

## The Suffolk Resolves, September 6, 1774

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At a Meeting of the Delegates of every Town and District in the County of *Suffolk*, on Tuesday the Sixth of September, at the House of Mr. *Richard Woodward*, of *Dedham*, and, by Adjournment, at the House of Mr. *Daniel Vose*, of *Milton*, on Friday the Ninth Instant, JOSEPH PALMER, Esq; being chosen moderator, and WILLIAM THOMPSON, Esq; clerk, a Committee was chosen to bring in a Report to the Convention, and the following being several Times read and put Paragraph by Paragraph, was UNANIMOUSLY voted, viz.

*Whereas the Power but not the Justice; the Vengeance, but not the Wisdom of Great-Britain, which of old persecuted, scourged and exiled our fugitive Parents from their native Shores, now pursues us their guiltless Children with unrelenting Severity—And whereas this then savage and uncultivated Desert was purchased by the Toil and Treasure or acquired by the Valor and Blood of those our venerable Progenitors, who bequeathed to us the dear-bought Inheritance, who consigned it to our Care and Protection; the most sacred Obligations are upon us to transmit the glorious Purchase, unfettered by Power, unclogg'd with Shackles, to our innocent and beloved Offspring. On the Fortitude— on the Wisdom and on the Exertions of this important Day, is suspended the Fate of this New World, and of unborn millions.— If a boundless Extent of Continent, swarming with Millions, will tamely submit to live move and have their Being at the arbitrary Will of a licentious Minister, they basely yield to voluntary Slavery, and future Generations shall load their Memories with incessant Execrations.— On the other Hand, if we arrest the Hand which would ransack our Pockets, if we disarm the Parricide who points the Dagger to our Bosoms, if we nobly defeat that fatal Edict which proclaims a Power to frame Laws for us in all Cases whatsoever, thereby entailing the endless and numberless Curses of Slavery upon Us, our Heirs and their Heirs for ever; if we successfully resist that unparelled Usurpation of unconstitutional Power, whereby our Capital is robbed of the Means of Life; whereby the Streets of Boston are thronged with military Executioners, whereby our Coasts are lined, and Harbors crowded with Ships of War, whereby the Charter of the Colony, that sacred Barrier against the Encroachments of Tyranny, is mutilated, and in effect annihilated ; whereby a murderous Law is framed to*

*Shelter Villains from the Hand of Justice ; whereby that unalienable and inestimable Inheritance, which we derived from Nature, the Constitution of Britain, which was covenanted to us in the Charter of the Province, is totally wrecked, annulled and vacated;—Posterity will acknowledge that Virtue which preserved them free and happy ; and, while we enjoy the Rewards and Blessings of the Faithful, the Torrent of Panegyric will roll down our Reputations to that latest Period, when the Streams of Time shall be absorbed in the Abyss of Eternity.*

Therefore, WE HAVE RESOLVED, AND DO RESOLVE,

1. That whereas his Majesty GEORGE the Third is the rightful Successor to the Throne of Great-Britain, and justly entitled to the Allegiance of the British Realm, and, agreeable to *compact*, of the English Colonies in America.—Therefore we the Heirs and Successors of the first Planters of this Colony, do cheerfully acknowledge the said GEORGE the Third to be our rightful Sovereign, and that said Covenant is the Tenure and Claim on which are founded our Allegiance and Submission.
2. That it is an indispensable Duty which we owe to GOD, our Country, Ourselves and Posterity, by all lawful Ways and Means in our Power, to maintain, defend and preserve those civil and religious Rights and Liberties for which many of our Fathers fought—bled— and died; and to hand them down entire to future Generations.
3. That the late Acts of the British Parliament for blocking up the Harbor of Boston, and for altering the established Form of Government in this Colony; and for screening the most flagitious Violators of the Laws of the Province from a legal Trial, are gross Infractions of those Rights to which we are justly entitled by the Laws of Nature, the British Constitution, and the Charter of the Province.
4. That no Obedience is due from this Province to either or any part of the Acts above mentioned; but that they be rejected as the Attempts of a wicked Administration to enslave America.
5. That so long as the Justices of our Superior Courts of Judicature, Court of Assize, and General Goal Delivery, and Inferior Courts of Common Pleas in this County, are appointed, or hold their Places by any other Tenure than that which the Charter and the Laws of the Province direct; they must be considered as under undue Influence, and are

therefore unconstitutional Officers, and as such no Regard ought to be paid to them by the people of this County.

6. That if the Justices of the Superior Court of Judicature, Court of Assize, &c., Justices of the Court of Common Pleas, or of the General Sessions of the peace, shall set and act during their present unqualified State, this county will support and bear harmless all Sheriffs and their Deputies, Constables, Jurors, and other Officers, who shall refuse to carry into Execution the Orders of said Courts: And, as far as is possible to prevent the Inconveniencies that must attend the Suspension of the Courts of Justice, we do earnestly recommend it to all Creditors to exercise all reasonable and generous Forbearance to their Debtors, and to all Debtors to discharge their just Debts with all possible Speed, and if any Disputes concerning Debts or Trespasses should arise, which cannot be settled by the Parties, we recommend it to them to submit all such Causes to Arbitration; and if the Parties or either of them shall refuse so to do, they ought to be considered as co-operating with the Enemies of this Country.
7. That it be recommended to the Collectors of Taxes, Constables and all other Officers who have public monies in their Hands, to retain the same, and not to make any Payment thereof to the Province or County Treasurers, until the Civil Government of the Province is placed upon a constitutional Foundation, or until it shall otherwise be ordered by the proposed Provincial Congress.
8. That the Persons who have accepted Seats at the Council Board by Virtue of a Mandamus from the King, in Conformity to the late Act of the British Parliament, entitled, An Act for regulating the Government of the Massachusetts-Bay” have acted in direct Violation of the Duty they owe to their Country, and have thereby given great and just Offence to this people. Therefore,

*Resolved*, That this County do recommend it to all Persons who have so highly offended by accepting said Department, and have not already publicly resigned their seats at the Council Board, to make public Resignations of their Places at said Board, on or before the TWENTIETH Day of this Instant September; and that all Persons neglecting so to do shall

from and after that Day, be considered by this County as obstinate and incorrigible enemies to this colony.

9. That the Fortifications begun and now carrying on upon Boston Neck are justly alarming to this County, and give us Reason to apprehend some hostile Intention against that Town, more especially as the Commander in chief has in a very extraordinary Manner removed the Powder from the Magazine at Charlestown, and has also forbidden the Keeper of the Magazine at Boston to deliver out to the Owners the Powder which they lodged in said Magazine.

10. That the late Act of Parliament for establishing the Roman Catholic Religion and the French Laws in that extensive Country now called Canada, is dangerous in an extreme Degree to the Protestant Religion, and to the civil Rights and Liberties of all America; and therefore, as Men and Protestant Christians, we are indispensably obliged to take all proper Measures for our Security.

11. That whereas our enemies have flattered themselves that they shall make an easy Prey of this numerous, brave and hardy People, from an Apprehension that they are unacquainted with military Discipline, We therefore, for the Honor, Defence and security of this County and Province advise, as it has been recommended to take away all Commissions from the Officers of the Militia, that those who now hold Commissions, or such other Persons be elected in each Town as Officers in the Militia as shall be judged of sufficient Capacity for that Purpose, and who have evidenced themselves the inflexible Friends to the rights of the People.; and that the Inhabitants of those Towns and Districts who are qualified do use their utmost Diligence to acquaint themselves with the Art of War as soon as possible, and do for that Purpose appear under Arms at least once every Week.

12. That during the present hostile Appearances on the Part of Great Britain, notwithstanding the many Insults and Oppressions which we must sensibly resent; yet nevertheless, from our affection to his Majesty which we have at all Times evidenced; we are determined to act merely upon the Defensive, so long as such Conduct may be vindicated by Reason and the Principles of Self-preservation, but no longer.

13. That, as we understand it has been in Contemplation to apprehend sundry Persons of this County who have rendered themselves conspicuous in contending for the violated Rights and Liberties of their Countrymen, we do recommend, that, shou'd such an audacious Measure be put in practice, to seize and keep in safe Custody every Servant of the present tyrannical and unconstitutional Government throughout the County and Province, until the Persons so apprehended be liberated from the Hands of our Adversaries, and restored safe and uninjured to their respective Friends and Families.

14. That, until our Rights are fully restored to us, we will to the utmost of our Power (and recommend the same to the other Counties) withhold all commercial intercourse with Great Britain Ireland, and the West Indies, and abstain from the Consumption of British Merchandise and Manufactures, and especially of East-India Teas and Piece Goods, with such Additions, Alterations, And exceptions only as the *Grand Congress* of the Colonies may agree to.

15. That, under our present Circumstances, it is incumbent on us to encourage Arts and Manufactures amongst us by all Means in our Power : and that *Joseph Palmer, Esq;* of *Braintree* ; *Mr. Ebenezer Dorr, of Roxbury*; *Mr. James Boyes, and Mr. Edward Preston, of Milton*; and *Mr. Nathaniel Guild, of Walpole*, be and hereby are appointed a Committee to consider of the best Ways and Means to promote and establish the same, and report to this Convention as soon as may be.

16. That the Exigencies of our Public Affairs demand that a provincial Congress be called to concert such Measures as, may be adopted and vigorously executed by the whole People ; and we do recommend it to the several Towns in this County to chuse Members for such a Provincial Congress, to be holden at Concord, on the second Tuesday of October next ensuing.

17. That this County confiding in the Wisdom and Integrity of the Continental Congress now sitting at Philadelphia, will pay all due Respect and Submission to such Measures as may be recommended by them to the Colonies, for the Restoration and Establishment of our just Rights, civil and religious, and for renewing that harmony and union between Great Britain and the colonies, so earnestly wished for by all good Men.

18. *Whereas the universal Uneasiness which prevails among all Orders of Men, arising from the wicked and oppressive Measures of the present Administration, may influence some unthinking Persons to commit Outrage upon private Property:—* we would heartily recommend to all Persons of this Community, not to engage in any Routs, Riots or licentious Attacks upon the Properties of any Person whatsoever, as being subversive of all Order and Government; but by a steady, manly, uniform and persevering Opposition, to convince our Enemies, that, in a Contest so important, in a Cause so solemn, our Conduct shall be such as to merit the approbation of the Wise, and the Admiration of the brave and free of every age and of every Country.

19. That should our Enemies, by any sudden Maneuvres, render it necessary for us to ask the Aid and Assistance of our Brethren in the Country, some one of the Committee of Correspondence, or a Selectman of such Town, or the Town adjoining, where such Hostilities shall commence, or shall be expected to commence, shall despatch Couriers with written Messages to the Selectmen or Committees of Correspondence of the several Towns in the Vicinity, with a written Account of such Matter, who shall despatch others to Committees or Selectmen more remote, 'till proper and sufficient Assistance be obtained ; and that the Expense of said couriers be defrayed by the county, until it shall be otherwise ordered by the Provincial Congress.

Attest: WILLIAM THOMPSON, *Clerk.*

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