

Essex County Colonial Resolutions Of July 9, 1774

At a meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of Essex County, Virginia, at the courthouse thereof, on Saturday, the 9th of July, 1774, seriously to consider the present dangers which threaten ruin to American liberty, Mr. John Upshaw being chosen moderator, the following resolves were proposed and unanimously agreed to:

First. Resolved, That we will at all times and on all occasions bear true and faithful allegiance to his Majesty, King George the Third, and as free men we have always been and ever shall be willing constitutionally to give and grant liberally our property for the support of his crown and dignity and the preservation of our parent state, but that we can never consent to part with it on any other terms.

Second. Resolved, That the legislature of this Colony, for the purpose of internal taxation, is distinct from that of Britain, founded upon the principles of the British constitution and equal in all respects to the purposes of legislation and taxation within this Colony.

Third. Resolved, That the people of this Colony in particular and of America in general have a clear and absolute right to dispose of their property by their own consent expressed by themselves, or by their representatives in Assembly; and any attempt to tax or take their money from them in any other manner and all other acts tending to enforce submission to them is an exertion of power contrary to natural justice, subversive to the English constitution, destructive of our charters, and oppressive.

Fourth. Resolved, That the town of Boston, in our sister Colony of Massachusetts Bay, is now suffering in the common cause of North America for the just opposition to such acts, and it is indispensably necessary that all the colonies should unite firmly in defense of our common rights.

Fifth. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that an agreement to stop all exports to and all imports from Great Britain and the West Indies, firmly entered into and religiously complied with, will at all times prove a safe and infallible means of securing us against the evils of any unconstitutional and tyrannical acts of Parliament, and may be adopted upon the principles of self-preservation---the great law of nature.

Sixth. Resolved, That the inhabitants of this county will firmly join with the other counties of this Colony and the other colonies on this continent, or a majority of them, to stop all exports to and imports from Great Britain and the West Indies, and all other parts of the world, except the colonies of North America, if such a measure shall be deemed expedient by the deputies at the General Congress; and whatever agreement the Congress shall come to for the advancing of the common cause of North America, relating to exports, imports or otherwise, ought to be considered as binding as any act of the Legislature, and that we will use our utmost endeavor to support and maintain such general agreement, at the expense of our lives and fortunes.

Seventh, Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that the several courts in this colony ought not to proceed to the forwarding or trial of civil causes until our exports are opened.

Eighth. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that the East Indian Company, having a desire to monopolize a great part of the American trade, to the injury of the other merchants of Britain trading to North America, and knowing well the fatal consequences that must have resulted from their fixing a precedent for future taxes, by importing tea into the colonies, became the willing instrument of the ministry to destroy American liberty, and deserve the loss they have sustained.

Ninth. Resolved, That we do most heartily concur with our late Representatives in their resolve for the disuse of tea and that we will not hereafter purchase any East India commodities whatsoever.

Tenth. Resolved, That the spirited conduct of the town of Boston hath been serviceable to the cause of freedom (all other methods having failed), and that no reparation ought to be made to the East India Company or other assistants for any injury they have sustained, unless it be the express condition on which all our grievances shall be removed.

Eleventh. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that any general censure of the conduct of the town of Boston respecting the tea, without allowing to them the motives of resistance upon the principles of public virtue and necessity, is inimical to American liberty, and we are persuaded that none but ministerial hirelings and professed enemies of American freedom will adopt a language so impolitic which manifestly tends to create a disunion of sentiment at this time fatal to America.

Twelfth. Resolved, That the Parliament have no right to pass an act to remove our persons to Great Britain, or any other place whatsoever, to be tried for any offense, and that we are determined not to submit thereto.

Thirteenth. Resolved, That it is the opinion of this meeting that no merchant in this or any other colony of this continent shall advance the goods now on hand higher than they are at the present or have been for some time, and that the merchants in the several counties sign an agreement to that effect.

Fourteenth. Resolved, That a subscription be set on foot for raising provisions for the poor of Boston, who now suffer by the blockading up of their ports, and that Robert Beverly, John Lee and Muscoe Garnett, in St. Anne's Parish, and Archibald Ritchie and John Upshaw, in the upper part of South Farnham Parish, and Meriwether Smith and James Edmonson, in the lower part thereof, take in subscriptions for that purpose, who are to consign what may be raised to some proper person to be distributed; and that the before-mentioned gentlemen are empowered to charter a vessel and send it to Boston.

Fifteenth. Resolved, That this meeting have the deepest sense of the injuries in which the merchants and

manufacturers of Great Britain must necessarily be involved by a non-importation resolution, they having placed an almost unlimited confidence in us for a series of years, and by that means have the greatest part of their fortunes lodged in our hands, and that nothing but the desire of preserving our liberties could induce us to adopt a measure big with such melancholy consequences.

Sixteenth. Resolved, That James Edmondson and William Roane, Esquires, the late Representatives of this county, be, as they are hereby appointed, deputies to represent us in the general meeting of deputies for the several counties of this colony, on the first day of August in Williamsburg; and we desire that they will exert their best abilities for the security of our constitutional rights and liberties, and to appoint deputies to meet at the General Congress the deputies of the other colonies on this continent.

Seventeenth. Resolved, That the clerk transmit the foregoing proceedings to the printers to be published in their Gazette.