with the Lords about the prosecution of impeachments.

The Lords, however, would not alter their verdict and a series of conferences followed, with Sunderland acting as one of the Lords' managers, but neither side would give way and the Lords eventually appointed 1 July as the date for Oxford's trial. On that day the Commons did not appear in Westminister Hall and after a short interval the Lords retired to their House. Harcourt suggested that the charges of Treason against Oxford should be dropped 'which Sunderland opposed, and said if he was discharged of any for want of prosecution, he ought to be discharged of all'.[54] Sunderland knew that it would be futile and unwise to try and secure a conviction when the mood of the House was so plainly in favour of clemency and therefore the wisest course of action was to dispose of this issue with the minimum of fuss and embarrassment to the government. His motion was approved and the Lords then returned to Westminster Hall where all the Lords present voted to acquit Oxford. Sunderland, Marlborough, Cadogan, Coningsby and some others withdrew before the peers entered the Hall.[55] The defeat over Oxford's trial left no one in doubt of the weakness of the Sunderland ministry and the Prime Minister must have been relieved when a troublesome session came to an end a fortnight later. He immediately embarked upon a search for a solution to the insecurity which threatened his authority.

Sunderland's first attempt to increase his parliamentary following involved an attempt to reach an agreement with a section of the Tory party. The King's speech on 6 May 1717 mentioned that an Act of Grace was to be introduced into Parliament and this can be seen as the first indication of Sunderland's readiness to approach the Tories. In response Harcourt and Trevor did, occasionally, follow a more moderate course during the conclusion of the Oxford affair, indicating their readiness to consider any proposals from Sunderland.[56] Once Oxford had been cleared it was decided in Cabinet to introduce into Parliament an Act of Grace which Sunderland delivered to the House of Lords on 15 July 1717.[57] Sunderland was also prepared to play a more dangerous game by seeing if he could enlist the support of

Bolingbroke to persuade the Tories to sever any connection with Walpole and Townshend. Bolingbroke was eager to assist Sunderland in the hope that he could obtain a pardon and be permitted to return to England. He was allowed to send over his agent, John Brinsden, who met Sunderland and Lord Carnarvon and who was introduced to the King. Sunderland, however, felt that it would be unwise to try to get Parliament to pardon Bolingbroke and this explains the Prime Minister's reluctance to enter into correspondence with the other leading Jacobite exile, the Earl of Mar, in September 1717.[58] The Tories themselves were unwilling to listen to Bolingbroke's counsel, while the Act of Grace in itself was insufficinet to convince them of Sunderland's good intentions.[59] Sunderland, therefore, decided to approach the Tories directly.

In October 1717 the King visited Newmarket for the horse racing, but, as Parliament had only been prorogued until Wednesday 9 October, Sunderland required further time for his discussions with the Tories.[60] He inquired of the Lord Chancellor 'whether in case the King should have a mind to stay at Newmarket longer than Monday one might continue so as to have a council at Newmarket for the prorogation of Parliament and also for the proclamation for notice of their doing business'.[61] Two days later Sunderland again wrote to Cowper informing him that Parliament was to be prorogued until 21 November and urging him to lose no time in sending up the commission for the King to sign if a council was held at Newmarket.[62] In the event, however, the King returned to Hampton Court where, at a council meeting, Parliament was prorogued until the end of the third week in November.[63] Sunderland could now approach the Tories. He contacted Lord Trevor who was summoned to Hampton Court where Sunderland introduced him to the King. It appears that a number of meetings took place between Sunderland and Trevor at which the Prime Minister offered a new Cabinet Council, including four Whigs, four Hanoverians, and four Tories; Trevor was to be created Lord President. Trevor showed little inclination to accept these terms and he demanded the dissolution of Parliament, for he regarded frequent parliaments as being essential

to the constitution, and he also warned Sunderland not to repeal the Occasional Conformity Act.[64] The talks came to nothing.

Sunderland's attempts to achieve a reconcilation with the Prince of Wales were also to end in failure. The first steps towards an accommodation with the Prince were taken in March 1717 when Stanhope had a meeting with Princess Caroline. On 16 April it was reported that 'Lord Sunderland designed yesterday to kiss the Prince's hand but the Prince would not see his Lordship and will give it's presumed for a reason the letter he [Sunderland] wrote to my Lord Orford'.[65] The Archbishop of Canterbury spared no effort to try and get the Prince of Wales to allow Sunderland to wait upon him. He urged Lady Cowper to interpose her efforts to bring about a reconciliation, he met with Sunderland, and consulted Princess Caroline and the Bishop of Carlisle, but it all came to nought.[66] The summer and early autumn of 1717 saw no lessening of the Prince's hostility to Sunderland[67] and as Lord Percival commented, 'the Prince, who on occasion of the letter writ by my Lord Sunderland to the Earl of Orford, has never since shewed any sort of countenance to that first mentioned Lord'.[68] As the hostility intensified in late 1717 Sunderland, no doubt angered by the Prince's intransigence, became increasingly ruthless and vindictive towards him. It was a measure of Sunderland's standing with the King that he could behave as he did.

On 20 October 1717 the Princess of Wales gave birth to a son who was at once the centre of controversy. His parents wanted the Duke of York to stand godfather while Sunderland argued that Newcastle, as Lord Chamberlain, should have that honour. The King accepted Sunderland's advice, to the great annoyance of his son.[69] The Prince's resentment was such that after the christening ceremony on 28 November he accosted Newcastle and used,

> very unbecoming words... in the King's presence... His Majesty being willing to give him an opportunity of recalling his error did this morning send the Dukes of Kingston, Kent and Roxburghe to enquire whether he had spoken such words, which except one (the altering of which

left the matter much as it was before) His Royal Highness owned, adding such aggravating expressions in relation to the Duke of Roxburghe who offered to excuse what he had done as being in obediance to the King's positive command, that His Majesty being informed thereof thought fit to confine His Royal Highness to his apartment till farther order, resolving to let him see he will be master of his own family.[70]

The Prince wrote submissively to his father the following day and in a further communication on 1 December he declared that he bore no malice towards Newcastle. Upon receiving these letters the King summoned Sunderland and Stanhope to him, on Sunday 2 December, and delivered the Prince's letters to them.[71] Sunderland was now ready to humiliate the Prince and to destroy his political influence.

It was decided to order the Prince to leave St. James's Palace and Sunderland had a list of the officers and servants of the Prince drawn up for examination. He then instructed the Dukes of St. Albans, Montagu, and Bolton, Lord Cowper, Lord Hinchinbrooke, William Clayton and Charles Howard that as their wives were employed by the King they should no longer wait upon the Princess and her family. Sunderland told Marlborough that the Prince and his family should have neither horse nor foot guards to attend them and that all the army officers who held posts in the Prince's household should be informed that the King expected them to give up these offices. The Prince immediately obeyed the King's order and he and the Princess set up house in rented accommodation in Leicester Square. On 4 December 1717 Sunderland and Addison gave foreign envoys in London the ministerial account of the dispute in the royal family. Archbishop Wake was reluctant to follow the instructions forbidding the King's servants to wait upon the Prince and on 28 December he visited Sunderland to ask that as a divine he should be allowed access to the Princess. The next day Wake was advised by Sunderland that the King could make no exceptions, but if the Archbishop informed a Secretary of State when the Princess desired to see him his request would be laid before the King for his approval. Wake agreed to accept these conditions.[72]

Encouraged by the humility the Prince of Wales had shown in his letters to the King and the promptness with which he obeyed the command to leave St. James's, Sunderland probably believed he could force the Prince to submit to George I on very unfavourable terms. It would seem that proposals for an agreement were presented to the Prince early in December, but they were unacceptable to him.[73] By the end of the month or early in 1718 Sunderland was ready to try again. He drew up a paper containing five points which the Prince was expected to accept in order to show his sincere desire for a reconciliation.[74] The document was carried to the Prince by the Speaker of the House of Commons, Spencer Compton, to whom George Augustus declared 'qu'il ne pouvoit pas se soumettre à ces conditions qui etoient les mêmes et encore plus dures que celles qu'il avoit déja refusé il y a quelque tems'.[75] Following this second refusal Sunderland was ready to strike directly at the Prince's wealth and authority.

At Sunderland's instigation the King was prepared to inform Parliament that he had resumed the various grants made to the Prince in order to make provision for the rest of his family and that he would assume responsibility for the care and education of his grandchildren.[76] Sunderland also directed the Attorney-General, Sir Edward Northey, to peruse 'the several grants to his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales' and to declare whether those relating to the nomination of his servants were not revocable. Northey felt it would be of little value to revoke this power and consequently Sunderland dropped the attempt to obtain control of the Prince's household and income.[77] Despite this setback Sunderland was still intent upon securing custody over the Prince's children.

In the House of Lords on 20 January 1718 Sunderland delivered a letter to Lord Chancellor Cowper to be sent to Lord Chief Justice Parker seeking the opinion of the judges:

> Whether the education and care of the persons of his Majesties grandchildren now in England and of Prince Frederick, elder son of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, when his Majesty shall

> think fit to cause him to come into England, and the ordering the place of abode, and appointing their governors and governesses, and other instructions, attendants and servants, and the approbation of their marriages when grown up, belong of right to his Majesty as King of this realm or not.[78]

Cowper greatly resented the fact that Sunderland had drawn up the question without consulting him.[79] Two days later the judges met at Lord Parker's chambers where Sunderland's inquiry was read. The Prince, being informed, desired that his counsel should be heard. The judges communicated this request to the King and Sunderland instructed Parker that George I gave permission for counsel to appear on the Prince's behalf.[80] Sunderland also informed the Prince of the decision.[81] After deliberating for two days the judges declared, by a majority of ten to two, that the King had the rights, mentioned in Sunderland's letter, with respect to the Prince's children.[82]

The King had fully approved of Sunderland's conduct in the dispute with the Prince of Wales, thus confirming the Prime Minister's growing authority at Court. This strength was based upon Sunderland's vigorous upholding of the dignity and interests of the Crown both at home and abroad. Sunderland was also developing a more intimate relationship with the King which gave him considerable influence over the disposal of offices within the royal household and allowed him to dismiss nominees of the Hanoverian ministers. In November 1717 it was observed that at informal Court gatherings there 'was every night the Duchess of Munster and the neighbouring ladies. The King sometimes playing at billiards and other times looking upon her with those that played at cards, on Sunderland at chess with Mr. ——— and upon other picqueteers'.[83] Similarly, when Sunderland married his third wife, Judith Tichborne, in December 1717, she was received at Court and presented to the King.[84] In April 1717 Sunderland had secured Newcastle's appointment as Lord Chamberlain, replacing the Duke of Bolton, who was transferred to the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland,

and in July he had Bolton, together with Grafton and Dorset, dismissed as Gentlemen of the Bedchamber because of their opposition to the government. Significantly, Grafton and Dorset had been given their posts upon the recommendation of Bothmer and this is the first indication that Sunderland could challenge the influence of George I's German ministers at Court. In September and November 1717 Sunderland was trying, unsuccessfully as it turned out, to persuade Lord Carlisle, whose son had married one of Sunderland's daughters, to accept the office of Lord President.[85] Sunderland's interest with the King and at Court was the most encouraging feature of 1717. The new parliamentary session, unfortunately, once again highlighted Sunderland's vulnerability in the Commons though, more positively, it revealed that he was now in a commanding position in the Lords following the temporary setback in the summer of 1717.

Walpole attacked supply proposals for the army in the Commons during December 1717 and January 1718, forcing the acceptance of his own suggestions. Walpole and the Tories then proceeded to harry the government over the Mutiny bill and the opposition came close to a major victory.[86] The Mutiny bill was read for the first time in the Lords on 13 February 1718. Trevor and Argyll opened the debate by opposing the bill and 'Sunderland answered Argyll and reflected on him for voting one session that the peace was safe and honourable and the next that it was a disadvantageous one'.[87] It was observed upon the debate that 'Lord Sunderland speaks short but first and when he gives the hint all his party takes it'.[88] The second reading took place on 18 February and the bill was considered in committee two days later.[89] Lord Trevor moved to instruct the committee that no punishment should be inflicted at any Court Martial that extended to life and limb. Stanhope retorted that this would render the bill ineffectual. A debate then ensued which lasted for five hours. Anglesey argued that it was dangerous to maintain a large army in time of peace, especially when it was governed by martial law. Sunderland replied 'that among the Romans, the wisest people in the world and the greatest lovers and assertors of public liberty, martial laws and

discipline were invigorated by decrees of the senate and were in force in times of peace as well as in times of war'. As a result the motion was defeated by 91 votes to 77.[90] The Tories continued their attack in the committee on 21 February when it was proposed to reduce the standing army from 16,347 men to 12,000 men:

> my Lord Sunderland les reponnsa en representent que ce nombre étoit petit pour un royaume come celui de la Grande Bretagne, mais il passa l'egerment sur les mecontentements du peuple qui rendiut ce nombre et un plus grand necessaire. Il ne toucha que la situation de l'Ecosse soutenant que dix mille montagnards étoient capables de renverser toute la milice qui y est.[91]

It was agreed by 72 votes to 50 that the 16,000 men should stand as part of the bill and a motion to resume the House was defeated by 74 votes to 48. The Lords then considered the clause which made mutiny and desertion punishable by death. The question whether the words 'death or' should be retained in the bill was carried without dividing and the bill passed the House on 24 February.[92] On 4 March 1718 the Forfeited Estates bill was read for the first time and a recommendation for a second reading was opposed by Trevor, Harcourt, North and Grey, and Argyll. They were answered by Sunderland, Stanhope, Parker and Coningsby, and it was resolved to give the bill a second reading. The bill passed this stage two days later and after being examined in committee it was approved by the House.[93] The debates in the Lords left little doubt that Sunderland was very much master of that assembly and together with his authority at Court it was evident that his administration was now stronger than it had been for nearly a year. Only the House of Commons remained unbowed and to help to remedy this weakness Sunderland decided to reorganize the ministry.

In March 1718 James Craggs junior, 'a true disciple of Lord Sunderland',[94] replaced Joseph Addison as Secretary of State for the South. John Aislabie, a former Tory M.P. who had supported Cadogan in June 1717 and had been one of the leading ministerial speakers in the

Commons in November and December 1717, became Chancellor of the Exchequer and was named in a new Treasury Commission with George Baillie, John Wallop, and William Clayton. Nicholas Lechmere was made Attorney-General, while in April Lord Parker succeeded Cowper as Lord Chancellor. Stanhope became Secretary of State for the North in place of Sunderland who took the offices of First Lord of the Treasury and Lord President of the Council.[95] The exchange of posts between Sunderland and Stanhope was merely a recognition of political realities. Sunderland was at the head of the King's administration totally dominating domestic policy, with Stanhope, who had little aptitude for politics,[96] content to follow his lead; though it is clear he was Sunderland's closest associate and confidant. His real value to Sunderland was his ability as a diplomat and his skill in conducting the government's foreign policy.

Sunderland, however, was not completely satisfied with this arrangement for he wanted Lord Carlisle to be Lord President,[97] while he himself was to be First Lord of the Treasury and Groom of the Stole. The Duke of Montrose observed that Sunderland was 'very far from being fond of the change. I may tell you he's inclined more to be Groom of the Stole than P[resident] of the Council, but that's a post the K[ing] has no inclination to sell'.[98] Sunderland also disliked holding two posts when both gave a place on the Council,[99] though in compensation, as Bonet remarked, the office of First Lord of the Treasury 'confrere un grand credit par le pouvoir qu'elle donne de deposer d'une infinité de bonnes places'.[100] Sunderland's inability to secure the position of Groom of the Stole was probably due to the King's refusal to give this office to an English minister until he was on very close personal terms with him and, furthermore, the Hanoverian ministers, particularly Bernstorff, now regarded Sunderland with suspicion and unease. They were determined to keep the office of Groom of the Stole vacant 'for an able English politician near the king might have quickly deprived them of their monopoly of the royal confidence and checked to some extent their enormous influence in English affairs'.[101] A year later Sunderland's intimacy with the King was sufficient for him to overcome

Hanoverian opposition and to obtain the post with ease. Sunderland's relations with Bernstorff began to deteriorate from early 1718 as his authority with the King grew and showed every sign of advancing even further.

The 1717-1718 parliamentary session had ended on 21 March 1718 and throughout the summer and autumn of 1718 attention was centred on foreign affairs. With the backing of the French, and of Dubois above all, Stanhope had brought the Emperor to accept his plan for peace in southern Europe that would settle the territorial disputes in Italy between the Emperor Charles VI and Philip V of Spain. Stanhope then tried to prevent Spanish aggression in Italy and to persuade Spain to approve his scheme. To this end Admiral Byng, with a fleet of twenty ships, had sailed for the Mediterranean in July 1718 with instructions to oppose the Spanish and to protect Imperial dominions. In August Byng destroyed the Spanish fleet at Cape Passaro and Stanhope was now ready to go to war with Spain in order to force her to accept his peace initiative.[102]

When Parliament met on 11 November 1718 the King's speech was designed to prepare the ground for a declaration of war against Philip V. Lord Carteret moved an address of thanks which included congratulations upon Byng's recent victory. The opposition attacked the government over what many felt was unprovoked aggression by Byng and it was moved to omit from the address the words 'to congratulate his Majesty upon the seasonable success of his naval forces'. But, with Sunderland cautiously managing the debate and Stanhope speaking with great warmth, the motion was accepted as it stood by 83 votes to 50. Sunderland was named in the committee to draw up the address.[103] The Whig opposition in the Commons also criticised Byng's conduct, but in the vote on the address of thanks they were defeated by 60 votes. The government's majority rose to seventy-one in the debate on the address approving the declaration of war on Spain which Sunderland delivered into the House of Lords on 17 December 1718.[104] The conflict with Spain was pursued with restraint and success and by January 1720 Spain had joined the Quadruple alliance. The successful implementation of

the government's foreign policy and particularly the victory at Cape Passaro had rallied support to the administration in the Commons and for the first time since March 1717 Sunderland had a substantial majority in the lower House. This was all the encouragement he needed to introduce his scheme to make his position virtually unassailable.

III SUNDERLAND'S OFFENSIVE NOVEMBER 1718 TO JUNE 1720

'nous somes en de bonnes mains, nous somes gouvernés par un insensé'

Sunderland knew that his power as the King's chief minister depended upon his ability to manage both the Crown and Parliament. Failure to control either one of these two strongholds rendered him politically vulnerable. Aware of his strength at Court Sunderland sought to carry through a programme which would make his authority in the Lords and Commons incontestable and thereby give his administration a degree of security which no ministry had possessed since 1689. Sunderland's bid for hegemony dominated the 1718-1719 and 1719-1720 sessions of Parliament. It was the Prime Minister who was responsible for planning, modifying, and implementing the ministry's parliamentary strategy. Sunderland rallied the government's followers for the opening of the sessions, he bought off Tory peers such as Saye and Sele, Hatton, and Clarendon, and struggled to win the support of the Episcopate. The bill to repeal the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts was a piece of shrewd and deliberate calculation designed not only to give relief to the Dissenters but also, by its moderate tone, to prepare the way for the legislation which Sunderland believed necessary to safeguard his political future. It would be difficult for the opposition Whigs to oppose repeal of the disabilities upon the Dissenters without laying themselves open to the accusation of cynical factionalism; repeal would appeal to the independent Whigs in the Commons; and its restrained nature might even serve as a further

recommendation by not alienating the Bishops. The reception which repeal was given would also help to indicate the feasibility of introducing Sunderland's legislation into Parliament. The readiness of Argyll to come to terms with Sunderland and the latter's appointment as Groom of the Stole can only have served to increase his confidence. Sunderland's personal standing in the Lords allowed him to carry the Peerage bill through the House, but the hostility it was certain to raise amongst M.P.'s and his inability, even with the full backing of the Crown, to placate this opposition led Sunderland to drop the bill for the 1718-1719 session. During the summer of 1719 Sunderland crowned his ascendancy at Court by humbling Bernstorff for his opposition to the government. After this victory, and confident that he could once more use Stanhope's achievements in foreign policy to win over the Commons, Sunderland was ready to re-introduce the Peerage bill. Sunderland carried the bill through the Lords with ease but he was defeated in the Commons by Walpole. Sunderland was now convinced that only by buying off Walpole could his administration be secure in the Commons. It was a testimony to the extent of Sunderland's predominance that he could dictate the terms of reconciliation to Walpole and Townshend.

Sunderland was meticulous in his preparations for the meeting of Parliament in November 1718. He urged his supporters in the Lords and Commons to hasten their journey up to London so that the ministry would be at full strength when the struggle began. At the same time Sunderland had been augmenting his following in the Lords. In February 1718 he had procured, in return for a pension, the assistance of the Tory, Lord Saye and Sele, and it is likely that a similar bargain was struck with Lords Clarendon, Hatton, Jersey, Yarmouth, and Maynard for they, along with Saye and Sele, all voted for the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts in December 1718. Sunderland also paid particular attention to the Bishops in the House of Lords. Bishop Nicolson of Carlisle was implacably opposed to repeal of the penal legislation against Dissenters and he had served as a focus of ecclesiastical discontent in early 1717, but Sunderland

had effectively banished Nicolson from British political life by having him created Bishop of Londonderry in Ireland in 1718.[105] Sunderland was assiduous in his courting of the Archbishop of Canterbury. In October 1718 he approved Wake's nomination of White Kennett for the Bishopric of Peterborough; as far as Sunderland was concerned Kennett was an excellent choice for he was eager to attach himself to Sunderland's interest, he was moderate in his attitude towards the Dissenters, and he supported the repeal bill in December.[106] Sunderland also tried to influence Wake towards favouring repeal by promising a letter from the King to be sent to all the Bishops condemning heretical and unorthodox opinions about which the Archbishop was greatly worried. Wake, however, could not be moved from his opposition to the bill and when it was about to pass the House of Commons Sunderland lost interest in the projected royal letter and the idea was laid aside.[107]

Sunderland had been considering what form the legislation to assist the Dissenters should take from May 1718, but it was only at the end of the year that the plan was finalised.[108] On 23 November Sunderland inquired of Archbishop Wake if it would be convenient if he, along with Stanhope, Craggs and Parker, waited on him at Lambeth the following day. At dinner that day Wake was probably told that the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts were to be repealed.[109] On 12 December Sunderland again wrote to Wake that:

> I had several things to have talked to your Grace upon, if I had waited upon you this morning, and in particular by the King's order to have shewn your Grace the enclosed copy of the Bill about the Occasional Conformity, which Lord Stanhope is to bring tomorrow into the House. Your Grace will see by it, that though it is absolutely necessary, for the King's affairs to have this matter brought on yet there is in the framing and shaping it, all the regard had to the dignity of the Church, and the ease of the clergy, as was possibly consistent with making it effectual for the public service of the government, and indeed I think it truly so framed, as not to leave a real

conscientious and religious objection to it. The King therefore hopes it will not meet with your Grace's disapprobation. I am sure there never was a King who was more sincerely and more strongly determined to support the established Church, and consult its honour, nor who has a greater desire to shew the utmost regard to yourself, as the head of that Church under him, and this you will find more and more every day, both in little and in great things, for indeed all those that are concerned in the King's administration are out of principle determined to pursue in this the King's intentions and are out of inclination and true esteem, your Grace's faithful servants.[110]

The bill which Sunderland had drawn up in consultation with the Bishops of Lichfield, Sarum, Worcester, Gloucester, Lincoln, and Bangor repealed the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts. It protected clergymen who refused to administer the Sacrament to a Dissenter, in order to allow him to qualify for office. If a person desirous to receive the Sacrament, in order to hold office, gave notice in writing of his intention to present himself on a certain day then if the minister refused to administer the Sacrament this was equivalent to actual bestowal; evidence of refusal was to be presented within three months of the person's admission to office; and, finally, no magistrate was to carry his insignia of office to any place of public worship other than the established Church. Despite these concessions the Archbishop of Canterbury would not support Sunderland, even after being spoken to in the lobby of the House of Lords the following day.[111]

Stanhope opened the debate by requesting that the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts should be read and after this had been done he moved to introduce the bill for their repeal. He was seconded by Sunderland. Once the bill had been communicated Nottingham proposed that a very long day should be set aside for the second reading together with a call of the House. Sunderland moved for a second reading the following Tuesday and he was seconded by Stamford. Devonshire, Townshend, and North and Grey favoured a long day, but

Sunderland's suggestion was about to be put to the House by the Lord Chancellor when Islay stood up and, though he spoke against the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts, complained against the clause in the repeal bill which would abrogate the Test Act. Cowper spoke likewise and 'my Lord Sunderland yielded to Thursday and gave to understand that the clause against which exception was taken should be dropped, and bound down Earl Islay and Lord Cowper upon what they had said with relation to the other two acts'.[112]

The discussion on Thursday 18 December was monopolised by the Bishops and it was apparent that the removal of the Sacramental Test raised most objections. In the committee the next day Sunderland, true to his word, 'himself proposed the waiving... and afterwards owned that it had never been part of the bill unless the Bishops of Gloucester, Lincoln, and Bangor had declared they would not appear for the bill without it'.[113] Upon the committal debate Devonshire, Buckingham, Anglesey, Nottingham, Oxford, Abingdon, Aylesford, Lumley, Harcourt and Cowper spoke against, while Sunderland, Stanhope, Newcastle, Montrose, Peterborough, Cholmondeley, Islay, Carteret, and Coningsby spoke in favour; the motion carried by 95 votes to 77. On Saturday 20 December it was agreed by 65 votes to 33 to engross the bill the following Monday. During the third reading on the Tuesday Nottingham moved to add a clause to the bill that no one should be allowed to hold office without subscribing to the articles of faith of the Church of England. He was opposed by Sunderland, Stanhope, and Islay and the proposal was rejected.[114] In the debate 'very high words passed between Lord Sunderland and the late Chancellor [Cowper]... accusing one another of dishonesty and betraying their country, several broken sentences uttered which, if any had but gently blown the flame would have been filled up, and several secrets revealed which had long been desired'.[115]

The bill was read for the first time in the Commons on Christmas Eve 1718 and for the second time on 7 January 1719. In the debate:

Le Sieur Robert Walpole, Whig mécontent, ne fut pas plus retenu apres avoir impute ce bil au Ministere, au Comte de Sunderland en particulier, il rapella le changement de religion du feu Comte son Pere; les ruineux conseils qu'il donnoit au Roy Jacques; les intelligences secretes qu'il entretenoit alors avec le Prince d'Orange, qu'il traita de perfide, et le merite qu'il se fit sous le Roy Guillaume de cette conduite, mais qu'il ne vouloit point faire de parable'.[116]

The Duke of Montrose declared that Walpole's speech 'was the most impertinent one I ever heard',[117] but it achieved little for the bill was committed by 243 votes to 202. It passed its third reading in the Commons on 10 January by 215 votes to 157.[118]

Sunderland's triumph with the repeal bill was rewarded in February 1719 when the King made him Groom of the Stole.[119] There was no longer any doubt about Sunderland's standing with George I.[120] Bonet informed the King of Prussia 'Il n'est pas moins suprenant que my Lord Sunderland ait accepté cette charge... qui est une veritable charge de favori, avec qui un Roy se plait, et a qu'il donne cette charge pour lui donner un entree libre de son appartemens privez'.[121] Sunderland gave up the position of Lord President and was replaced by the Duke of Kingston, while the Duke of Kent became Lord Privy Seal. More significantly, Argyll was given the office of Lord Steward. Walpole's relations with Argyll and Islay had deteriorated in 1718 and the two Scots, impressed by Sunderland's power, were prepared to come to an arrangement with him, as Islay himself had demonstrated in the debates over the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts.[122] Negotiations took place in January and February 1719 and an agreement was reached. Argyll's return to the ministry helped to compensate for Cadogan's erratic behaviour. The latter's connection with Stanhope and Craggs was becoming more and more strained. Sunderland was probably better disposed towards Cadogan than the two Secretaries of State, but he could not ignore the value of Argyll's support. Furthermore, Cadogan's attempt to create intimate relations with the King and his association with the Hanoverian ministers meant that he could no longer be trusted. Sunderland, aware that Argyll's

promotion would be a source of great unease to his Scottish allies, the Squadrone, re-assured Montrose of his continuing fidelity and ensured that the Squadrone retained its dominance in Scotland by excluding Argyll from Scottish affairs.[123] Fortified by these successes Sunderland was now ready to introduce the Peerage bill.

Sunderland was personally responsible for drawing up the Peerage bill.[124] Under its terms the sixteen Scottish representative peers were to be replaced by twenty-five hereditary peers nominated by the King and in the event of one of these peerages becoming extinct, the choice of a replacement also lay with the Crown. There were to be no more than six further additions to the English peerage and, as with the Scottish nobility, when a title died out it was the monarch who was to appoint a successor.[125] Sunderland, Montrose, Roxburghe and Argyll had settled the arrangements for the twenty-five hereditary Scottish peers. The present sixteen representative peers were to be incorporated into the twenty-five with the addition of Atholl, Hamilton, Queensberry, Douglas, Marchmont, Murray, Morton, Tweeddale and 'Alquis'.[126]

The Duke of Somerset moved to introduce the Peerage bill into the Lords on 28 February 1719 and he was supported by Argyll and Sunderland. Carlisle urged that a day should be appointed for the House to go into a committee upon the bill. Oxford opposed Somerset's suggestion, but he was answered by Sunderland, who said 'that though the number of peers were limited, yet the Crown would still be the fountain of honour, and preserve its prerogative of creating new peers upon the extinction of old titles, for want of male issue, which happened frequently; and that those extinctions would give the prince on the throne sufficient opportunities to bestow honours upon commoners of distinguished merit and abilities'. Sunderland closed his speech by supporting Carlisle's motion, which was agreed to accordingly, and the debate was adjourned until 2 March.[127] As if to emphasise the point Sunderland persuaded the King to deliver a message to the Lords, read by Stanhope, 'that he has so much at heart the settling

the peerage of the whole kingdom, upon such a foundation, as may secure the freedom and constitution of Parliament in all future ages, that he is willing his prerogative stand not in the way of so great and necessary work'.[128] This message was the cause of heated debates and 'the Lords Oxford and Sunderland clashed and went out; the House observed it; sent after them; called them to their places, and there made them promise upon honour, that what had been said there should occasion no further misunderstanding betwixt them'.[129]

On 3 March 1719 the Lords went into committee upon the bill and Sunderland, in a speech which lasted almost an hour[130] and was described by his opponents 'as one of the greatest performances they ever knew in Parliament',[131] opened the debate. He commenced,

> with an historical deduction (as he called it) of the steps that had been taken towards a union from the time of King James the first. [He] said, that the constant obstruction to it had been picking the number of Scotch peers and negotiating their manner of sitting in the English House. That at the Union, when both sides had agreed upon the number, they were established upon a footing derogatory to the dignity of both peerages. That he had the honour of being a commissioner and should have never agreed to this part of the treaty had it not been for establishing the succession in the House of Hanover. That he was in the late Queen's service when the Duke of Dover was created and represented to her, that it would be looked upon as an invasion of the Union and that he doubted whether even that Lord's services would procure him an easy seat in the House of Lords. He then said, that Lord had been admitted quietly, yet in the next instance, which was the Duke of Brandon, they had passed a resolution which excluded for ever any such Lords from the benefit of English peerages. That if this were adhered to (as he believed it would be) they should lose the company of the young Duke of Dover, who notwithstanding his father's merit [illegible] a youth of great hopes would not be allowed a seat there. He believed both peers thought the tenure by which the Scottish Lords sat very improper and then proceeded to open his scheme of having

> twenty-five hereditary, instead of elective, but that these sixteen might be allowed to sit till the end of the sessions when the whole might be named. He then took notice of the great increase of the English peerage in the late reigns, and that his Majesty had graciously offered not to insist upon his prerogative if that stood in the way. And having talked a good deal of limiting the number he said it might be, however, proper to come to some resolution and then concluded for putting the question "Whether in lieu of the sixteen elective there should be twenty-five hereditary peers for the future to represent the peerage of Scotland".[132]

Lord Cowper replied that it was unjust for the twenty-five to be nominated except by the peerage of Scotland, to which Sunderland answered 'that then they must summon a Scotch Parliament for that the Commons as well as the Lords had passed the act in that kingdom which made the Scotch peers elective; that he did not think the consent of either necessary. That in the Septennial bill, (the merits of which he would not enter into) the Commons of Great Britain had continued themselves for a longer time than they were chosen, without consulting their principals'.[133] It was then agreed to accept Sunderland's resolution and the bill received its first reading on 14 March 1719 and its second reading two days later.[134]

It was evident that the Peerage bill would pass easily through the House of Lords, but Sunderland was doubtful whether he could obtain the necessary majority in the House of Commons. Throughout March 1719 he had been trying to persuade Whig M.P.'s such as Alan Brodrick, the Irish Lord Chancellor, who sat in the English House of Commons, to vote for the bill. Sunderland tried to bribe these M.P.'s, no doubt using the Secret Service money which he had under his control from late 1717, but he met with little success. The uncertainty about how a large group of Whig M.P.'s would vote led Sunderland, sometime in March 1719, to draw up a prediction of how the voting would go on the Peerage bill in the Commons. According to his figures he had a solid bloc of 211 votes, while the opposition could muster 222 votes.

The problem lay in forecasting how the remaining 122 M.P.'s, which Sunderland classified as 'doubtful', would behave. His estimates of how many doubtfuls would support the government was far from encouraging. At best, Sunderland concluded, he would have a majority of twenty, but even that figure appeared optimistic.[135] Sunderland, however, continued his efforts. On the evening of 13 April 160 Whig M.P.'s gathered at the house of Sir Hugh Boscawen where,

> Sunderland leur exposa qu'il avoit considere ce bil comme une chose avantageuse au parti Whig, par la creation de 25 pairs Ecossois, et par celle de six Anglois, si l'on le projet qui avoit été formé, ensorte que ce parti auroit toujours été dominant dans cette chambre. Il le representa aussi comme necessaire pour remedier aux abus des Ministres d'Etat ont fait de cette prerogative royale. Il finit par exposer que, nonobstant la diversité de sentiments qu'il y avoit sur ce bil, il esperoit qu'ils demeureroient unis sur les autres points qui interessent sa Majesté et son Gouvernement. De ces 160 il en eut plus de cent que se declareront contre un bil qui tendoit à elever la chambre haute au dessus de la leur, mais ils prominent de concurir avec ces ministres d'Etat dans les autres mesures.[136]

The bill was due to be given its third reading in the Lords the following day, but instead 'Lord Sunderland in an eloquent speech today has signified that the bill of Peerage is to be dropped this session and to be renewed the next'.[137] Four days later Parliament was prorogued.[138] Sunderland was to spend the whole of the summer of 1719 preparing for the re-introduction of the Peerage bill. He was determined to root out any opposition and once again to exploit Stanhope's success abroad to lay the foundations for this attempt.

The Hanoverian minister Bernstorff, was deeply perturbed by Sunderland's commanding position at Court and he was apprehensive of Stanhope's attempt to come to terms with Sweden and Prussia because it ran counter to his own plan for peace in the north and also threatened his own personal territorial interests in northern Germany.

Bernstorff opposed the Peerage bill and he helped to establish an alliance, including Hanover, the Emperor, and Poland which was hostile to Prussia, while trying to sabotage the diplomatic missions of Lord Carteret to Stockholm and Charles Whitworth to Berlin.[139] Both Sunderland and Stanhope greatly resented Bernstorff's behaviour and Sunderland observed of the Hanoverian 'qu'il pouvoit etre bon ministere à Hanover, qu'il n'etoit pas propre pour étre sur un grand theatre'.[140] Stanhope, who accompanied George I to Hanover in the summer of 1719, was struggling to overcome Bernstorff's wrecking policy. The Secretary of State wrote to the Prime Minister, 'you may depend upon it that he [Bernstorff] will do us all the mischief he can. I think, however, as I told you before, that we shall weather the present danger'.[141] Bonet was not so sanguine, remarking 'C'est un malheur que my Lord Stanhope soit seul ministre d'Etat Anglois à Hanover, et qu'il n'ait pas le Comte de Sunderland avec lui pour le consulter et pour le soutenir'.[142] By the end of July 1719 Stanhope was in agreement with the Prussian envoy. He again wrote to Sunderland, 'I have mentioned to the Duchess [of Kendal] your Lordships coming over and judged it most proper to open it her self to the King. I can assure you we both very much approve it, and for my own part I most earnestly desire you were here. You will see by my dispatches to Craggs the confused situation of our northern affairs'.[143] Sunderland tried to encourage Stanhope and dispatched the warrant for the King to sign to allow him to visit Hanover.[144] A week later Sunderland wrote to him, 'I return your Lordship many thanks for the favour of your letters, with the King's licence, and your kind invitation to Hanover, which I shall make use of as soon as possible I can'.[145] In the meantime Carteret at Stockholm and Whitworth at Berlin completed a series of treaties involving Britain, Hanover, Sweden, and Prussia. Sweden agreed to cede Bremen and Verden to Hanover and Stettin and part of Pomerania to Prussia. In return Britain promised Sweden financial and naval assistance against her remaining enemies in the north.[146] On 14 August Sunderland

congratulated Stanhope upon the treaty between Britain and Prussia and declared that he would leave for Hanover the following Thursday. Sunderland reached The Hague on 24 August and arrived at Hanover at the end of the month.[147]

The struggle with Bernstorff lasted throughout September and early-October 1719, but Sunderland, thanks to his great influence with the King and George I's confidence in his chief minister, eventually emerged victorious. On 22 October N.S. Sunderland informed Newcastle 'that neither Bernstorff nor Cadogan have any credit'.[148] Upon his return to England Sunderland gave further details of his triumph to Lord Carlisle. He affirmed:

> I beg leave to congratulate you upon the good situation of the King's affairs in all parts, which gives a reasonable and near prospect of a peace both in north and south. I must also congratulate you upon another thing; that is the resolution the King has taken not to suffer his Germans to meddle in English affairs, he having forbid them to presume so much as to speak to him about them. And this he has ordered all his servants to declare to everybody to be his resolution, and tells it himself to as many as come to him.[149]

The King crowned Sunderland's success by declaring that he would be made a Knight of the Garter. Sunderland told his wife 'as for the Blue Ribbon the King has in the handsomest and kindest manner told me he designed it for me as soon as he should return to England'.[150] Throughout his battle with Bernstorff Sunderland had still been preoccupied with the re-introduction of the Peerage bill into Parliament.

Early in August 1719 Sunderland importuned Stanhope 'for God's sake hasten the King's going to the Göhr for I hear he thinks of being in England not sooner than the middle of November. If so that entirely defeats the doing any considerable business before the holidays, the ill consequences of which are but too plain, whereas if

by meeting early, as has been for these two last sessions, the main of the money affairs are got over by that time, the King has the session in his hand'.[151] Sunderland renewed his plea at the end of the month adding 'that holding the Parliament, by the middle of November... with the wonderful success you have had, both in north and south, would make everything easy, and fix his authority in England, as much as it is everywhere abroad'.[152] At Hanover Sunderland advised that it would be necessary to be in England at the beginning of November and in September, no doubt with great relief, he informed his wife that 'the orders for the rising of the Parliament on the 23rd of November O.S. are sent, the King being determined to be in England wind and weather permitting the first week in November'.[153]

In September Sunderland revealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, John Aislabie, that the King was resolved to support the re-introduction of the Peerage bill and the bill to reform the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge.[154] Sunderland also outlined his plans to Newcastle, stating 'our affairs in all parts go as well as can be wished; after that our winter campaign can't fail, especially since the King is more determined than ever to persist with vigour in the measures you and your friends wish. He is resolved to push the Peerage bill, the University bill, and the repeal of the Septennial bill. If this won't unite the Whigs nothing will'.[155] The reform of the Universities had been first considered in 1716 and 1717, but it had been dropped along with the repeal of the Occasional Conformity and Schism Acts in May 1717.[156] Sunderland believed it was necessary for the government to tighten its grip on the Universities, especially in the light of the disputes involving the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, Dr. Richard Bentley, with the Fellows and Vice-Chancellor of the University. These quarrels had been brought before the King and Sunderland in Council.[157] The repeal of the Septennial Act was, like the Peerage bill, designed to help maintain Sunderland's control of Parliament. Stanhope wrote to Newcastle arguing that the best way to secure the passage of the Peerage bill was to win over the

Commons by repealing the Septennial Act. Newcastle, who was enthusiastic about the Peerage and University bills, had grave doubts as to the wisdom of this step as he told both Sunderland and Stanhope.[158] In the event the defeat of the Peerage bill put an end to the rest of Sunderland's scheme.

The departure from Hanover was delayed by a meeting with the King of Prussia and Sunderland eventually left for The Hague on 2 November N.S. 1719. He arrived back in England at the end of the second week in November.[159] He was already active in preparing for the meeting of Parliament. Sunderland had increased his following among the Bishops by having Dr. Hugh Boulter, 'one of the honestest, steadiest, and worthiest clergymen in England',[160] appointed Bishop of Bristol.[161] Sunderland was again discussing the nominations for the twenty-five hereditary Scotch Peers and he was active in obtaining the proxies of those of his supporters in the House of Lords who had not come up to London. There were even rumours that Sunderland was to be made Lord Treasurer at the opening of Parliament,[162]

On 23 November the King's speech appealed to both Lords and Commons 'to think of all proper methods to establish and transmit to your posterity the freedom of our happy constitution, and particularly to secure that part which is most liable to abuse. I value myself, upon being the first who hath given you an opportunity to do it, and I must recommend it to you to complete those measures which remained imperfect the last session'.[163] Sunderland, together with Argyll, Montrose, Roxburghe, Coningsby, Archbishop Wake, and the Bishop of Bristol, was a member of the committee which drew up the address of thanks. This acknowledged the King's efforts on behalf of his people and the constitution and concluded optimistically that these 'must necessarily draw all suitable returns of the utmost gratitude from all your Majesty's faithful subjects who have a true value for such inestimable blessings'.[164]

Two days later Buckingham introduced the Peerage bill into the Lords where it was given a first reading. On 26 November it was read for the second time and upon the motion to commit Cowper objected

to the precipitate manner in which the bill had been brought on.

Sunderland answered:

> That it could not with any justice be said, that any precipitation had been used in this affair, since the bill in question had been brought on the last session and then thoroughly examined; so that he doubted not but every member of that House was fully apprized of it and ready to give his vote for or against it: that the reason why it was brought in so soon at this time, he conceived to be, that it might give no interruption to the other important affairs which the King had recommended to his Parliament: and as for any secret meaning in this bill, his Lordship solemnly declared that he knew of no other, but what his Majesty had been pleased graciously to intimate in his speech, viz. the securing the freedom of our constitution, by preventing for the future the abuse of one branch of the royal prerogative, of which they had a fatal instance in the last reign, and which had given just offence to all sober men.[165]

Following Sunderland's speech the bill quickly passed through the committee stage and it passed the House on 30 November 1719. It was read for the first time in the Commons on 1 December and the second reading took place a week later. Lord William Paulet moved to commit the bill and was supported by Craggs, Lechmere and Aislabie. They were opposed by Richard Steele and Horatio Walpole, but the most telling performance came from Robert Walpole. He gave one of the most outstanding speeches of his career. He deliberately played upon the ambitions and jealousies of the country gentlemen to such effect that he virtually guaranteed the defeat of the bill. After almost eight hours debate the ministry moved that the bill should be committed, but this proposal was rejected by 269 votes to 177 and, encouraged by this success, the opposition moved to throw out the bill which carried without a division.[166] Sunderland had made a major miscalculation over his strength in the House of Commons. He had hoped that his victory over Bernstorff and the success of the

ministry's policy in Northern Europe would have a similar effect to the achievements abroad in 1718 and rally backbench opinion to the government in the Commons and ensure the passage of the Peerage bill. There was now only one alternative left to Sunderland; he would have to buy off Walpole and Townshend.

An agreement with Walpole was made even more necessary because the House of Commons would have to be persuaded to grant £600,000 to pay off the accumulated debt of the Civil List and it was unlikely that this would be approved without Walpole's support. Walpole and Townshend, on the other hand, could derive little satisfaction from their period in opposition and were eager to get back into the government at almost any price. The first step was to reconcile the King and the Prince of Wales. Negotiations began in February 1720 managed by Sunderland, Stanhope and Craggs for the government and by Walpole, Methuen, and Townshend for the opposition Whigs. Sunderland persuaded a reluctant King to be reconciled with his son, while Walpole, through his influence with Princess Caroline, brought the Prince to agree to wait upon his father.[167] On 23 April the Prince of Wales submitted to the King. Sunderland informed Wake:

> I have the honour of acquainting your Grace with a piece of news that, I dare say, will be more agreeable to you than any thing that has happened since the King's accession to the Crown. It is the reconciliation of the King and Prince and to the mutual satisfaction of both sides. The immediate consequence of this will be the entire reunion of the Whig Party, in both Houses, which will be attended with all other good consequences honest men can desire.[168]

The same day 'Lord Townshend, Lord Cowper, etc., were at Court, and they and Lord Sunderland caressed one another'.[169] The next day the dissident Whigs waited upon the King and on Monday 25 April there was a dinner at Sunderland's attended by Parker, Newcastle, Stanhope, Craggs, Aislabie, Orford, Devonshire, Cowper, Townshend, Methuen, and Walpole.[170]

In May 1720 Walpole piloted provision for the Civil List debt through the Commons and in June he was rewarded with the office of Paymaster General. Townshend replaced Kingston as Lord President who was sacrificed along with Argyll. The allies of Walpole and Townshend were also rewarded. Methuen became Comptroller of the Household and Sir Charles Turner and Richard Edgecumb became commissioners of the Treasury.[171] It was clear, however, that Walpole's faction had only been admitted to the government upon Sunderland's terms for he had refused to give Walpole his former position as First Lord of the Treasury while Sunderland's group dominated the Treasury Commission. Sunderland, who was created a Knight of the Garter on 24 May, dominated the Court and the House of Lords, but he had had to abandon the Peerage bill and acknowledge that he could not control the Commons without help. Through Walpole he was able to manage that House.[172] Sunderland was still Prime Minister and as Lady Cowper observed, in conversation with Bernstorff on 22 May 1720, 'I have seen several Treasurers, but none with the authority and unlimited power of the Earl of Sunderland. The Earl of Oxford never had the quarter of the power, nor the insolence that Lord Sunderland has'.[173] Similarly in June 1720 Lord Middleton declared of Sunderland 'there is no withstanding the current of his present power'.[174]

Faced with a divided Whig party Sunderland had quickly consolidated his authority at Court and he had also established his pre-eminence in the House of Lords. Unfortunately, he was unable to obtain and maintain a firm grip upon the House of Commons. He had approached the Tories, but they were unwilling to provide the support he required. For a time it appeared that Sunderland had won over a sufficient number of independent Whig M.P.'s to give him a reasonably secure working majority in the Commons. As a result he went ahead with his bid for untrammelled political power. His attempt failed because these same

M.P.'s, under the influence of Walpole's dissident and factious motives, were unwilling to allow Sunderland the degree of power to which he aspired. Though Sunderland could not master the Commons on a permanent basis neither could Walpole. After three years in opposition his only significant achievement had been the defeat of the Peerage bill. It was the recognition, by both Walpole and Sunderland, that a reconciliation was the only alternative to continued strife in the Commons which produced the Whig re-union in 1720. It was, however, not an accommodation between two equally balanced groups for Sunderland was clearly much more powerful as Walpole and Townshend confirmed by their eagerness to accept any offer from him to get back into the ministry. With their return Sunderland dominated both the Court and Parliament and as things stood there was no serious challenge to his authority.

CHAPTER NINE: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER 1720 TO APRIL 1722

'So much to the prejudice of his reputation when the matter was doubtful'

That a First Lord of the Treasury, who had little financial expertise and who depended upon his subordinates for the administration of his department, could accept an extravagant and highly speculative scheme to reduce the national debt testifies to the strength and self-confidence of the Sunderland administration. Sunderland's intimate relationship with the directors of the South Sea Company and his readiness to carry the South Sea bill through Parliament stemmed chiefly from his wish to diminish the burden of the national debt. That the undertaking was also personally lucrative only served to increase its attraction as far as he was concerned. Sunderland was at the centre of the frenzied monetary activity in the summer of 1720 yet his willingness to acquiesce in this single-minded pursuit of wealth, on behalf of himself and the South Sea directors, was to have disastrous consequences. It was Sunderland's attempt to safeguard the financial monopoly of the South Sea Company which precipitated the collapse in the late-summer and autumn of 1720. Sunderland, like the majority of his contemporaries, was blind to the implications of the South Sea disaster, but once he realised the magnitude of the disruption he responded immediately. Both Sunderland and the King returned from Hanover and the meeting of Parliament was deferred until the government could work out a plan for a financial recovery. His shortcomings as a financier forced Sunderland to rely upon the remedies of Robert Walpole and both men did all they could to calm the storm of resentment and anger which threatened to engulf Parliament and the country. It was their combined efforts which helped to stabilise the political life of the nation. Yet Sunderland's dependence upon Walpole meant that he would have to make major concessions to his

political rival and Walpole, as a result, was able to obtain the offices of Chancellor of the Exchequer and First Lord of the Treasury; the latter post was vacated by Sunderland because of his involvement in the South Sea debacle.

Sunderland suffered further grievous blows with the loss of Stanhope, Craggs, and Aislabie, which allowed Walpole to consolidate his strength with his brother-in-law, Townshend, replacing Stanhope as Secretary of State for the North. Sunderland, however, once again revealed his resilience and determination by rallying his supporters and installing Carteret as Southern Secretary. Furthermore, Sunderland retained his great influence with the King and his control of the House of Lords; it was his mastery of the upper chamber which enabled him to emasculate the Lords' enquiry into the South Sea Company. Nevertheless, in order to manage the House of Commons, Sunderland had to rely exclusively upon Walpole and it was the Norfolk man's skill in manipulating this turbulent assembly which allowed him to baulk the Prime Minister at Court. Consequently, Sunderland sought an alliance with a section of the Tory Party which would form the basis of a Whig-dominated coalition in the Commons. This strategy was designed to give Sunderland the opportunity to dismiss Walpole and Townshend. Walpole, realising that the source of his power lay with the present House of Commons, was resolved to perpetuate the existing Parliament as long as it served his interests. Sunderland was in fact unable to dissolve Parliament in 1721, but Walpole could not prevent a dissolution the following year. The compromise was the short parliamentary session of 1721-1722 after which both men sought to undermine the other in the general election. Before the result of the election was known Sunderland died on 19 April 1722.

I THE SOUTH SEA DISASTER: SUMMER 1720 TO SUMMER 1721

'the great South wind'

Sunderland took little part in the talks between the South Sea Company and the ministry over the proposals to help settle the problem of the national debt. Once the agreement had been concluded Sunderland gave his full support to the proposals. When the South Sea bill was under consideration in the House of Lords the Prime Minister was briefed about the details of the design by the directors and it was his speech which guaramteed the acceptance of the proposed legislation. Sunderland was heavily involved in the four money subscriptions taking responsibility for the lists of the rich and famous, leading Whig and Tory politicians, clergymen, and influential foreigners. In this activity he worked in close and extensive co-operation with Robert Knight, the cashier of the South Sea Company. It was the directors' fear that their efforts might be emulated which led Sunderland to direct the Attorney and Solicitor-Generals that unlawful subscriptions should be prosecuted. It was the implementation of this order which precipitated the fall in the price of South Sea stock. To begin with Sunderland, probably as a result of the advice he received from the directors, was confident that share prices would recover, but when it became clear that the situation in England was getting out of control Sunderland realised drastic action was necessary and he immediately returned to London. He fully approved, having little alternative, Walpole's engraftment scheme and together he and Walpole forced its acceptance by a hostile South Sea Company and a Bank of England which was more concerned with how it could benefit from the misfortune of its rival. The co-operation between Sunderland and Walpole continued throughout the 1720-21 parliamentary session with Sunderland keeping a tight rein on the House of Lords and Walpole striving to stem the tide of vengeance in the Commons. It took all the endeavours of both men to save the ministry from the resentment of the members of the House of Commons.

The South Sea Company had been founded by Robert Harley in 1711 to deal with the unfunded portion of the national debt. Under the terms of the South Sea bill, which passed that year, unfunded government securities were to be exchanged for shares in South Sea Company stock for which the Company was to receive an annual payment from the Treasury. Two years later, at the Treaty of Utrecht, the Company obtained the privilege of trading with Spanish America together with the Asiento contract which allowed it to transport slaves to the Spanish West Indies for thirty years. Despite these apparently favourable terms failure characterised the trading activities of the Company and by 1719 it was in financial difficulties. Inspired by the success of John Law in France its directors sought government backing for a project by which they would assume responsibility for a large part of the national debt. Discussions were held between the directors and prominent ministers in the summer and autumn of 1719. Sunderland took no part in these, leaving Aislabie and Secretary Craggs to represent the administration. By January 1720 it had been decided that the holders of government annuities were to be given South Sea stock in return for their existing securities and that the Company would pay the Treasury a lump sum for the right to make this offer. From the ministry's point of view the main attraction of the plan was the relief it would give to the burden of the national debt.[1]

On 22 January 1720 the South Sea Company's proposals were introduced into the House of Commons by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and, though he was seconded by Craggs, it was agreed that the Commons should be ready to consider other suggestions. The only serious challenge to the South Sea Company came from the Bank of England, but at the end of February the House approved the Company's undertaking. The South Sea bill was read for the first time on 17 March and at the beginning of April it was sent up to the Lords.[2] The bill passed its first reading and a second reading was ordered for 5 April. That morning Sunderland, Stanhope, and Aislabie met with representatives of the Company's directors who advised Sunderland on the details of

the scheme.[3] Later that day the bill was given its second reading and a motion to commit was made. It was opposed by North and Grey, Wharton, Cowper, and Buckingham:

> The Earl of Sunderland answered most of their objections and among other things said, that they who encouraged and countenanced the scheme had nothing in their view, but the easing the nation of part of that heavy load of debt it labours under. That, on the other hand, the managers for that Company had, undoubtedly, a prospect of private gain, either to themselves or their corporation, but that when that scheme was accepted neither the one nor the other could forsee that the stocks would have risen to the price they were now advanced. That if they had continued as they were at that time, the public would have had the far greater share of the advantage accruing from that scheme, and that if the stocks were kept up to the price they had been raised to, which was not unlikely, it was but reasonable that the South Sea Company should enjoy the profit procured to it by the wise management and industry of its directors, which would enable it to make large dividends among its members and thereby to compass the ends intended by this scheme.

The motion was carried by 83 votes to 17. The bill was considered in committee the following day and it passed its third reading on 7 April.[4]

Within a week there was a very successful first money subscription and by the time the second subscription occurred at the end of April speculative fever had gripped London. The price of South Sea stock rose dramatically and the largest single increase coincided with the third money subscription in June.[5] Sunderland was at the centre of applications to be included in the list of subscribers, receiving appeals from the Duke of Montrose, the Earl of Findlater, the Bishop of Bangor, the Duchess of Marlborough, and leading Tory politicians. Sunderland's wife subscribed £2,000 and his list in this subscription totalled £167,000.[6] Sunderland then gave the various solicitations he received to Robert Knight in order that the names could be placed

in the subscription list.[7] The Duchess of Marlborough was particularly anxious that her recommendations should be accepted in time and Sunderland had to go to great lengths to calm her unease. He informed her:

> I know I sent their names up, according to your Grace's commands, under my own hand. I own I thought the return I had in a letter from the Treasurer of the South Sea Company, and which I showed Mr. Hodges, had been satisfactory. However, to make your Grace as easy as I can, I sent the list, as you sent it me, up again this morning to the South Sea by Mr. Stanhope, the Secretary of the Treasury, who has brought me an answer from the Treasurer of the Company that they had taken care of these names before and that I might depend upon it.[8]

At the end of June South Sea stock was priced at just under 1000.

Unfortunately the whole exchange of debts was a brilliant but unscrupulous and dangerous confidence trick. The success of the Company's project depended upon forcing up the market price of South Sea stock so that this stock could be exchanged for large shares in the national debt. As such it was only viable as a short term expedient. The behaviour of the Company was imitated by the Bank of England and the Royal African Company, while a host of new companies, some of them fraudulent, were founded to the great annoyance of the directors of the South Sea Company. They petitioned the ministry to do something to prevent the growth of these new organizations and the government responded by passing the Bubble Act which was given the royal assent on 11 June 1720. Two weeks later Sunderland ordered the Attorney and Solicitor-Generals to consider how to prevent the growth of unlawful subscriptions in the City of London. As a direct result of Sunderland's instruction writs were issued against three companies and the prosecutions which resulted began the fall in all stock including that of the South Sea Company.[9] 'What both the government and the South Sea directors failed to realise was that the smaller bubbles were unlikely to be suppressed without destroying the largest one as well.'[10] Undeterred by the

fall in the price of their shares the Company proceeded with the fourth money subscription on 24 August. This time Sunderland took care of the lists of the Dukes of Newcastle and Marlborough along with ones sent from the Dutch Republic.[11]

Sunderland left England for Hanover on 19 August, reaching The Hague three days later.[12] He arrived near the end of the campaign to elect a new Pensionary of Holland following the decline and death of Heinsius.[13] Initially, Sunderland had commanded the British envoy at The Hague, Charles Whitworth, that 'Monsieur Fagel is the person we should most wish for, as well as the likliest to succeed, if he will be persuaded to it, which I should hope his affection to his country, and the King's pressing instances, would prevail upon him to consent to'.[14] Fagel, however, was unwilling to stand and Sunderland advised Whitworth 'if Monsieur Slingelandt should succeed it will be the same to the King's interest and the common cause'.[15] Sunderland had given Whitworth access to Treasury funds to be used on behalf of the British candidate[16] and told the envoy 'this whole matter must be left to your prudent management and I am sure it can't be in better hands'.[17] Whitworth, regrettably, does not appear to have acted with sufficient vigour. He was aware of the importance of Van Hoey's support for a potential Pensioner, but does not seem to have made a serious attempt to win him over to Slingelandt's cause.[18] Once at The Hague Sunderland tried to rally support for Slingelandt, but it was too late for Hoornbeck was elected Pensionary of Holland on 12 September. After congratulating him upon his success Sunderland left for Hanover.[19] By the time Sunderland reached Hanover the South Sea crisis had deepened and the clamour for revenge was growing.

Throughout September 1720 South Sea stock fell steadily and at the beginning of October it stood at 290. In the first half of September Sunderland was confident that this was only a temporary setback,[20] but by 23 September he was increasingly worried. He informed his wife that 'I am very uneasy at the falling of the South Sea, but I do verily believe it will rise again. As for any advice what you are to do I can give none at this distance, but think you

would do well to send to Mr. Warner and Mr. Higgins who can certainly advise you the best'.[21] At the beginning of October Sunderland was calculating how much of his investment in the South Sea Company was secure and it had been decided that the King should return to England and that Parliament should be summoned.[22] As the full extent of the crisis became apparent Sunderland decided he would have to return to England immediately to forestall criticism that, as the nation plunged into financial disorder, the King and his ministers had been content to remain at Hanover. He did not relish his return as he wrote to Lord Carlisle:

> all I will say now is that I know very well that when misfortunes happen in most countries, and particularly in England, it's the way to lay it at the door of those who have a share in the administration. That, therefore, ever since I meddled in public business I never thought of anything but doing the best I could for the public, with honest intentions, and with as much prudence as any poor understanding is capable of; and for the consequences afterwards, one must sit easy under them. That never was more the case than in this affair of the South Sea, which had almost the unanimous approbation and applause of all parties, in Parliament and out of it, and which of a sudden, in the compass of a very few, not months, not weeks, but days, has taken so strange and surprising a turn.[23]

After being delayed at Helvoetsluys by contrary winds Sunderland and Admiral Byng arrived in London at the beginning of November.[24]

The King arrived in Britain in mid-November,[25] but the meeting of Parliament was delayed until early-December to give the ministry an opportunity to draw up a programme for financial recovery. Aislabie, Craggs, and the South Sea directors tried, unsuccessfully, to find a solution in September and this failure of the men upon whom Sunderland relied for financial administration meant that the Prime Minister would have to turn to Walpole.[26] In late-October and early-November Walpole and his Banker, Robert Jacombe, devised a formula whereby the capital of the South Sea Company was to be broken down and engrafted into the

Bank of England and the East India Company.[27] The South Sea Company felt that Walpole's expedient had merely been designed for the benefit of the Bank and Sir George Caswell informed Sunderland of his determination to oppose the plan.[28] The Bank of England, meanwhile, eagerly sought to exploit the difficulties facing the South Sea Company for its own advantage.[29] On 15 November Sunderland, Walpole, and Townshend had a meeting with the directors of the South Sea Company and the directors were told, almost certainly in the strongest terms, to accept the proposal and to stop causing difficulties. The following day the directors of the Bank of England were summoned to the Treasury where Sunderland made it clear that the King fully approved the agreement which had been drawn up and any problems with its implementation should be resolved.[30] In the face of the combined efforts of Sunderland and Walpole the scheme was accepted by both the Bank and the South Sea Company.[31]

Now that the administration had a remedy they could lay before the Lords and Commons Parliament was allowed to meet on 8 December 1720.[32] The lower House was in a furious mood and, though Walpole was able to introduce his engraftment scheme, he could not impose his authority on the assembly. On 12 December it was agreed, without a division, that Parliament should examine the proceedings of the South Sea Company and in January 1721 the Commons appointed a Committee of Secrecy to look into the conduct of the South Sea directors.[33] On 21 and 22 December 1720 the House of Lords ordered that papers relating to the South Sea Company be laid before them.[34] Sunderland was already taking measures to stifle the inquiries into the South Sea scandal. On 7 January 1721 the Prime Minister had a meeting with the Company's directors where they were told not to implicate the government in the more dubious aspects of the South Sea project.[35] Sunderland probably told Robert Knight to destroy any incriminating evidence and then to get out of the country. Certainly a fortnight later, Knight fled to the Austrian Netherlands. In early-February Sunderland, in a speech to the Lords, confirmed rumours that Knight had been arrested by the Imperial authorities. The Peers then

resolved to address the King to issue orders to have Knight secured and brought back to Britain. Sunderland, however, bribed the governor of the Austrian Netherlands, the Marquis de Prie, with £50,000 out of the Civil List, not to release Knight. The King informed Prince Eugene that he would be obliged if the privileges of the province of Brabant could be maintained to prevent Knight's extradition. When Knight fled to France later in the year the Regent was advised, through the Duchess of Kendal, to ignore the requests of the British ambassador for Knight's return.[36] Sunderland also approached leading Tories including Harcourt, Trevor, Carleton and the Bishop of Rochester to see if they could be persuaded to support the government in Parliament. Sunderland also made overtures to the Duke of Argyll and his brother, Lord Islay, for their assistance. It was these efforts, together with his mastery of the upper chamber, which enabled Sunderland to neutralize the Lords inquiry while giving the impression that the ministry was doing all it could to seek out and punish those responsible for the financial disaster of the South Sea bubble.[37]

On 9 January 1721 the deputy governor and sub-governor of the South Sea Company brought several papers, called for in December 1720, before the House of Lords and the following day the House went into a grand committee upon public credit. Stanhope and Carteret urged that the estates of those who were criminally responsible should be confiscated:

> The Earl of Sunderland owned, that he had been for the South Sea scheme because he thought it calculated for the advantage of the nation in order to lessen the public debts, and in particular to take off the heavy incumbrance of long annuities. That no man could imagine that so good a design could have been so perverted in the execution, as to produce quite contrary effects. But that, in his opinion, no act of Parliament had ever been so much abused as the South Sea Act and therefore he would go as far as any body to punish the offenders.

Wharton declared that no respect should be paid to persons and the offenders should be punished with the utmost severity. North and Grey, Abingdon, and the Bishop of Rochester commented upon the adverse effects of the South Sea project, while Cowper attacked those who had been appointed by Act of Parliament to supervise the directors of the Company. To vindicate himself Sunderland replied:

> That by the South Sea they were directed to appoint such persons as they should think fit to be managers of the said Act. That as they had reason to look upon those persons who had the principal share in framing this scheme as the most able and proper to execute it, they had accordingly appointed some of the South Sea directors to be managers and directors of the Treasury; concluding that in this they had followed former precedents.

The question was then put, 'That the constitution from the Commissioners of the Treasury, dated the 6th of May 1720, appointing the directors of the South Sea Company to be managers and directors for performing such matters and things as, by the Act for enabling the said Company to increase their capital stock, are directed, has been conformable to precedents and legal'. Sunderland's speech resulted in the motion carrying in the affirmative by 63 votes to 28.[38] Sunderland's approaches to the Tories were already beginning to have effect for it was noted that Lord Harcourt voted with the administration in the division.[39] Finally, 'My Lord Sunderland moved the House to enter upon the enquiry tomorrow and that the directors should be ordered to attend'.[40] On Thursday 12 January, the deputy and sub-governors of the Company, together with the directors, the treasurer, the deputy-treasurer and secretary were examined by the Lords.[41] Sunderland and Stanhope then moved, 'that the directors of the South Sea Company, in the loans by them made upon the stock and subscriptions, have been guilty of a breach of trust and ought, out of their private estates, to make good whatever losses the Company may sustain thereby'.[42] The motion was agreed to without a division[43] and it was observed that 'the Court carry on the enquiry and prosecution with all imagineable vigour'.[44]

The inquiry into the South Sea collapse revealed that bribery had been used in 1720 to persuade the government to accept the South Sea Company's proposals. In particular £574,500 of fictitious stock had been given to prominent politicians as the South Sea bill passed through Parliament.[45] The entire ministry was under suspicion, but Sunderland's involvement in the corruption, no doubt due to his instructions to the South Sea directors, was unclear. On 15 February 1721 Lord Clarendon reported from the Lords' Committee which had examined the directors. Charles Joye had declared that Knight had told him that Sunderland never received any stock and, though Edward Gibbon said that he had been informed that Sunderland was to receive £50,000 worth of stock, he did not know whether any payment had been made.[46] Even when it appeared that inquiries which could embarrass Sunderland might be undertaken Sunderland's overtures to the Tories helped to defuse the danger. Sir John Blunt had been asked if Sunderland had been given any stock:

> Sir John answered no. Thus the clerk entered it [into the Committee's report], but my Lord Windsor stood up and appealed to the House whether Sir John answered so peremptorily and did not use the words I gave him none, which, said my Lord, carry a very different meaning from that absolute denial entered by the clerk. Upon this the Bishop of Rochester said, it might possibly be as my Lord Windsor affirmed, but other Lords might not remember it and it would be very hard upon that noble Lord [Sunderland] to alter an entry already made so much to the prejudice of his reputation when the matter was doubtful. So the whole report was allowed to stand.[47]

The Secret Committee of the House of Commons made its first report on 16 February 1721. In his testimony before these M.P.'s Sir John Blunt left little doubt that Sunderland did obtain £50,000 of South Sea stock as a reward. Joye and Gibbon made similar declarations to this committee as they had given to the equivalent committee in the House of Lords. Richard Holditch merely said that he was uncertain as to whether any payment had been made to Sunderland.[48] Eleven

days later the committee issued its second report and the wrath of the House now focussed upon the government. The evidence that the Treasury Secretary, Charles Stanhope, and Chancellor Aislabie had engaged in corrupt practices was very strong, but Sunderland, probably due to personal loyalty and friendship but also self interest, tried to help both men so far as he could. Charles Stanhope was a very close personal and political associate of Sunderland, having accompanied him to Hanover in 1719 and 1720 and having worked with him at the Treasury. Sunderland probably persuaded the King to request three members of the Secret Committee to abstain from the Commons vote on Stanhope and this was the majority by which he was cleared on 28 February 1721.[49] With Walpole refusing to assist Aislabie (both he and Sunderland knew how important Aislabie was to the Prime Minister in the Commons), Sunderland could do little for him and twelve resolutions were passed against Aislabie; he was expelled from the House and sent to the Tower on 8 March. After sending Sir John Carswell to the Tower two days later, the committee turned its inquiry towards Sunderland's involvement in the South Sea Bubble.[50]

In early March the members of the Secret Committee considered that part of their report which concerned Sunderland and drew up a series of resolutions against him.[50] On 14 March Sir Joseph Jekyll moved that the report pertaining to Sunderland should be read, after which Walpole managed to adjourn the consideration until the following day upon the pretext that it would allow the House to examine the witnesses who had been questioned by the committee.[52] The next day the Commons was very full and the Prince of Wales was present in the gallery to animate his followers against Sunderland.[53] Jekyll again proposed to consider the report of the committee and he was supported by Hutcheson and Sloper. The statements which the directors of the South Sea Company had made to the committee were read and five of the directors were called in and cross-examined by the House.[54] After this:

> Mr. Pelham... and Mr. Walpole informed the House that his Lordship [Sunderland] had empowered them to declare that no stock had ever been taken in for him by Knight or note given. So that the question in truth was neither more or less than whether we should give credit to that assertion or Sir John Blunt's oath. A good deal of pains was taken to falsify the oath by asking the witnesses at the bar, whether Knight had told them of this stock being taken in presence and hearing of Sir John Blunt (as he had sworn). They owned Knight's telling them of the stock so taken in for Lord Sunderland. One of them said he was alone with Knight when he told him of it; two others owned Sir John's being in the room when he told it them, but did not believe him in hearing of what Knight said.[55]

Jekyll, after personal reflections upon Sunderland,[56] moved:

> That it appears to this House that, after the proposals of the South Sea Company were accepted by the House, and a bill ordered to be brought in thereupon; and before such bill passed, £50,000 of the capital stock of the South Sea Company was taken in by Robert Knight, late cashier of the said Company, for the use and upon the account of Charles, Earl of Sunderland, a Lord of Parliament and First Commissioner of the Treasury, without any valuable consideration paid, or sufficient security given, for payment for, or acceptance of the same.[57]

Walpole, Pulteney, John Hungerford and Sir John Walter spoke in favour of Sunderland and were opposed by Jekyll, Grey Neville, Hutcheson, Sloper, Shippen and Sir Thomas Hanmer, among others. The debate lasted until 8 p.m., when the question was rejected by 233 votes to 172.[58] Though it was observed, that '172 was a great number against a Prime Minister'[59] and Sunderland himself declared 'that whenever an English Minister had but 60 majority in a House of Commons he was undone',[60] in the circumstances Sunderland was acquitted by a

comfortable majority. That the administration could obtain a majority of this size in the immediate aftermath of the South Sea disaster was no mean achievement and it bears comparison with the votes Sunderland's ministry obtained in the Commons in late 1718 and early 1719 which induced Sunderland to introduce the Peerage bill.

There were a number of facts which help to explain the ministry's ability to defeat the attack upon Sunderland. Even Thomas Brodrick, who, apart from Sir Joseph Jekyll, received the largest number of votes when elected to the Commons' Secret Committee in January 1721 and who showed little inclination to favour Sunderland,[61] felt he had been duped by the South Sea directors and pointed to the fact that Sunderland's family and friends had lost heavily in the crash.[62] Certainly Sunderland's ignorance of finance put him at a distinct disadvantage in relation to the directors and he appears to have been the victim of his own lack of expertise and his ambition rather than anything else. Another member of the Secret Committee, Nicholas Lechmere, took to his bed rather than have to face the responsibility of voting either for or against Sunderland; to the evident annoyance of his father-in-law, Lord Carlisle, who expected him to vote for Sunderland.[63] There was a widespread belief that the evidence against Sunderland was insufficient to convict him[64] as Lord Percival noted: 'I observe that most people think there was not sufficient evidence produced of his [Sunderland] being concerned in the manner his enemies set forth and a leading Tory member told me he would not hang a dog upon the proof which was offered. I know not how it is, but he [Sunderland] is in much better esteem than Walpole, especially with the Tories'.[65] Percival had not been privy to the negotiations the Prime Minister had been conducting with the Tories since the beginning of the year and from which he now reaped great benefit. Sunderland obtained considerable Tory support,[66] including Harcourt's followers[67] and also from 'la pluspart des Thorys les plus declarés'.[68] Ironically, Whig M.P.'s had been pressured into voting for Sunderland

by being told that if they did not, and Sunderland was found guilty, they would help to establish a Tory ministry.[69] Walpole's assistance was, of course, invaluable,[70] as was the support of the Argyll faction in the Commons.[71] The French envoy in London, Destouches, had little doubt of the significance of Sunderland's acquittal as he informed Dubois: 'Cette victoire est decisive et non seulment met my Lord Sunderland dans une meilleure posture que jamais mais elle acheve d'atterer le parti du Prince de Galles dont tous les amis ont voté contre ce ministre'.[72]

It had taken the united strength of the government to secure the acceptance of the engraftment project and to temper the ill-feeling in Parliament and both Sunderland and Walpole knew that, at least in Parliament, it would be advisable to continue to act in unison until the end of the session. In April Sunderland and Townshend delivered congratulations from the House of Lords to the Prince and Princess of Wales upon the birth of a son.[73] Sunderland continued to back Walpole's plans for financial reconstruction[74] and between May and July 1721 a Committee of the Whole House of Commons considered measures to restore public credit. The committee drafted a series of important resolutions which were incorporated into an address to the Crown on 25 July. A bill encompassing these resolutions was brought before the House on 1 August and it was given the royal assent on 10 August. Walpole was chiefly responsible for the bill 'which applied the harsh cautery of common sense to the soaring dreams and meglomaniac expectations of the South Sea years'.[75] Sunderland and Walpole also tried to ease the retribution which was to be inflicted upon John Aislabie, as far as was realistic in the circumstances.

In April 1721 a bill had been introduced into Parliament to confiscate the estates of the South Sea directors and a motion was made to add to it 'the bill for restraining John Aislabie from going out of the kingdom and for discovering his estates and effects'.[76] Walpole was unable to prevent this proposal being accepted though as a

concession it was agreed that Aislabie should only forfeit his estate acquired after 20 October 1718.[77] The confiscation bill was only one of Aislabie's worries for he heard rumours of the King's dissatisfaction at the way he had handled royal investment in the South Sea Company.[78] Aislabie, who was in the Tower:

> presumed to write to his Majesty, humbly beseeching him to appoint some persons to examine it in what manner he thought fit. Upon which my Lord Sunderland and Lord Carteret came to me in the Tower, when my Lord Sunderland assured me from the King, that he was well satisfied with the account, and had given orders to tell me so; and with that would give me that £6,000 South Sea stock in consideration of my sufferings. And the same Lords sometime after I was released from the Tower did me the honour to visit me at my house and gave me the same assurances there.[79]

Sunderland also sought to assist Aislabie in the Lords when the Directors' bill came up for consideration in July 1721. After the second reading had been ordered on 10 July a petition from Aislabie, that he be heard by counsel on his behalf, was presented to the House. Townshend strongly opposed admitting it, but 'some other Lords spoke more favourably of Mr. Aislabie, particularly the Earl of Sunderland, though not directly, and so the petition was received and ordered to lie upon the table'.[80] Petitions were then presented on behalf of two South Sea directors and another debate arose over whether or not they should be received. Strafford, Trevor, Bathurst, and North and Grey urged that there was as much reason for admitting these petitions as there had been for accepting Aislabie's. Sunderland, Townshend, and Newcastle replied that the Lords had resolved that the directors were guilty of a notorious and fraudulent breach of trust and this bill was the consequence of these resolutions. The directors had not raised objections against these decisions when asked at the bar of the House and that their offence was so great that they were not entitled to this indulgence. It was agreed to read the resolutions which had been passed against the directors and the

petitions were rejected without a division.[81] On 11 July the Lords desired a conference with the Commons to explain why Aislabie and James Craggs senior had been included in the Directors' bill. Sunderland, Carteret, and Townshend were members of the committee to draw up what was to be offered to the Commons at a conference. After considering the report of this meeting the Lords resolved that Aislabie was at liberty to be heard by the House on Tuesday 18 July.[82] That day Harcourt proposed that Aislabie's witnesses might be heard separately, but Townshend argued this would take too long and might result in the loss of the bill. Sunderland backed Townshend stating that it was necessary to pass the bill as it had been sent up from the Commons in order to quieten the anxieties of the people. After his witnesses had been examined Aislabie made two long speeches on his own behalf; the only members of the government he mentioned were Secretaries Stanhope and Craggs who by now were both dead. Sunderland's efforts on behalf of Aislabie were suitably rewarded. The Directors' bill received the royal assent on 29 July, but it was not until 1723 that the question of Aislabie's estate was decided.[83]

Ministerial solidarity was also evident in the defeat of the attempt of the Archbishop of Canterbury to counter the growth of irreligion. In March 1721 Wake conferred with Lords Nottingham and Trevor about possible ways to suppress profaneness and blasphemy and to prevent the propagation of Arian ideas. Nottingham drew up a bill which he sent to Wake, but the Archbishop, after consulting his episcopal brethren, thought it would be better to wait for the present. Nottingham, however, was set upon going ahead and on 20 April Willoughby de Broke introduced a bill into the Lords to suppress profaneness and blasphemy.[84] The next day Wake visited Sunderland to try to get him to support the bill, but though he persisted in his endeavours until the end of the month Sunderland would not agree.[85] The measure was given a second reading on 2 May 1721 and Wake moved for committing, but Onslow proposed that it should be thrown out and Sunderland, Carteret, Argyll, Wharton, Islay, Townshend, Cowper, and

the Bishop of Peterborough spoke to the same effect. Nottingham, Bathurst, Trevor, and the Bishop of Litchfield supported the bill, but it was agreed by 60 votes to 31 to put it off for three weeks.[86] Sunderland was displeased by Wake's speech for the bill, believing that it reflected both on him and the administration, but the difference between them was quickly patched up.[87] Once the South Sea crisis had passed the animosities between Sunderland and Walpole began to come to the surface and, though a facade of unity was maintained in Parliament, few doubted that a major struggle for power was developing.

II THE FINAL CONFLICT: SUMMER 1721 TO SPRING 1722

'a kind of peace between Sunderland... and Walpole'

The reconciliation between Sunderland and Walpole which had been effected in 1720 could not conceal the underlying tension within the government,[88] yet Sunderland's authority at this time was such that Walpole could not provide a serious challenge. The South Sea crisis changed all this. Though cleared of charges of corruption, Sunderland, as First Lord of the Treasury, was still heavily implicated in the financial scandal and he had to resign this office which, together with the Chancellorship of the Exchequer was given to Walpole as a reward for his efforts on behalf of Sunderland and his followers. Walpole, with the support of Sir Charles Turner and Richard Edgecumb, was now in a position to dominate the Treasury and use it to serve his own interests. This in itself was a major setback for Sunderland, but it was accompanied by further grievous blows which tore the heart out of his ministry.[89] On 4 February 1721 while the Lords were engaged in the inquiry into the South Sea affair the Duke of Wharton drew a parallel between the recent division in the royal family and that caused by Sejanus in the Imperial family in Ancient Rome. This was a direct reflection on Sunderland and Stanhope and the latter, after making a vehement reply denouncing Wharton,

collapsed and was taken home. Stanhope took tea with Sunderland and Newcastle the following morning, but later in the day he died. Twelve days later Secretary Craggs died of smallpox.[90] Sunderland was now forced to allow Townshend to become Northern Secretary in place of Stanhope, but he compensated for this reverse by securing Carteret's appointment as the other Secretary of State. Carteret's promotion was seen as 'un coup de la prudence de my Lord Sunderland qui met part là les affaires entre les mains d'un homme dont il est sur et qui est eleve de my Lord Stanhope'.[91] Sunderland also secured the support of Argyll and Islay in return for creating them Master of the Household and Scottish Privy Seal respectively. Sunderland was reconciled with Cadogan, while the office of Postmaster General was held jointly by Edward Carteret and Galfridus Walpole.[92] Sunderland had once again demonstrated his ability to recover from even the most severe setback and with his strength at Court and in the House of Lords he was still the dominant figure in the administration. In February 1721 Sir John Vanbrugh shrewdly remarked that 'by all I can learn, I incline to think Lord Sunderland will not be dropped. I believe he still has the King, which, with the consideration of his great ability in Parliament may probably incline Lord Townshend and Mr. Walpole to think it for their own service to draw with him'.[93] Though underestimating the position of Walpole and Townshend, Vanbrugh had identified the sources of Sunderland's power. A spate of vacancies in the Church gave Sunderland the opportunity not only to demonstrate his authority with the King but to augment his strength in the Lords.

Upon the death of the Bishop of Winchester in July 1721[94] Sunderland wrote to Archbishop Wake: 'I am commanded by the King to let your Grace know that he has named the Bishop of Norwich to succeed [at Winchester and] Dr. Green to be Bishop of Norwich'.[95] At the beginning of September Sunderland had the Bishop of Bangor translated to Hereford and Dr. Reynolds named as his replacement.[96] A week later Sunderland again wrote to Wake: 'The King has ordered me to acquaint your Grace that, upon the Bishop of Durham's death, he has named the

Bishop of Salisbury to succeed and the Bishop of Gloucester to succeed him at Salisbury. As for Gloucester the King, being very desirous to do something for Dr. Willcox,... has determined to make him Bishop of Gloucester'.[97] Sunderland informed Newcastle that 'we shall now have nineteen Whig Bishops out of the 26 which is a pretty reasonable proportion'.[98] It was observed that 'there have been a great many promotions of late in the Church and all done by the one person the Lord Sunderland. A deanery was all that Lord Townshend could get for Dr. Canon whose friend he is'.[99] The position facing Sunderland in the Commons, unfortunately, was far from satisfactory.

The death of Craggs and the expulsion of Aislabie deprived Sunderland of his chief lieutenants in the Commons and he was forced to rely exclusively upon Walpole to manage the House. Walpole's influence with M.P.'s was, together with his control of the Treasury, his chief asset in any struggle with Sunderland and he was able to use this advantage to check Sunderland's influence at Court. Sunderland intended to promote his ally, Charles Stanhope to the post of Treasurer of the Chamber.[100] Walpole was not prepared to agree to Stanhope having this office and he was able to blackmail Sunderland and Carteret into giving way. Carteret announced the disappointment to Newcastle:

> Charles Stanhope's advancement is put off by Mr. Walpole's assuring us that it will revive matters in Parliament concerning South Sea. He is contented that he [Stanhope] should have the place at the end of the Parliament. This has mortified Lord Sunderland and me not a little, but when Mr. Walpole has taken upon him that all South Sea matters shall be kept out of Parliament next sessions we could not persist in a point, which would bring us to answer for any ill event in Parliament. These arguments did not prevail with us by virtue of their own weight, but we could do no otherwise considering all.[101]

That Walpole was now in a position to challenge Sunderland at Court meant that he could threaten to undo nearly a decade of endeavour by Sunderland to establish himself as the King's first minister. This was a development Sunderland was unwilling to tolerate. Sunderland was resolved to reorganize his following in the Commons, to reach an agreement with a section of the Tory party, and to dissolve Parliament.

In February 1721 Lord Dering acquainted his brother that the deaths of Stanhope and Craggs had 'bereft the rest of the ministry of much support, especially in the House of Commons where they seem to have little influence left. My Lord Sunderland endeavours to make new friends'.[102] It seems that Daniel Pulteney was being groomed by Sunderland for the leadership of his Whig following in the Commons. After Sunderland's death Speaker Onslow declared of Pulteney:

> His animosity to Mr. Walpole arose from his intimacy with Lord Sunderland, to whom he was brother-in-law by having married the sister of my Lord Sunderland's last wife. He was in the depth of all that Lord's political secrets, as far at least as he trusted anybody, and was designed by him to be Secretary of State in the scheme he formed of a new administration.[103]

Pulteney was certainly well qualified to serve as Secretary of State for the North, having been envoy to Denmark throughout the previous reign. In 1717 he had been appointed to the Board of Trade and when Sir George Byng was created Viscount Torrington in 1721 Sunderland had secured Pulteney's transfer to the Admiralty Board as Byng's successor. The only drawback about Pulteney was his inexperience in the House of Commons for he had only been elected in March 1721.[104] To compensate for this it seems likely that Pulteney would act with his cousin, William Pulteney, who brought him into Parliament for the borough of Hedon in October 1721 and who was, by 1721, bitterly opposed to Walpole for failing to secure an office for him when the Whigs were reconciled in 1720. William Pulteney did

in fact go on to co-operate with his cousin after Sunderland's death and was one of the most able and dangerous of Walpole's opponents.[105] Daniel and William Pulteney had been chosen to lead the Sunderland Whigs in the Commons yet alone this group could not maintain control of the House.

Sunderland's acquittal on 15 March 1721 had demonstrated the value of Tory assistance in the House of Commons and he was eager to exploit any advantage he could out of this connection. It is clear that Sunderland's prime concern was to win over a number of prominent Tory politicians and their followers which would allow him to assume the offensive by dissolving Parliament and establishing a new administration and thereby ousting Walpole and Townshend. Though Sunderland approached numerous elements within the Tory party his most serious overtures were directed towards men such as Harcourt, Trevor, and Carleton. Harcourt had shown his willingness to reach an accommodation with Sunderland early in 1721 and in return for his support the Prime Minister was again ready to consider pardoning Bolingbroke. Not only would this win over Harcourt, but Bolingbroke would also serve as a powerful counter to Walpole's influence. Sunderland and Harcourt discussed the question of Bolingbroke in March 1721 after which Harcourt delivered Sunderland's instructions to his friend, and former Tory colleague, Sir Robert Raymond who had been created Attorney-General in 1720. Raymond drew up a draft of a bill to pardon Bolingbroke which was to have been inserted into the Act of Grace of July 1721 and would have restored him to his lands, title, and his seat in the House of Lords. Though the attempt had to be given up because of Walpole's opposition, Sunderland continued to court Harcourt and Lord Carleton.[106] On 25 June Sunderland had Lord Carleton appointed Lord President of the Council, in place of Townshend, and offered Harcourt a promotion in the peerage to the rank of Viscount.[107] On 11 August Townshend informed Walpole that he 'had this morning a long debate before the King with Carteret about Lord Harcourt's being made a Viscount. He did not carry his point then, but I fancy when Sunderland comes to his assistance it will be done'.[108]

Sunderland was also engaged in negotiations with other Tory factions, but these approaches were often contradictory and ultimately unworkable and were not characterised by the seriousness that marked his treating with Harcourt and Carleton. It would appear that Sunderland's intention in consulting with these groups was to try to gain a temporary tactical advantage and to pre-empt any attempts which Walpole might make to come to terms with one or other of the elements in the Tory party. Like Harcourt, Francis Atterbury, the Bishop of Rochester, and Alexander Urquhart had helped Sunderland in his difficulties with the South Sea inquiry[109] in the hope that he would be ready to espouse their interest. It is inconceivable that Sunderland had any serious intention to assist the Jacobites, but he was alive to the advantages that could be derived from keeping up their expectations. Sunderland was prepared to help Atterbury in his legal dispute over the dormitory at Westminster as Edward Harley contemptuously observed: 'Ruff [Atterbury] by snivelling and cringing to Lord S[underland] has got him to prevail with the C[hancell]or to speak out against his own order'.[110] The meetings between Sunderland and Atterbury continued into April, during which time the Bishop spoke on behalf of Aislabie in the Lords. On 16 May the dormitory case came before the House of Lords for the final time and Atterbury carried his point by 28 votes to 26 with Sunderland and Carteret voting for him.[111] Sunderland had secured Atterbury's assistance at a bargain price and he was ready to keep in touch with Atterbury, probably in the hope he could get his backing and that of his adherents in the general election which would follow the dissolution of Parliament in the summer. Even if little progress was made Sunderland was at least able to prevent the Bishop committing himself to Walpole and Townshend, who were also approaching Atterbury.[112] Sunderland's intentions towards the Jacobites are confirmed by George Lockhart, who told the Pretender that Urquhart, who had returned to Scotland in August 1721, 'seemed very desirous that your friends would enter into measures with Sunderland, particularly with a view to the elections of a new Parliament insinuating his Lordship would give them good terms'.[113]

Sunderland's desire for as much Tory benevolence in the forthcoming election as possible helps to explain his approaches to the Tory M.P., Archibald Hutcheson. Apart from their desire for a new Parliament Sunderland and Hutcheson had little in common, but from Sunderland's point of view Hutcheson would be of value in an election and like the Bishop of Rochester he was also being courted by Walpole. Sunderland did not intend to make any serious concessions, but Hutcheson never seemed to realise this and, to Sunderland's delight, he was always keen to confer with him.[114] Sunderland also approached the Harleyites, but he can not have expected to achieve much when it was known that he was attempting to bring back Bolingbroke. Oxford saw through Sunderland's approaches and though William Bromley proved receptive he too soon became disillusioned.[115] He told Oxford: 'I had a good deal at second hand of the project then pretended to be carrying on, but wanting faith I absolutely declined the opportunities offered and pressed upon me of receiving all possible assurances from the first. Promises were made to me so large that it was affronting me to imagine I could think them sincere and be imposed upon by them'.[116] At the beginning of August the French envoy in London, Destouches, wrote to the Abbé Dubois: 'My Lord Sunderland que l'on croit d'accord avec les chefs des Thorris qu'on fasse une nouvelle election'.[117]

If Sunderland was determined to dissolve Parliament Walpole was equally insistent that its life should be prolonged as long as possible, 'believing he will hardly be able to influence and conduct another as he has this Parliament'.[118] Walpole's great strength was his connection with the backbench M.P.'s and it was this which allowed him to challenge Sunderland's authority; a dissolution could put his influence over the Commons in jeopardy. Walpole brought all his influence to bear and advised the King that it was necessary that Parliament should continue sitting[119] and Sunderland 'did not think to push the matter too far'.[120] The Duke of Montrose declared to Mungo Graham, 'affairs here look strangely. I shall tell you plainly, but let it be to your self till you hear more, that Walpole appears to

have got the better of Sunderland and I take it to be now certain that we shall have another session of this Parliament in November next. Judge what a jumble and mass of confusion we are likely to live in'.[121]

Sunderland had suffered a major setback, but Carteret was quick to reassure Newcastle. He wrote:

> In the next place I can with pleasure acquaint you that neither Lord Sunderland nor I have lost any ground with the King. This affair has been well managed; the particulars of it must remain to be talked over when I shall have the happiness to see you. Lord Sunderland is in good humour and I shall only add that when I told the King how matters were agreed he said to me Je veus qu'ils sachent que j'aurai une particuliere distinction pour Mild. Sunderland et vous.[122]

Yet, as Carteret admitted, 'the King is resolved that Walpole shall not govern, but it is hard to be prevented'.[123]

Encouraged by this success, and that over the promotion of Charles Stanhope, Walpole then overreached himself by suggesting that the present Parliament should be extended indefinitely.[124] Sunderland, smarting over his recent setbacks and still intent upon having an election as soon as possible, now stood firm. The dispute threatened to split the ministry apart and it was only the efforts of Newcastle and Townshend that produced a compromise. Writing of the outcome Montrose declared: 'it's certain the Parliament will meet at the day appointed, you may depend upon it. It's as sure that we shall have a very short session and that all prospects of continuing it are laid aside. This was a point adjusted and agreed upon by both sides of our ministry and those of 'em whose interest it would be most to have it continued are sensible that's a pull too hard for them'.[126] Sunderland now had to counter Tory annoyance at his failure to obtain a dissolution of Parliament.[127]

Archibald Hutcheson was easily persuaded of Sunderland's continuing sincerity, as he informed the Prime Minister: 'I can retain no doubt of your sincere endeavours to have procured for the

people of Great Britain, an opportunity of being represented in Parliament by an immediate new choice; since nothing could have been more for your own, and the honour and interest of his Majesty and the Nation'.[128] The Jacobites were, like the Harleyites, now suspicious of Sunderland, treating with considerable scepticism his explanation of why Parliament had not been dissolved. The Earl of Orrery told the Pretender that Sunderland 'pretends still to be a well wisher to the Tories, who cannot but be a little shocked with this disappointment'.[129] In an attempt to dispel Tory apprehensions Sunderland had Harcourt's Viscountcy confirmed on 11 September and Harcourt was introduced into the Lords with his new rank at the end of October.[130] Sunderland also urged Harcourt and Carleton up for the opening of the session in order to demonstrate their support and co-operation with his administration.[131]

The compromise session opened on 19 October and the ministry again presented a united front. Carleton, Carteret, Sunderland and Townshend served on the Lords' committee which drew up the address of thanks for the King's speech. Almost immediately a well organized but small group of Tory peers, together with a few Whig dissidents, notably Cowper, Wharton, and Coningsby, began to harry the administration in the Upper House. Their numerical inferiority meant they could do little real damage but their activities kept the government on its toes; it served as a useful propaganda exercise, and it livened up the debates.[132] On 13 November the King's speech was under consideration when North and Grey, Cowper, Trevor, Bathurst, Wharton and Coningsby insisted that there should be an inquiry into the Navy debt. 'The Lord Carteret, Lord Townshend, the Earl of Sunderland, and Lord Teynham answered, that near two-thirds of that debt had been contracted in the last reign, which they were ready to make appear to the House.' It was agreed to consider the Navy debt the following Friday.[133] As before, Cowper, Bathurst, Aylesford, Coningsby, and North and Grey used this opportunity for adverse reflections upon the size of the debt and were replied to by Sunderland, Harcourt, and Islay, 'who represented that about £1,100,000

of that debt had been contracted in the last reign, and the remaining part upon extraordinary emergencies and in pursuance of the address of both Houses, which they were ready to make appear'. It was then decided to lay an account of the Navy debt, as it stood in September 1714, before the House.[134] The examination into the Naval arrears continuted from November 1721 to the end of January 1722 and though the opposition was regularly defeated by large majorities it maintained significant pressure upon Sunderland's government.[135] Similar tactics were employed in the course of the debates on a whole series of issues, including the Mutiny bill, the recent treaty with Spain, the Infection bill, the Quakers bill, the question of ships being built for foreigners in England, whether the terms of the Act of Settlement had been contravened by sending a fleet to the Baltic, the bill for securing the freedom of elections, and the problem of the national debt.[136] The opposition forced an unprecedented number of divisions and took the opportunity to protest at each defeat they suffered. There were twenty-six recorded protests which was an unusually large number for a single session.[137]

This increasing sniping began to take its toll upon the administration's nerves. There were heated and prolonged debates on 5 December 1721[138] and a week later Sunderland complained about the remarks Coningsby had made concerning the Lords Justices, who had been appointed when the King went to Hanover in 1720. Despite Coningsby's attempt to soften what he had said, Sunderland 'insisted, that the Earl Coningsby's words ought to be wrote down in order to have him sent to the Tower'. Harcourt's intervention and an apology from Coningsby prevented the matter going any further.[139] By February 1722 Sunderland's patience was at an end. In the debate on the second reading of the bill 'For the better securing the Freedom of Elections' he had said 'that it had been a common thing in former reigns for money to be issued out of the Treasury, and even remitted from France, for promoting the election of persons in the Court interest'. The consequence of this statement was that the protest against the rejection of the bill declared that public money was often used to influence elections.[140] On 19 February Sunderland said in the House of Lords:

> That every member of that illustrious assembly had, indeed, a right to dissent from and protest against any bill depending, or any resolution taken in the House, but that it was an intolerable abuse to wrest any man's words and put false constructions upon them, as had been done in an instance relating to himself. That he durst appeal to any Lord in the House, that was not a protestor, whether, in the debate about the bill above-mentioned, he said, or intimated, that the issuing public money for elections had ever been practised in this reign. For what he meant was only in King Charles' and King James' time. His Lordship added, that the business of protests was managed now after another manner than formerly. For at present it was grown customary to protest even against bills that were passed into a law, and to get them printed and handed about in coffee houses, and sent all over the kingdom to inflame the minds of the people against the administration. And, therefore, he thought it time to have the method of protesting regulated.[141]

Sunderland also remarked 'that in general the whole protest [against the rejection of the Freedom of Elections bill] was derogatory to the honour of the House, and therefore he moved to have it expunged'.[142] He was supported by Wharton, Townshend, Argyll, Carteret, Harcourt, Newcastle and the Bishop of Salisbury. On the other side Cowper, North and Grey, Strafford, Aylesford, Bathurst and the Bishop of Rochester spoke against Sunderland's motion, but, upon the division, it was carried by 55 votes to 22.[143] 'Lord Sunderland then moved to appoint a day to consider of the nature and manner of protesting; accordingly Thursday next was appointed and the Lords ordered to be summoned.'[144]

After further consideration, on Thursday 22 February and the following Saturday, Sunderland took note on Tuesday 27 February 'that the privilege of entering protests had of late been so much abused that, in his opinion, some restraint ought to be put to it by limiting the time for entering protestations upon asking leave of the House, which was never denied. And therefore he moved: "That such Lords as shall

enter their protestations with reasons shall do the same before two o'clock the next sitting day, and sign them before the House rises"'.[145] Sunderland's proposal carried by 55 votes to 18[146] and it was then urged that the motion should be made a standing order of the House. This was accepted on 3 March and the same day Sunderland argued that the protest of 19 February 1722, over putting off the consideration of the Navy debt, should be removed from the Journals. This was passed by 42 votes to 16. Two days later Sunderland moved to delete the reasons given for the protest of 17 January 1722 against the Lords rejection of the petition from the clergy of London against the Quakers bill and this was approved by 54 votes to 18. Parliament was dissolved on 7 March 1722,[147] and Sunderland began to intensify his efforts for an electoral victory which would give him control of the House of Commons.

Sunderland campaigned with vigour, industry, and remorseless application, determined to seize every opportunity to get the better of Walpole. The extent of his activities is quite staggering for he laboured in Northumberland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, Herefordshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire, Wiltshire, Berkshire, Devon, Cornwall, Buckinghamshire, Norfolk and the City of London. He was supported by the Dukes of Rutland, Bolton, and Wharton, the Duchess of Kendal and Lords Warrington, Holdernesse and Orkney. His most important ally was the Duke of Newcastle, whose efforts on behalf of Sunderland in Sussex and Nottinghamshire were only matched in terms of application by Sunderland himself.[148] Sunderland and Carteret were active on behalf of Tory candidates as John Brinsden's unsuccessful efforts at Wootton Bassett indicate.[149] Sunderland was still in contact with Archibald Hutcheson, despite having had the bill to secure the freedom of elections thrown out of the Lords in February 1722,[150] though it seems that Sunderland's connection with the Harleyites would not have been of great value for as Bromley remarked after the Prime Minister's death, 'I could not reconcile his actions with his intentions'.[151] Sunderland was also very active in Scotland and it seems that his intention was nothing less than to

secure the support of all the sixteen Scottish Representative Peers and all forty-five Scottish M.P.'s.

The situation in Scotland was almost Byzantine in its complexity. At the time the Whigs were re-united in 1720 Sunderland had relied almost exclusively upon the Squadrone, who dominated the Scottish administration, to manage Scotland. In return Sunderland made it clear to Roxburghe and Montrose that they would have the full backing of the government in the forthcoming election.[152] Furthermore, Sunderland and the Squadrone intended to reintroduce into Parliament the part of the Peerage bill which related to the Scottish nobility.[153] The rewards given by Sunderland to Argyll and Islay for their assistance in March 1721 and the election of the Tory peer, Lord Aberdeen, following the death of Lord Annandale, served to complicate even further the complex web of Scottish politics.[154] Sunderland was now in the almost impossible position of trying to retain the support of both the Squadrone and the Argyll faction who only seemed able to agree on how much they detested each other. By a dexterous management of judicial and administrative appointments Sunderland managed to establish a degree of harmony and at the same time to retain his influence over both groups. Sunderland also encouraged the Squadrone to approach Lord Aberdeen to see if it were possible to get Tory support in the election. At the same time orders were given to Argyll and Islay that both they and the Squadrone were to have a share in the administration in Scotland and that encouragement should be given to the Tories. Both Argyll and the Squadrone proved too eager to negotiate with the Tories for both groups tried to bring in the Tories at their rivals' expense, as the discussions over the sixteen peers to be included in the Court list for the election of the Scottish Representative peers reveal. Matters threatened to get out of hand and Sunderland intervened to give orders that Aberdeen was to be the only Tory peer in the Court list. Aberdeen, disillusioned by this decision, declined to be included and Sunderland put forward Hopetoun as a replacement, which was agreed to unanimously.[156] Sunderland, however, was not to reap the fruits of these endeavours.

As the election results were being reported in April 1722 Sunderland was conferring with Harcourt in London when he began to complain of heart palpitations. By 18 April his condition had deteriorated rapidly and Dr. Mead was called out to attend to him. Upon the Doctor's arrival Sunderland 'pointing to his side said he was upon the rack and was blooded immediately'.[157] Later in the evening the King's principal Surgeon was called out of bed to administer to Sunderland, but even after a further letting of blood there was still no improvement. A further blood letting took place on the morning of 19 April, but, as before, it had no effect and, after the Bishop of Winchester had administered the Sacrament, Sunderland died at about three o'clock in the afternoon.[158] The autopsy was carried out by Dr. Mead and the Surgeons, Buffiere, Amiens, and Aime.[159]

> Upon the opening of his body there appeared a great inflammation of the Pleura on the left side a little above the diaphragm, which was supported and mortified and has discharged into the cavity of the breast above a pint of matter. That the lungs adherent to this part were inflamed and mortified, as was also the left kidney, and that in the right ventricle of the heart was a polipus two inches thick which branched out into the arteria pulmonalus and stopped the vessel.[160]

Upon being informed by Carteret of Sunderland's death the King 'sent a nobleman to condole the Countess on her loss and to assure her of his royal favour to her and the children his Lordship left behind'.[161]

Political and personal ambition, self interest, and ignorance had led Sunderland to countenance the dubious proposals for reducing the national debt which had been put to him by the directors of the South Sea Company. Sunderland must bear a heavy responsibility for the South Sea crash for it was his desire to serve his own interests together with those of the South Sea Company directors that produced

the crisis. Forced, by his own shortcomings as a finance minister and his weakness in the House of Commons, to rely upon Robert Walpole, Sunderland realised that, if the administration was to survive, he and Walpole would have to co-operate closely to weather the storm. Once the immediate crisis had been dealt with the old antagonisms came to the surface. The Bubble and the death of Stanhope allowed Walpole and Townshend to press for a more prominent position in Sunderland's administration. This, Sunderland was not prepared to concede. He reorganized his Whig followers in the Commons, strengthened his grip on the Lords and sought to come to terms with a section of the Tory party in order to assert his authority over the House of Commons. Despite having retained the full support of the King, Sunderland could not prevent Walpole using his skill in managing the Commons to outmaneouvre him. These differences between Sunderland and Walpole over the dissolution of Parliament threatened to wreck the government, but a compromise was produced whereby an election would take place in 1722 as required under the terms of the Septennial Act. Sunderland, together with his Tory followers, sought to destroy Walpole in the election and, though it is uncertain if he would have achieved his aim, Sunderland's death left the way open for Walpole and Townshend to succeed to the power and authority to which he had for so long aspired and for which he had laboured so vigorously.

CONCLUSION

Power, principles, pragmatism, success and failure all mingle together to form the fibre of Sunderland's political career from 1695 to 1722. Sunderland was devoted to an almost obsessive degree to the pursuit of power and was on occasion prepared to go to any lengths to achieve it, even to the extent of appearing to compromise his own beliefs and opinions. Yet it is clear that Sunderland was not interested in power merely for its own sake. He wanted to use it to achieve certain specific goals which derived from the political principles he adhered to from the very beginning of his career right up to the moment of his death. He believed in limited monarchy, particularly that represented by the Protestant Succession in the House of Hanover, the complete subordination of the Church to the State, and that Britain's security depended upon an active and interventionist foreign policy. Sunderland realised that to achieve his goals both in terms of the search for power and the programme he sought to implement he must be able to adapt and to use all the means at his disposal. It was a tribute to his outstanding ability and his phenomenal industry that he was able to implement such a major part of his political convictions. Though he never achieved the full power to which he aspired his achievements are remarkable. At his death George I was firmly established upon the throne, the Whig conception of monarchy, with the King ruling with the consent and co-operation of the 'political nation' in both Houses of Parliament, had triumphed over its Tory counterpart. The Church was effectively subordinated to the interests of the State and the Whig dominated Ecclesiastical Bench meekly followed the dictates of their secular masters. Abroad Britain had once again emerged as an important and influential force in European politics and the government's foreign policy had helped to bring about peace in Europe and to give Britain the security she needed. Sunderland left Walpole

with a rich political inheritance on which he established his own ascendancy. Sunderland was one of the most successful and outstanding politicians of the early-eighteenth-century and had he not died in 1722 it seems likely that his supremacy would have continued well into the 1730's and perhaps beyond. It was Sunderland who provided the framework for Britain's political development in the eighteenth-century.

APPENDIX

W.T. Morgan has claimed that Sunderland was responsible for the return of nine M.P.'s to Parliament at the 1715 election.[1] The evidence cited is an undated memorandum in B.L. Stowe Ms. 247, ff.193-199. The document is endorsed 'Names of Members'. The following is an abstract of the document as it relates to Sunderland.

'Wm. Strickland	Lord Sunderland and Duke of Bolton
Sr. Fr. Drake	Mr. Craggs Lord Sunderland
Mr. Henley	Lord Sunderland
Lord Carbery	Lords Sunderland and Cadogan
Sir Wm. Strickland	Lords Sunderland and Stanhope
Gab. Roberts	Lord Sunderland
Sr. Wm. Monson	Duke of Newcastle and Sunderland
Norris, Gilbon	Lords Sunderland and Stanhope
Sidney Wortley	Lord Sunderland
Edw: Wortley	Lord Sunderland
John Morgan, Tho: Lewis, Grey Nevil	Lord Sunderland
Bar: Shute	Lord Sunderland
Tho: Broderick	Lord Sunderland'

William Strickland was returned as M.P. for Carlisle in 1715 by Lord Carlisle.

Francis Henry Drake was returned as M.P. for Tavistock in 1715 by a combination of his own interest with that of the Bedfords. He did not succeed to the family Baronetcy until January 1718.

John Henley was returned as M.P. for Lyme Regis in 1715 upon the family interest.

George Evans, Lord Carbery was defeated at Carbery in the election but upon petitioning the House of Commons he was declared M.P. for Carbery on 1 June 1715.

Sir William Strickland was returned as M.P. for the Pitt borough of Old Sarum on 3 August 1716.

Gabriel Roberts lost his seat at Marlborough in the 1715 election but recovered it upon a petition in May 1717.

William Monson was returned for Aldborough by Newcastle in 1715 but did not succeed to the family Baronetcy until April 1718.

Edward or Sir John Norris were returned for Liverpool and Rye respectively in 1715.

Gilbon no-one with this surname appears to have sat in the House of Commons between 1715 and 1754.

Honourable Sidney Wortley Montagu was elected for Huntingdon in 1715.

Edward Wortley Montagu was elected for Westminster in 1715.

John Morgan was elected for Monmouthshire in 1715.

Thomas Lewis. There are three M.P.'s with this name who were elected in 1715 at Monmouthshire, New Radnor Boroughs, and Southampton. The first, though a Whig, voted against the government each time his vote was recorded. The second, originally an associate of Robert Harley's, voted against the Septennial bill but thereafter became a reliable government supporter. The third was a Tory who voted against the administration in all recorded divisions of this Parliament.

Grey Neville was returned for Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1715.

John Barrington was returned for Berwick-upon-Tweed in 1715 on the local nonconformist interest.

Thomas Brodrick was returned for Stockbridge in 1715.[2]

Furthermore, James Stanhope was not created a peer until 1717 and Newcastle did not become Duke until August 1715; up to that time he was Earl of Clare. As Earl Stanhope died on 5 February 1721 it seems the above document should be dated between April 1718 and February 1721.[3]

1. W.T. Morgan, 'Some sidelights on the General Election of 1715', in Essays in Modern English History in Honor of Wilbur Cortez Abbot (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1941), 173.

2. Romney Sedgwick, The House of Commons 1715-1754 (2 vols., London, 1970), i, 437, 491, 620. ibid., ii, 18, 127, 215-216, 266, 276, 292, 297-298, 385, 453, 556, 557.

3. Basil Williams, Stanhope (Oxford, 1932), pp.267-268, 441. S.H. Nulle, Thomas-Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle. His Early Political Career 1693-1724 (Pennsylvania, 1931), pp.59, 69.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter One

1. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto', i, 263. Horwitz, Parliament, p.156. J.P. Kenyon, Robert Spencer Earl of Sunderland 1641-1702 (London, 1958), pp.272-275.

2. Horwitz, Parliament, p.156.

3. E.G. Forrester, Northamptonshire County Elections and Electioneering 1695-1832 (London, 1941), p.16. Kenyon, op.cit., p.276.

4. Forrester, op.cit., p.15.

5. Northamptonshire Record Office. Isham Ms. Isham Correspondence. 1524. Henry Benson to Sir Justinian Isham, 10 August 1695.

6. C.J., xi, 340. B.L. Portland Loan, 29/188. J. Freke to Robert Harley, 22 October 1695. Kenyon, op.cit., p.276.

7. Kent Archives Office. Chevening Ms. U1590 C7/23. Newcastle to Alexander Stanhope, 31 August 1695.

8. B.L. Portland Loan. 29/236. Lord Spencer to Newcastle, 14 October 1695.

9. ibid., 29/188. J. Freke to Robert Harley, 22 October 1695. C.J., xi, 340.

10. B.L. Portland Loan. 29/188. J. Freke to Robert Harley, 22 October 1695. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' ii, Appendix G. p.2.

11. McInnes, Robert Harley, pp.28-50. J.A. Downie, 'The Commission of Public Accounts and the Formation of the Country Party', E.H.R., Xc1 (1976), 40-51. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, pp.65-66. Feiling, Tory Party, pp.309-315. Kenyon, op.cit., p.277.

12. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.159-162.

13. I.F. Burton, P.W.J. Riley and E. Rowlands, 'Political Parties in the Reigns of William III and Anne: The Evidence of Division Lists', B.I.H.R., Special Supplement Number 7. November 1968. 6-13, 43. Kenyon op.cit., Horwitz, Parliament, pp.164-165.

14. Horwitz, Parliament, p.165. Horwitz claims that when these resolutions were reported to the House Lord Spencer opposed the first while supporting the second. The evidence cited by Horwitz to substantiate his assertion does not, however, contain any reference to Spencer's activities on this day. Yet given his earlier support for the Parliamentary Council of Trade and the fact that he signed the 'Association' Horwitz's claim would, nonetheless, appear to be reasonable. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.165-174. A. Browning, Thomas Osborne Earl of Danby and Duke of Leeds 1632-1712 (3 vols., Glasgow, 1951), iii, 199.

15. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, p.67. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.162-168.

16. Horwitz, Parliament, p.175.

17. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' i, 291-297. McInnes, Robert Harley, pp.52-53. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.168-169, 175-178. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, pp.68-69. Feiling, Tory Party, pp.318-322. S. Baxter, William III (London, 1966), p.337.

18. Browning, op.cit., iii, 199.

19. C.J., xi, 482.

20. The Diary of John Evelyn, ed. E.S. de Beer (6 vols., Oxford, 1955), v, 238.

21. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.179-182.

22. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto,' i, 298-303. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.182-184. Kenyon, op.cit., pp.283-284.

23. Letters Illustrative of the reign of William III from 1696 to 1708 addressed to the Duke of Shrewsbury by James Vernon, ed. G.P.R. James (3 vols., London, 1841), i, 69. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 21 November 1696.

24. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto', i, 303-304. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.185-187.

25. Kenyon, op.cit., pp.279-287. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.183-184.

26. C.J., xi, 598.

27. Horwitz, Parliament, p.191.

28. The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, ed. H. Davis (12 vols., Oxford, 1939-1953), vii, 9. Interestingly enough in 1709 Swift had described Sunderland as 'that most learned and excellent Lord, now Secretary of State'. ibid., i, 268.

29. Kenyon, op.cit., p.324. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' ii, 655-657.

30. H.M.C. Onslow Mss., p.508.

31. B.L. Add. Ms. 34496, f.84.

32. ibid., 30000 C, ff.178-179. Bonet to the King of Prussia, 5/16 September 1699. ibid., Stowe Ms.222, ff.302-303^{v}. Wratislaw to Robethon, 25 July N.S. 1705. ibid., ff.317-^{v}. Wratislaw to Robethon, 1/12 September 1705. Coxe, Memoirs of Marlborough, i, 340-341. Wratislaw to Marlborough, 19 July N.S. 1705. ibid., 341. Wratislaw to Marlborough, 30 July N.S. 1705. Hatton, George I, p.119.

33. C.J., xi, 632.

34. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' ii, Appendix G, pp.21,28.

35. C.J., xi, 784. Horwitz, Parliament, p.190.

36. Ellis,'The Whig Junto',i, 309-318.

37. Kenyon, op.cit., pp.290-291.

38. Sachse, Lord Somers, pp.127-128. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' i, 320-328.

39. Somerville, King of Hearts, pp.142-146. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.225-229. Sachse, Lord Somers, pp.123, 133-134. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto,' i, 328-334. Kenyon, op.cit., pp.296-301.

40. C.S.P.D., 1698, p.10. Newsletter to Sir J. Williams, 4 January 1698.

41. Kenyon, op.cit., pp.102,242,302.

42. Private and Original Correspondence of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, with King William, the leaders of the Whig Party and other distinguished Statesmen, ed. W. Coxe (London, 1821), p.524. Somers to Shrewsbury, 6-16 January 1698.

43. Kenyon, op.cit., p.303. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.229-230.

44. James, op.cit., i, 478. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 25 January 1698.

45. Ellis,'The Whig Junto,' i, 337-340. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.230-231, 235.

46. B.L. Add. Ms.9088, ff.49-50. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 22 February 1698.

47. C.J., xii, 146-147, 150-151.

48. C.S.P.D., 1698, p.140.

49. C.J., xii, 163. Horwitz, Parliament, p.235.

50. C.J., xii, 161-162.

51. ibid., 163-165.

52. ibid., 170-174, 188.

53. B.L. Portland Loan. 29/236. Lord Spencer to Newcastle, 14 October 1695. Coxe, Shrewsbury, op.cit., p.524. Somers to Shrewsbury, 6-16 January 1698. James op.cit., i, 478. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 25 January 1698. Kenyon, op.cit., p.307.

54. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, pp.76-77. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.237-240.

55. Cobbett, v, 1189.

56. Luttrell, Historical Relation, iv, 458.

57. C.J., xii, 347-348.

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60. B.L. Add. Ms.17677 SS, ff.424-426. L'Hermitage to the States General, 16/26 December 1698. ibid., 30000 B, ff.281-286. Bonet to the King of Prussia, 20/30 December 1698.

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62. Browning, op.cit., iii, 213-217.

63. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.249-252.

64. C.J., xii, 468.

65. Somerville, King of Hearts, p.161. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.257-260. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto,' i, 396-400. Kenyon, op.cit., p.311.

66. B.L. Add. Ms.9088, ff.122-123. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 4 June 1698. Luttrell, Historical Relation, iv, 388.

67. B.L. Add. Ms.17677 TT, ff.248-249^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 5/15 September 1699. ibid., 30000 C, ff.178-179. Bonet to the King of Prussia, 5/15 September 1699. Luttrell, Historical Relation, iv, 560. James op.cit., ii, 356. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 26 September 1699. Coxe Shrewsbury, op.cit., 592. Sunderland to Shrewsbury, 26 September-6 October 1699.

68. B.L. Add. Ms.17677 UU, ff.107-110. L'Hermitage to the States General, 22 December 1699/1 January 1700. Luttrell, Historical Relation, iv, 597. Kenyon, op.cit., p.314.

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70. James, op.cit., ii, 358. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 28 September 1699.

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72. C.J., xiii, 318-322.

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74. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto', i, 424-425. Sachse, Lord Somers, pp.172-173. Kenyon, op.cit., p.318.

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83. B.L. Add. Ms.29568, ff.11-12. John Verney to Viscount Hatton, 11 March 1701.

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87. ibid.

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89. C.J., xiii, 487.

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91. C.J., xiii, 559.

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97. ibid., 646-647, 648.

98. ibid., 707-708. Sachse, Lord Somers, p.214. Horwitz, Parliament, p.300.

99. C.J., 782, 784-785, 787.

100. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.154-158. Feiling, Tory Party, p.364. Baxter, op.cit., pp.397-398. Horwitz, Parliament, pp.301-304.

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102. C.J., xiii, 269-270.

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104. Gregg, Queen Anne, p.159.

105. Northampton Record Office. Isham Ms. Isham Correspondence 2720. Edward Stratford to Sir Justinian Isham. Forrester, op.cit., p.26.

106. James op.cit., iii, 226. Vernon to Shrewsbury, 21 August 1702. Kenyon, op.cit., p.326.

107. H.M.C. Bathurst Mss., p.8. Sarah Marlborough to Frances, Lady Bathurst, 'Monday noon' [1702].

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109. B.L. Add. Ms.29568, f.114. J. Griffin to Lord Hatton 17 ? [1702].

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111. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, p.94. Feiling, Tory Party, p.365. Gregg, Queen Anne, p.160.

112. B.L. Add. Ms.17677 YY, ff.222-223^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 29 September/10 October 1702.

Chapter Two

1. Holmes, British Politics, p.235.

2. ibid., pp.239-240.

3. ibid., p.237.

4. Speck, Tory and Whig, p.113. Feiling, Tory Party, pp.366-368. McInnes, Robert Harley, pp.67-69. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.157-162. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, pp.94-95. Churchill, Marlborough, ii, 87-96.

5. L.J., xvii, 162. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.161-162.

6. L.J., xvii, 168.

7. ibid., xvii, 169-170. C.J., xiv, 39. Nicolson Diary. 20 November 1702.

8. Tindal Hart, William Lloyd, pp.157-165.

9. H.L. Snyder, 'The Defeat of the Occasional Conformity Bill and the Tack: A study in the techniques of Parliamentary management in the reign of Queen Anne', B.I.H.R., XLi (1968), 173. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.162-163. Turberville, House of Lords, pp.50-51. Sachse, Lord Somers, p.220. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks, pp.185-186. Churchill, Marlborough, ii, 178-181.

10. Nicolson Diary. 9 December 1702.

11. L.J., xvii, 185.

12. H.M.C., House of Lords Mss., V, 158.

13. Nicolson Diary. 18 December 1702. L.J., xvii, 195.

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17. Sachse, Lord Somers, pp.219-220. Turberville, House of Lords, pp.41-42. Lever, Godolphin, pp.132-133. Churchill, Marlborough, ii, 174-176. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.166-167.

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19. Dickinson, Bolingbroke, p.32. Sachse, Lord Somers, p.222. Trevelyan, Blenheim, pp.274-275.

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21. Bodleian Library. Tanner Ms.305. Charles Spencer to Trimnell, 5 September 1694.

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23. B.L. Add. Ms.61612, ff.47-48. Archbishop of York to Sunderland, 14 June 1703.

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25. Cambridge University Library. Cholmondeley (Houghton) Ms. Correspondence 317. J. Stanhope to R. Walpole, 28 October 1703.

26. H.M.C. Rutland Mss., ii, 177. John Charlton to Lady Granby, 11 November 1703.

27. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.170, 172. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks, pp.168-180. McInnes, Robert Harley, p.70.

28. Turberville, House of Lords, pp.54-56. Gregg, Queen Anne, p.176.

29. Snyder, Occasional Conformity Bill, 174-176, 187-192. Snyder reproduces the first of Sunderland's lists which is in B.L. Add. Ms.61495, ff.11-14. The second list he refers to does not appear to be in the Sunderland papers at the B.L.

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34. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks, p.196.

35. B.L. Add. Ms.61628, f.25.

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37. L.J., xvii, 445-446, 455.

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42. L.J., xvii, 505-506, 523-524, 525-526, 553, 557. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks, p.196. Turberville, House of Lords, pp.49-50.

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53. Nicolson Diary. 10, 16, 21 December 1704. L.J., xvii, 602, 603, 605-608. H.M.C. House of Lords Mss., vi, 235. Sachse, Lord Somers, p.228. Riley, England and Scotland, pp.121-123. Trevelyan, Ramillies, pp.19-20.

54. McInnes, Robert Harley, pp.94-95. O.R.F. Davies, 'The Wealth and influence of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle 1694-1711', Renaissance and Modern Studies, ix (1965), 31.

55. L.J., 677-678, 680-681, 692-695. Luttrell, Historical Relation, v, 524-525, 529. Chandler, History and Proceedings, iii, 415-435. B.L. Add. Ms.17677AAA, ff.171-174^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 9/20 March 1705.

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62. H.M.C. Bath Mss., i, 69. Godolphin to Harley, 31 May 1705. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, i, 446. Marlborough to the Duchess, 10/21 June 1705.

63. Curtis Brown, Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne, p.165. The Queen to Godolphin. Though undated it would appear that the letter was written at the beginning of June 1705.

64. H.M.C. Frankland-Russell-Astley Mss., p.180. J. Tucker to Lord Cutts, 12 June 1705. B.L. Add. Ms.17677AAA, ff.331-333. L'Hermitage to the States General, 12/23 June 1705.

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71. B.L. Add. Ms.7069, ff.237-238. Alexander Stanhope to George Stepney, 14 July N.S. 1705. ibid., ff.239-240. Alexander Stanhope to George Stepney, 17 July N.S. 1705. ibid., ff.243-244. Alexander Stanhope to George Stepney, 24 July N.S. 1705.

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73. ibid., 34515, ff.206-207^{v}. Somers to Portland, 28 August 1705. ibid., 28056, ff.283-^{v}. Sunderland to Godolphin, 29 June 1705. ibid., ff.289-290. Sunderland to Godolphin, 3/14 July 1705. P.R.O. S.P. Foreign. 80/26. Sunderland to Harley, 3/14 July 1705. ibid., 80/26. Sunderland to Harley, 10/21 July 1705.

74. P.R.O. S.P. Foreign. 80/26. Sunderland to Harley, 13/24 July 1705.

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84. B.L. Add. Ms.61502, ff.146^{v}-147. Stepney to Sunderland, 22 July 1705. ibid., ff.187-188. Stepney to Sunderland, 12 August 1705.

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87. P.R.O. S.P. Foreign. 80/26. Sunderland to Harley 18/29 August 1705.

88. B.L. Add. Ms.28056, ff.319-320^{v}. Sunderland to Godolphin, 29 August/9 September 1705.

89. P.R.O. S.P. Foreign. 80/26. Sunderland to Harley, 12/23 September 1705.

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92. P.R.O. S.P. Foreign 80/27. Sunderland to Harley, 24 October/4 November 1705. ibid., 80/27. Stepney to Harley, 4 November N.S. 1705.

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100. B.L. Stowe Ms.222, ff.317-^{v}. Wratislaw to Robethon, 12 September N.S. 1705.

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102. ibid., 34515, ff.204-205^{v}. Somers to Portland, 21 June 1705, Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, i, 456. Marlborough to Godolphin, 2/13 July 1705. Ingrao, op.cit., p.160.

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107. B.L. Add. Ms.61443, ff.7-8. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 11/22 December 1705.

108. Nicolson Diary. 29 January 1706.

109. ibid., 31 January 1706.

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111. Holmes, British Politics, pp.131-134. G.S. Holmes, 'The attack on "the influence of the Crown",1702-1716', B.I.H.R., xxxix (1966), 53-59.

112. Ellis,'The Whig Junto',ii, 563-566.

113. B.L. Stowe Ms.222, ff.392-393. Sunderland to the Elector of Hanover, 12 April 1706.

114. Cobbett, vi, 534-536.

115. Riley, England and Scotland, pp.162-189. Trevelyan, Ramillies, pp.259-269.

116. P.R.O. Baschet Transcripts. 31/3/193, f.279. Le Vasseur to Gaultier, 12 January N.S. 1706.

117. B.L. Add. Ms.4291, ff.60-61. Charles to Henry Davenant, 12 March 1706.

118. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, i, 522. Godolphin to Marlborough, 19 April 1706. ibid., i, 525. Godolphin to Marlborough, 22 April 1706.

119. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.36, 219.

120. ibid., p.219.

121. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, i, 563. Godolphin to Marlborough, 26-27 May 1706. ibid., ii, 603. Marlborough to Godolphin, 8 July 1706. ibid., ii, 604. Marlborough to the Duchess, 6 July 1706.

122. B.L. Add. Ms.61101, ff.96-^{v}. Anne to the Duke of Marlborough, 9 July 1706.

123. ibid., 61443, ff.9-10^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess, n.d. 'Saturday night'.

124. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 620. Godolphin to Marlborough, 11 July 1706. ibid., ii, 628. Marlborough to the Duchess, 18/29 July 1706. ibid., ii, 638. Marlborough to the Duchess, 29 July/9 August 1706.

125. ibid., ii, 632. Godolphin to Marlborough, 23 July 1706. ibid., ii, 653. Marlborough to Godolphin, 19/30 August 1706. ibid., ii, Marlborough to the Duchess, 19/30 August 1706.

126. ibid., ii, 656. Godolphin to Marlborough, 23 August 1706. ibid., ii, 658-659. Marlborough to the Duchess, 28 August/ 9 September 1706. B.L. Add. Ms.56105L. Queen to Godolphin, 23 August 1706.

127. B.L. Add. Ms.61443, ff.13-^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess, 17 September 1706.

128. ibid., 61417, ff.19-20^{v}. Duchess to the Queen, 27 August 1706. Gregg, Queen Anne, p.223.

129. Curtis Brown, Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne, pp.196-197.

130. Ellis, 'The Whig Junto', ii, 571-574. Gregg, Queen Anne, p.222. McInnes, Robert Harley, p.96.

131. H.M.C. Portland Mss., ii, 196-197. Harley to Newcastle, 10 September 1706.

132. Coxe, Memoirs of Marlborough, ii, 3-4. Godolphin to the Queen. n.d. 'Saturday morning at nine'.

133. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 661. Godolphin to the Duchess, 1 September 1706.

134. B.L. Add. Ms.61417, ff.34-37^{v}. Duchess to the Queen, [6 September 1706].

135. ibid., 61443, f.12. Undated fragment of a letter from Sunderland to the Duchess probably written between 27 August and 17 September 1706.

136. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 670-671. Godolphin to the Duchess, 7 September 1706.

137. ibid., ii, 675. Marlborough to Godolphin, 10 September 1706. ibid., ii, 684. Godolphin to the Duchess, 17 September 1706. B.L. Add. Ms.61443, ff.13-14^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess, 17 September 1706.

138. B.L. Add. Ms.56105L. Godolphin to the Queen, 13 September 1706.

139. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 679. Godolphin to the Duchess, 14 September 1706. ibid., ii, 683. Godolphin to Marlborough, 17 September 1706.

140. B.L. Add. Ms.61118, ff.8-10. Queen to Godolphin, 21 September 1706.

141. ibid., 61118, ff.12-13. Godolphin to the Queen, 25 September 1706. Curtis Brown, Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne, p.202. Queen to Godolphin, 28 September 1706.

142. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 686. Godolphin to Marlborough, 18 September 1706.

143. ibid., ii, 694-695. Marlborough to Godolphin, 26 September/ 7 October 1706.

144. Coxe, Memoirs of Marlborough, ii, 16-17. Marlborough to the Queen, 24 October N.S. 1706.

145. Snyder, Marlborough-Godolphin Correspondence, ii, 718-719. Godolphin to Marlborough, 21 October 1706. ibid., ii, 733. Godolphin to the Duchess, 9 November 1706.

146. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.228-229.

147. Snyder, Godolphin and Harley, 260-261. Gregg, Queen Anne, pp.227-228.

148. Snyder, Godolphin and Harley, 261.

149. B.L. Add. Ms.61101, ff.121-122. Queen to Marlborough, 22 June 1708.

150. ibid., 17677BBB, ff.548-549^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General 3/14 December 1706. ibid., 4291, ff.111-112^{v}. Charles to Henry Davenant, 3 December 1706. Nicolson Diary. 3 December 1706.

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Chapter Three

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3. In the discussion of the office and duties of the Secretary of State I have relied very heavily on: Snyder, Charles Spencer, op.cit., pp.68-112, 144-145, 249-254. M.A. Thomson, The Secretaries of State (Oxford, 1932). J.H. Plumb, 'The Organization of the Cabinet in the Reign of Queen Anne', T.R.H.S., 5th Series, vii (1957), 137-157. H.T. Dickinson, The Poor Palatines and the Parties, E.H.R., Lxxxii (1967), 464-485.

4. A.D. Francis, The First Peninsular War (London, 1975), pp.223-241. Dickinson, Lord Peterborough, 175-180.

5. B.L. Portland Loan, 29/9. Cabinet Minutes, 20, 21, 22 December 1706. ibid. Add. Ms.61498, ff.6, 8, 9. Cabinet Minutes, 15, 20, 22 December 1706. ibid., 61508, ff.50-53. Methuen to Sunderland, 15 January N.S. 1707. ibid., 61516, ff.13-15. Rivers to Sunderland, 17 December N.S. 1706. ibid., ff.16-^{v}. Rivers to Sunderland, 25 December N.S. 1706. ibid., ff.24-25^{v}. Rivers to Sunderland, 31 December N.S. 1706. ibid., ff.34-35. Rivers to Sunderland, 2 January N.S. 1707. ibid., 61651, ff.22-^{v}. Sunderland to Galway, 17 December 1706. ibid., ff.23-24. Sunderland to Galway, 23 December 1706. ibid., f.23. Sunderland to Rivers, 20 December 1706. ibid., ff.24-25. Sunderland to Rivers, 23 December 1706. ibid., ff.26-^{v}. Sunderland to Peterborough, 23 December 1706.

6. ibid., ff.25^{v}-26. Sunderland to Methuen, 23 December 1706.

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49. ibid., 61651, f.45. Sunderland to Manchester, 18 April 1707.

50. ibid., Portland Loan, 29/194, f.49. Sunderland to Harley, 11 April 1707.

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140. Bonet., Bonet to the King of Prussia 2/13 June 1719.

141. B.L. Add. Ms.61513, ff.139-140^{v}. Stanhope to Sunderland, 6 July 1719.

142. Bonet., Bonet to the King of Prussia, 2/13 June 1719.

143. B.L. Add. Ms.61513, f.141. Stanhope to Sunderland, 3 August N.S. 1719

144. Kent Archives Office. Chevening Ms.U1590 0145/28. Sunderland to Stanhope, 31 July 1719.

145. ibid., Sunderland to Stanhope, 7 August 1719.

146. Hatton, George I, pp.238-240. McKay, Northern Policy, 384. Chance, Northern War, pp.324-329, 340-378. Basil Williams, Carteret and Newcastle: A contrast in Contemporaries (Cambridge, 1943), pp.23-25. Archibald Ballantyne, Lord Carteret: A Political Biography 1690-1763 (London, 1887), pp.41-45. Sir Richard Lodge, Great Britain and Prussia in the Eighteenth Century (Oxford, 1923), pp.13-14.

147. Kent Archives Office. Chevening Ms.U1590 0145/28. Sunderland to Stanhope, 14 August 1719. ibid., Sunderland to Stanhope, 25 August 1719. S.R.O. Stair Ms. GD 135/141/20/20. Montrose to Stair, 11 September [N.S. ?] 1719.

148. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.149-^{v}. Sunderland to Newcastle, 22 October N.S. 1719.

149. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.23. Sunderland to Carlisle, 18 November 1719.

150. B.L. Add. Ms.61655, f.78. Sunderland to his wife, 28 October N.S. 1719.

151. Kent Archives Office. Chevening Ms.U1590 0145/28. Sunderland to Stanhope, 7 August 1719.

152. ibid., Sunderland to Stanhope, 25 August 1719.

153. B.L. Add. Ms.61655, f.74. Sunderland to his wife, 23 September 1719.

154. Leeds City Archives. Vyner Mss Catalogue. Item 5709 refers to a letter sent by Sunderland to Aislabie from Hanover on 21 September 1719, though it incorrectly describes Sunderland as Secretary of State.

155. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.149-^{v}. Sunderland to Newcastle, 22 October N.S. 1719.

156. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.20, ff.347-^{v}. Cowper to Wake, 14 March 1717. Hertfordshire Record Office. Panshanger Ms. D/EP F56, f.112. Sunderland to Cowper, 13 May 1717. Sykes, William Wake, ii, 132-133.

157. Bodleian Library. Carte Ms.244, f.132. Mountwood to Carte, 8 November 1718. B.L. Add. Ms.61612, ff.38-^{v}. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.16, ff.26, 29-31. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 571-572. Newsletter, 18 November 1718. R.J. White, Dr. Bentley: A Study in Academic Scarlet (London, 1965), pp.169-177. Sykes, William Wake, ii, 247-248.

158. B.L. Add. Ms.32868, ff.155-156^{v}. Stanhope to Newcastle, 27 October N.S. 1719. ibid., ff.151-153. Draft. Newcastle to Stanhope, 14 October 1719.

159. B.L. Add. Ms.61655, f.80. Sunderland to his wife, 28 October N.S. 1719. ibid., f.81. Sunderland to his wife, 1 November N.S. 1719. ibid., 61443, f.122. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 3 November N.S. 1719. Kent Archives Office. U1590 0146 Sunderland to Carteret, 12 November N.S. 1719.

160. B.L. Add. Ms.61443, ff.120-121^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 30 October N.S. 1719.

161. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.21, f.168. Sunderland to Wake, 27 October N.S. 1719.

162. B.L. Add. Ms.61496, f.20. Warrington to Sunderland, 20 November 1719. ibid., f.22. Abergavenny to Newcastle, 21 November 1719. ibid., f.34. Abergavenny to Sunderland, 7 January 1720. H.M.C. Polwarth Mss., ii, 342. Robethon to Polwarth, 17 October N.S. 1719. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.23. Sunderland to Carlisle, 18 November 1719. H.M.C. Clements Mss., p.281. Walter to John Molesworth, 5 October 1719.

163. L.J., xxi, 162.

164. ibid., 165-166.

165. Cobbett., vii, 606-609.

166. Plumb, Walpole, i, 279-281. Turberville, House of Lords, pp.181-184. Turner, op.cit., 257-258.

167. B.L. Add. Ms.37381, ff.3-6. Bothmer to Whitworth, 26 April/ 7 May 1720. Cowper, Diary, pp.131, 137, 154. Plumb, Walpole, i, 286-287.

168. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.21, f.216. Sunderland to Wake, [23 April 1720].

169. Bodleian Library, Add. Ms.A269, ff.88-89. Gibson to Nicolson, 23 April 1720.

170. Cowper, Diary, p.150. B.L. Add. Ms.17677KKK3, ff.531-532^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 7 May N.S. 1720.

171. ibid., ff.611-613. L'Hermitage to the States General, 28 June N.S. 1720. Hatton, George I, p.246. Hill, Parliamentary Parties, p.178.

172. Cowper, Diary, p.173. H.M.C. Polwarth Mss., ii, 558. Robethon to Polwarth, 4 June N.S. 1720.

173. Cowper, Diary, p.169.

174. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 175. Lord Middleton to Thomas Brodrick, 12 June 1720.

Chapter Nine

1. A Collection of the Several Pieces of Mr. John Toland, (2 vols., London, 1726), i, 407-408. Sunderland's absence from these talks and his reliance upon Aislabie does seem to confirm the general tenor of his activities as First Lord of the Treasury. For his irregular attendance at meetings of the Treasury Board see P.R.O. T29/24 (i) and (ii). P.G.M. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England 1688-1756, (London, 1967), pp.95, 97. J. Carswell, The South Sea Bubble (London, 1960), p.100. E. Wagstaff, 'The Political Aspects of the South Sea Bubble', University of London, unpublished M.A. Thesis (1934), pp.9, 10, 27, 30, 31, 74-84, 96-98.

2. Dickson, op.cit., pp.98-103. Carswell, op.cit., pp.110-113, 122-123.

3. B.L. Add. Ms.27871, f.535. Aislabie to Robert Knight, 4 April 1720.

4. Cobbett, vii, 646-648.

5. Dickson, op.cit., pp.126, 138, 140-142. Carswell, op.cit., pp.133, 136, 141, 145, 159.

5. S.R.O. Montrose Ms. GD 220/5/833/8. Montrose to Mungo Graham, 16 June 1720. ibid., Seafield Ms. GD 248/563/61/47. Alexander Abercromby to Findlater, 16 June 1720. ibid., GD 248/563/61/45. Alexander Abercromby to Findlater 18 June 1720. ibid., GD 248/563/61/44. Alexander Abercromby to Findlater, 24 June 1720. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, ff.49-50. Bishop of Bangor to Sunderland, 21 June 1720. ibid., f.56. ibid., 47029, ff.34^{v}-35. Lord Percival to Charles Dering, 23 June 1720. ibid., 61443, ff.128-^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 23 June 1720. Cobbett, vii, 734.

7. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, ff.49-50. Bishop of Bangor to Sunderland, 21 June 1720.

8. ibid., 61443, ff.128-^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 23 June 1720.

9. P.R.O. T29/24 (i). ff.274-275. Treasury Board Minutes, 24 June 1720. Dickson, op.cit., pp.135, 136, 140-149.

10. ibid., p.150.

11. B.L. Add. Ms.9149, ff.179-^{v}. Newcastle to Charles Stanhope, 29 July 1720. ibid., 37381, ff.232-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 2 August 1720. ibid., 61443, ff.132-133. Duchess of Marlborough to Sunderland, 1 August 1720. ibid., ff.142-143^{v}. Duchess of Marlborough to Sunderland, 11 August 1720. ibid., ff.140-141. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 8 August 1720. ibid., ff.144-^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 11 August 1720. ibid., ff.145-147. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 16 August 1720.

12. ibid., 37381, ff.304-305^{v}. Bothmer to Whitworth, 19/30 August 1720. ibid., 61655, f.82. Sunderland to his wife, 23 August 1720.

13. Hatton, Diplomatic Relations, p.206.

14. B.L. Add. Ms.37381, ff.184-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 6 July 1720.

15. ibid., ff.232-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 2 August 1720.

16. ibid., ff.100-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 24 June 1720.

17. ibid., ff.148-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 6 July 1720.

18. Hatton, Diplomatic Relations, p.208.

19. B.L. Add. Ms.37382, ff.18-^{v}. Whitworth to Craggs, 30 August/ 10 September 1720. ibid., ff.25-^{v}. Whitworth to Craggs, 2/13 September 1720. ibid., ff.35-^{v}. Whitworth to Craggs, 6/17 September 1720. H.M.C. Polwarth Mss., ii, 625. J. Payzant to Polwarth, 20 September N.S. 1720.

20. B.L. Add. Ms.61655, f.85. Sunderland to his wife, 2 September 1720. ibid., f.86. Sunderland to his wife, 5 September 1720.

21. ibid., f.89. Sunderland to his wife, 23 September 1720.

22. ibid., f.90. Sunderland to his wife, 1/12 October 1720.

23. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., pp.24-25. Sunderland to Carlisle, 19 October 1720.

24. B.L. Add. Ms.5994, ff.4-5^{v}. Elisha D. to Dr. Beauvoir, 31 October/1 November 1720. ibid., ff.6-^{v}. Elisha D. to Dr. Beauvoir, 3/14 November 1720. ibid., 17677KKK3, ff.693-694. L'Hermitage to the States General, 12 November N.S. 1720. Lambeth Palace. Wake Diary f.234^{v}.

25. Hatton, George I, p.254.

26. Darwin, John Aislabie, 301-302. Dickson, op.cit., pp.162-167.

27. ibid., p.170. Plumb, Walpole, i, 329.

28. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, f.84. George Caswell to Sunderland, ? 1720.

29. P.R.O. T29/24(ii), ff.1-3. Treasury Board Minutes, 16 November 1720.

30. B.L. Add. Ms.17677KKK3, ff.706-707^{v}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 26 November N.S. 1720. P.R.O. T29/24 (ii), ff.1-3. Treasury Board Minutes, 16 November 1720.

31. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, f.76. E. Gibbon to Sunderland, 28 November 1720.

32. L.J., xxi, 369.

33. Plumb, Walpole, I, 334-336. Dickson, op.cit., p.171. C.B. Realey, The Early Opposition to Sir Robert Walpole 1720-1727. (Philadelphia, 1931), pp.16, 23-24.

34. L.J., xxi, 382, 384-385.

35. B.L. Add. Ms.47076, ff.9^{v}-10^{v}. Newsletter to Lord Egmont, 7 January 1721.

36. ibid., 5994, ff.57-58^{v}. Newsletter to Dr. Beauvoir, 13/24 February 1721. Cobbett., vii, 709-710. H.M.C. Onslow Mss., p.507. Dickson, op.cit., pp.111-112. Caswell, op.cit., pp.265-266. Hatton, George I, p.255.

37. S.R.O. Seafield Ms. GD 248/563/63/7. John Philp to Findlater, 8 January 1721. ibid., GD 248/563/63/6. Alexander Abercromby to Findlater, 14 February 1721. B.L. Add. Ms.61632, ff.201-^{v}. Royal Archives Windsor. Stuart Ms.52/105. James Hamilton, 10/21 March 1721. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 615. [Thomas Harley to Oxford], 17 February 1721. ibid., 614-615. Edward Harley to Oxford, 17 February 1721. ibid., 615-616. [Lord Harley] to Oxford, 18 February 1721. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., pp.31-32. [Sir J. Vanbrugh] to Carlisle 18 February 1721. G.V. Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688-1730 (Oxford, 1975), p.226. G.V. Bennett, 'Jacobitism and the Rise of Walpole', in Historical Perspectives: Studies in English thought and society in honour of J.H. Plumb ed., N. McKendrick (London, 1974), 73-75.

38. Cobbett., vii, 669-698.

39. ibid., 698.

40. Bodleian Library. Add. Ms.A269, ff.93-94. Gibson to Nicolson, 11 January 1721.

41. L.J., xxi, 392.

42. Bodleian Library. Add. Ms.A269, f.94. Gibson to Nicolson, 15 January 1721.

43. Carswell, op.cit., p.224.

44. Bodleian Library. Add. Ms.A269, f.94. Gibson to Nicolson, 15 January 1721.

45. Dickson, op.cit., pp.171-172.

46. L.J., xxi, 431-432.

47. B.L. Add. Ms.47029, ff.46^{v}-47^{v}. Lord Percival to Charles Dering, 17 February 1721.

48. ibid., A.E.C.P.A. 335, ff.190-192. Destouches to Dubois, 6 March N.S. 1721. Cobbett., vii, 717-718. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 615. [Thomas Harley to Oxford], 17 February 1721.

49. B.L. Add. Ms.9149, ff.152-^{v}. Newcastle to Charles Stanhope, 10 August 1719. ibid., ff.117-118. Craggs to Lord Stanhope, 22 July 1720. ibid., ff.179-^{v}. Newcastle to Charles Stanhope, 29 July 1720. ibid., 61443, ff.128-^{v}. Sunderland to the Duchess of Marlborough, 23 June 1720. ibid., 37381, ff.100-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 24 June 1720. ibid., ff.148-^{v}. Sunderland to Whitworth, 6 July 1720. Kent Archives Office, Chevening Ms.U1590 0145/28. Sunderland to Stanhope, 29 July 1720. Dickson, op.cit., p.173. Realey, op.cit., p.25. Plumb, Walpole, i, 343-344. Hatton, George I, p.255.

50. Darwin, John Aislabie, 311-312. Realey, op.cit., pp.26-27. Plumb, Walpole, i, 343.

51. Hertfordshire Record Office. Panshanger Ms. D/EP F55, f.43. Archibald Hutcheson to Cowper, 12 March 1721. ibid., ff.45-46. Archibald Hutcheson to Cowper, 13 March 1721.

52. Bodleian Library. Carte Ms.239, f.468. Mountwood to Carte, 14 March 1721. B.L. Add. Ms.47076, ff.31-32^{v}. Newsletter to Lord Egmont, 14 March 1721. ibid., 17677KKK4, ff.148-150. L'Hermitage to the States General, 25 March N.S. 1721. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 213-214. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 16 March 1721.

53. Royal Archives Windsor. Stuart Ms.53/15. John Menzies to the Pretender, 7 April 1721.

54. B.L. Add. Ms.5994, ff.75-76^{v}. Newsletter to Dr. Beauvoir, 16/27 March 1721. Cobbett, viii, 755. R. Chandler, The History and Proceedings of the House of Commons from the Restoration to the Present time (14 vols., London, 1742), vi, 237.

55. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 213-214. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 16 March 1721.

56. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 688. [Edward Harley to Oxford], 16 March 1721.

57. Cobbett., vii, 755.

58. B.L. Add. Ms.5994, ff.75-76^{v}. Newsletter to Dr. Beauvoir, 16/27 March 1721. Royal Archives Windsor. Stuart Ms.53/13. John Menzies to the Pretender, 7 April 1721. Bodleian Library. Ballard Ms.32, f.154. [William Bishop to Charlett], 20 March 1721. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 213-214. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 16 March 1721. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 618. [Edward Harley to Oxford], 16 March 1721. ibid., 618-619. [Edward Harley, junior] to Abigail Harley, 19 March 1721.

59. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 618-619. [Edward Harley, junior] to Abigail Harley, 19 March 1721.

60. H.M.C. Egmont Diary Mss., ii, 150.

61. B.L. Add. Ms.47076, ff.10^{v}-11^{v}. Newsletter to Lord Egmont, 10 January 1721.

62. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 192. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 27 September 1720.

63. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.32. Lady Lechmere to [Lord Carlisle], 14 March 1721. ibid., p.33. Lady Lechmere to Lord Carlisle, 1 April [1721].

64. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, ff.98-^{v}. Lord Carlisle to Sunderland, 25 March [1721]. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.33. Sir John Vanbrugh to Lord Carlisle, 25 March 1721.

65. B.L. Add. Ms.47029, ff.55-56. Lord Percival to Charles Dering, 15 April 1721.

66. Royal Archives Windsor. Stuart Ms.53/15. John Menzies to the Pretender, 7 April 1721. H.M.C. Portland Mss., vii, 295. Dr. William Stratford to Lord Harley, 9 April 1721.

67. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 213-214. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 16 March 1721. The House of Commons 1715-1754, ed. R. Sedgwick (2 vols., London, 1970), ii, 517.

68. A.E.C.P.A. 335, ff.245-248. Destouches to Dubois, 27 March N.S. 1721.

69. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 213-214. Thomas Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 16 March 1721. B.L. Add. Ms.61604, ff.98-v. Lord Carlisle to Sunderland, 25 March 1721.

70. Plumb, Walpole, i, 344-346.

71. B.L. Add. Ms.61632, ff.201-v.

72. A.E.C.P.A. 335, ff.245-248. Destouches to Dubois, 27 March N.S. 1721.

73. L.J., xxi, 495. B.L. Add. Ms.17677KKK4, ff,202-205. L'Hermitage to the States General, 2 May N.S. 1721.

74. B.L. Add. Ms.47029, ff.56-57. Lord Percival to Philip Percival, 25 April 1721.

75. Dickson, op.cit., pp.175-176.

76. Darwin, John Aislabie, 313.

77. ibid., 313.

78. Hatton, George I, pp.252-253. Sedgwick, op.cit., i, 410.

79. Sedgwick, op.cit., i, 410.

80. Cobbett., vii, 859.

81. B.L. Add. Ms.47076, ff.133-134. Newsletter to Lord Egmont, 11 July 1721. Cobbett., vii, 854.

82. L.J., xxi, 562-563, 569.

83. B.L. Add. Ms.5994, ff.137-138v. Newsletter to Dr. Beauvoir, 20/31 July 1721. Cobbett., vii, 862-863. Timberland, History, iii, 151-184. Darwin, John Aislabie, 315-318. Dickson, op.cit., p.174.

84. Horwitz, Revolution Politicks, p.256. Sykes, William Wake, ii, 135-136.

85. B.L. Add. Ms.61612, f.198. Wake to Sunderland, 29 April 1721. Lambeth Palace. Wake Diary. f.239^{V}.

86. B.L. Add. Ms.5994, ff.90-91^{V}. Newsletter to Dr. Beauvoir, 5/16 May 1721. Cobbett., vii, 894-895. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 621. [Edward Harley] to Oxford, 2 May 1721.

87. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.9, f.52. Wake to Sunderland, 11 May 1721. ibid., f.53. Sunderland to Wake, 12 May 1721.

88. G. Davies, 'Autobiography of Thomas Raymond and Memoirs of the Family of Guise of Elmore, Gloucestershire', Camden Society 3rd Series xxvii (1917), 157.

89. B.L. Add. Ms.47029, ff.47^{V}-48^{V}. Lord Dering to Philip Percival, 18 February 1721. ibid., 47076, ff.49-50. Newsletter to Lord Egmont, 4 April 1721. ibid., 17677KKK4, ff.184-185^{V}. L'Hermitage to the States General, 15 April N.S. 1721. A.E.C.P.A. 335, f.127. Destouches to Dubois, 13 February N.S. 1721. ibid., 336, f.45. Destouches to Dubois, 14 April N.S. 1721. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.28. Sir J. Vanbrugh to Lord Carlisle, 2 February 1721. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 615. [Thomas Harley to Oxford], 17 February 1721. ibid., 615-616. [Lord Harley] to Oxford, 18 February 1721. ibid., vii, 289. Dr. William Stratford to Lord Harley, 5 February 1721. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., p.30. Lady Irwin to Lord Carlisle, 11 February 1721.

90. Bodleian Library. Ballard Ms.32, ff.150-^{V}. William Bishop to Charlett, 7 February 1721. H.M.C. Polwarth Mss., iii, 40. Carteret to Polwarth, 7 February 1721. Newman, Stanhopes of Chevening, pp.98-99. Williams, Stanhope, p.440. Carswell, op.cit., pp.233-234.

91. A.E.C.P.A. 335, ff.190-192. Destouches to Dubois, 6 March N.S. 1721.

92. B.L. Add. Ms.47029, ff.47^{V}-48^{V}. Lord Dering to Philip Percival, 18 February 1721. ibid., 61632, ff.201-^{V}. Realey, op.cit., p.30. Riley, English Ministers, p.272.

93. H.M.C. Carlisle Mss., pp.31-32. [Sir J. Vanbrugh to Lord Carlisle, 18 February 1721].

94. B.L. Add. Ms.61612, f.199. Bolton to Sunderland, [19 July 1721].

95. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.9, f.101. Sunderland to Wake, 20 July 1720.

96. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.197-198. Carteret to Newcastle, 9 September 1721. ibid., 61655, f.99. Sunderland to his wife, 14 September 1721.

97. Christ Church Library Oxford. Wake Ms.9, f.119. Sunderland to Wake, 21 September 1721.

98. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.204-^{v}. Sunderland to Wake, 21 September 1721.

99. Bodleian Library. Carte Ms.239, f.473. Mountwood to Samuel Carte, 26 September 1721.

100. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.179-180. Carteret to Newcastle, 1 August 1721. ibid., ff.185-187. Carteret to Newcastle, 22 August 1721. Plumb, Walpole, i, 365-366. See also J.B. Owen's review of Plumb's Walpole in E.H.R., Lxxii (1957), 331. Owen corrects Plumb's error over Stanhope's promotion for the Treasurship of the Chamber was a Household office under the jurisdiction of Newcastle as Lord Chamberlain rather than Walpole as First Lord of the Treasury.

101. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.185-187. Carteret to Newcastle, 22 August 1721.

102. ibid., 47029, ff.47^{v}-48^{v}. Lord Dering to [Philip Percival], 18 February 1721.

103. H.M.C. Onslow Mss., p.466.

104. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.197-198. Carteret to Newcastle, 9 September 1721. ibid., 61655, ff.98-^{v}. Sunderland to his wife, 'Tuesday seven o clock' [September 1721]. Sedgwick, op.cit., ii, 372. D.N.B., xvi, 467.

105. Sedgwick, op.cit., ii, 372, 375.

106. B.L. Add. Ms.61649, ff.35-37. Harcourt to Sunderland, 25 March 1721. Snyder, Pardon, 235-237. Dickinson, Bolingbroke, p.152. Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy, p.198. English Historical Documents, ed. D.B. Horn and Mary Ransome (London, 1957), 957-964.

107. G.E.C., iii, 27.

108. B.L. Add. Ms.9133, ff.51-52. Townshend to Walpole, 11 August 1721.

109. B.L. Add. Ms.61496, f.40. Alexander Urquhart to Sunderland, 'Saturday 12 o'clock'. [March 1721 ?].

110. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 618-619. [Edward Harley, junior] to Abigail Harley, 19 March 1721.

111. B.L. Harleian Ms.7190, f.310. I owe this reference to Mr. Clyve Jones. G.V. Bennett, The Tory Crisis in Church and State 1688-1730 (Oxford, 1975), pp.226-228. G.V. Bennett, 'Jacobitism and the Rise of Walpole', in Historical Perspectives: Studies in English Thought and Society in honour of J.H. Plumb, ed. N. McKendrick (London, 1974), 74-75.

112. B.L. Portland Loan. 29/67. Edward Harley to Abigail Harley, 22 June 1721. Cambridge University Library. Cholmondeley (Houghton) Ms. Correspondence 1292. J. Sample to Horace Walpole, 27-30 March 1726. H.M.C. Portland Mss., vii, 299-300. Dr. William Stratford to Lord Harley, 23 June 1721. Plumb, Walpole, i, 365.

113. The Lockhart Papers, ed. A. Aufrere (2 vols., London, 1817), ii, 69-74. George Lockhart to the Pretender, 5 December 1721.

114. B.L. Add. Ms.61496, ff.48-49. Hutcheson to Sunderland, 28 July 1721. ibid., ff.64-65^{v}. Hutcheson to Sunderland, 3 April 1722. ibid., ff.62-63. Hutcheson to Sunderland, 11 April 1722. Copies of Some Letters from Mr. Hutcheson to the Late Earl of Sunderland (London, 1722). Hutcheson to Sunderland, 5 September 1721. Plumb, Walpole, i, 377.

115. Colley, In Defiance of Oligarchy, p.198.

116. H.M.C. Portland Mss., v, 625. [William Bromley to Oxford], 22 August 1721.

117. A.E.C.P.A. 337, ff.121-125. Destouches to Dubois, 18 August N.S. 1721.

118. Coxe, Walpole, ii, 217-218. Saint John Brodrick to Lord Middleton, 10 June 1721.

119. B.L. Add. Ms.9149, ff.58-60^{v}. Anthony Corbiere to Sir Luke Schaub, 16 August 1721. A.E.C.P.A. 337, ff.121-125. Destouches to Dubois, 18 August N.S. 1721. ibid., f.155. Destouches to Dubois 1 September N.S. 1721.

120. Lord Mahon, History of England from the Peace of Utrecht to the Peace of Versailles 1713-1783 (7 vols., London, 1853-1854), ii Appendix xviii, Orrery to James III, 28 October 1721.

121. S.R.O. Montrose Ms. GD 220/5/835/8a. Montrose to Mungo Graham, 27 July 1721.

122. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.185-187. Carteret to Newcastle, 22 August 1721.

123. ibid., ff.193-v. Carteret to Newcastle, 27 August 1721.

124. Plumb, Walpole, i, 369.

125. B.L. Add. Ms.32686, ff.179-180. Carteret to Newcastle, 1 August 1721. ibid., ff.185-187. Carteret to Newcastle, 22 August 1721. ibid., ff.189-190. Carteret to Newcastle, 26 August 1721. ibid., ff.193-v. Carteret to Newcastle, 27 August 1721.

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