

The Road to War, 1771–1775

At the time of the Boston Massacre, the colonists did not know that the British government, beset by troubles at home, was again ready to succumb to an economic boycott (see text p. 150). Ironically, Parliament debated repeal on the very day of the Massacre and formally rescinded all the Townshend duties except that on tea in April 1770. In response to the Massacre itself, the British pulled their troops out of Boston proper. As the relatively quiet period that developed after the traumatic events of 1770 revealed, the British government seemed willing, at least temporarily, to stop escalating the confrontation with the colonists. But when Parliament passed the Tea Act of 1773 (see text pp. 150–151), it raised a new threat of economic monopoly. Colonists looked again to the tactics they had used against the Stamp Act; they also tried newer techniques, such as the threat of tar and feathering. Once again Boston became the scene of vigorous action. Document 5-10, a participant's account of the Boston Tea Party of 1773, illustrates the degree of organization and the effectiveness of that crowd operation. Not surprisingly, the Patriots turned again to an economic boycott. The agreement was signed by fifty-one women of Edenton, North Carolina (Document 5-12).

When news of the Boston Tea Party reached Parliament, the members expressed outrage over the destruction of private property (Document 5-11). Determined to punish Boston—which had become known as “the Metropolis of Sedition”—the British government passed the infamous Coercive Acts (see text pp. 150–151, 154–155). As they had done in response to the Stamp Act, the colonists called an intercolonial congress (Documents 5-13 and 5-14). This Continental Congress, which opened in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, deliberated until late October. As the textbook authors note, “men of ‘loyal principles’” at the Continental Congress supported a plan to create a new structure of empire (see text p. 154). That plan was not adopted, and the Continental Congress became a milestone in the ongoing and organized opposition to Britain's renewed efforts to exert control over the colonies. The Congress's Plan of Association (Document 5-14) shows the detailed program advanced by the Congress to counter the Coercive Acts and the British imperial reform effort.

5-10 An Account of the Boston Tea Party of 1773

George R. T. Hewes

Boston was the site of many crowd actions that marked the growing confrontation and the march toward the War of Independence. On the night of December 16, 1773, Bostonians staged the Boston Tea Party to show their opposition to the Tea Act of 1773. George R. T. Hewes, the Boston shoemaker whose life story is given in the textbook (see “American Lives,” text pp. 152–153), was one of the participants. Late in his long life, Hewes provided the following description of what occurred in Boston's harbor that December night in 1773.

Source: James Hawkes, A Retrospect of the Boston Tea-Party, with a Memoir of George R. T. Hewes, a Survivor of the Little Band of Patriots Who Drowned the Tea in Boston Harbour in 1773 (1834), 37–41.

The tea destroyed was contained in three ships, laying near each other, at what was called at that time Griffin's wharf, and were surrounded by armed ships of war; the commanders of which had publicly declared, that if the rebels, as they were pleased to style the Bostonians, should not withdraw their opposition to the landing of the tea before a certain

day, the 17th day of December, 1773, they should on that day force it on shore, under the cover of their cannon's mouth. On the day preceding the seventeenth, there was a meeting of the citizens of the county of Suffolk, convened at one of the churches in Boston, for the purpose of consulting on what measures might be considered expedient to prevent the

landing of the tea, or secure the people from the collection of the duty. At that meeting a committee was appointed to wait on Governor Hutchinson, and request him to inform them whether he would take any measures to satisfy the people on the object of the meeting. To the first application of this committee, the governor told them he would give them a definite answer by five o'clock in the afternoon. At the hour appointed, the committee again repaired to the governor's house, and on inquiry found he had gone to his country seat at Milton, a distance of about six miles. When the committee returned and informed the meeting of the absence of the governor, there was a confused murmur among the members, and the meeting was immediately dissolved, many of them crying out, Let every man do his duty, and be true to his country; and there was a general huzza for Griffin's wharf. It was now evening, and I immediately dressed myself in the costume of an Indian, equipped with a small hatchet, which I and my associates denominated the tomahawk, with which, and a club, after having painted my face and hands with coal dust in the shop of a blacksmith, I repaired to Griffin's wharf, where the ships lay that contained the tea. When I first appeared in the street, after being thus disguised, I fell in with many who were dressed, equipped and painted as I was, and who fell in with me, and marched in order to the place of our destination. When we arrived at the wharf, there were three of our number who assumed the authority to direct our operations, to which we readily submitted. They divided us into three parties, for the purpose of boarding the three ships which contained the tea at the same time. The name of him who commanded the division to which I was assigned, was Leonard Pitt. The names of the other commanders I never knew. We were immediately ordered by the respective commanders to board all the ships at the same time, which we promptly obeyed. The commander of the division to which I belonged, as soon as we were on board the ship, appointed me boatswain, and ordered me to go to the captain and demand of him the keys to the hatches and a dozen candles. I made the demand accordingly, and the captain promptly replied, and delivered the articles; but requested me at the same time to do no damage to the ship or rigging. We then were ordered by our commander to open the hatches, and take out all the chests of tea and throw them overboard, and we immediately proceeded to execute his orders; first cutting and splitting the chests with our tomahawks, so as thoroughly to expose them to the effects of the water. In about three hours from the time we went on board, we had thus broken and thrown overboard every tea chest to be found in the ship; while those in the other ships were disposing of the tea in the same way, at the same time. We were surrounded by British armed ships, but no attempt was made to resist us. We then quietly retired to our several

places of residence, without having any conversation with each other, or taking any measures to discover who were our associates; nor do I recollect of our having had the knowledge of the name of a single individual concerned in the affair, except that of Leonard Pitt, the commander of my division, who I have mentioned. There appeared to be an understanding that each individual should volunteer his services, keep his own secret, and risk the consequences for himself. No disorder took place during the transaction, and it was observed at that time, that the stillest night ensued that Boston had enjoyed for many months.

During the time we were throwing the tea overboard, there were several attempts made by some of the citizens of Boston and its vicinity, to carry off small quantities of it for their family use. To effect that object, they would watch their opportunity to snatch up a handful from the deck, where it became plentifully scattered, and put it into their pockets. One Captain O'Conner, whom I well knew, came on board for that purpose, and when he supposed he was not noticed, filled his pockets, and also the lining of his coat. But I had detected him, and gave information to the captain of what he was doing. We were ordered to take him into custody, and just as he was stepping from the vessel, I seized him by the skirt of his coat, and in attempting to pull him back, I tore it off; but springing forward, by a rapid effort, he made his escape. He had however to run the gauntlet through the crowd upon the wharf; each one, as he passed, giving him a kick or a stroke.

The next day we nailed the skirt of his coat, which I had pulled off, to the whipping post in Charlestown, the place of his residence, with a label upon it, commemorative of the occasion which had thus subjected the proprietor to the popular indignation.

Another attempt was made to save a little tea from the ruins of the cargo, by a tall aged man, who wore a large cocked hat and white wig, which was fashionable at that time. He had slightly slipped a little into his pocket, but being detected, they seized him, and taking his hat and wig from his head, threw them, together with the tea, of which they had emptied his pockets, into the water. In consideration of his advanced age, he was permitted to escape, with now and then a slight kick.

The next morning, after we had cleared the ships of the tea, it was discovered that very considerable quantities of it was floating upon the surface of the water; and to prevent the possibility of any of its being saved for use, a number of small boats were manned by sailors and citizens, who rowed them into those parts of the harbour wherever the tea was visible, and by beating it with oars and paddles, so thoroughly drenched it, as to render its entire destruction inevitable.

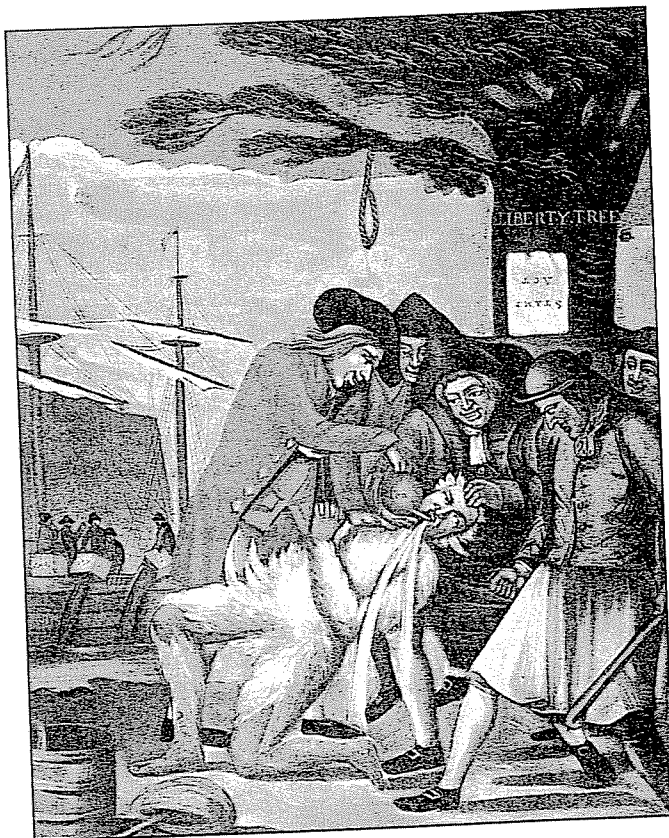
Questions

1. How thorough was the planning for the Boston Tea Party?
2. Were the participants eager to have their names known? Why or why not?
3. What, if any, specific rights does Hewes claim that he was trying to support by participating in the Boston Tea Party?

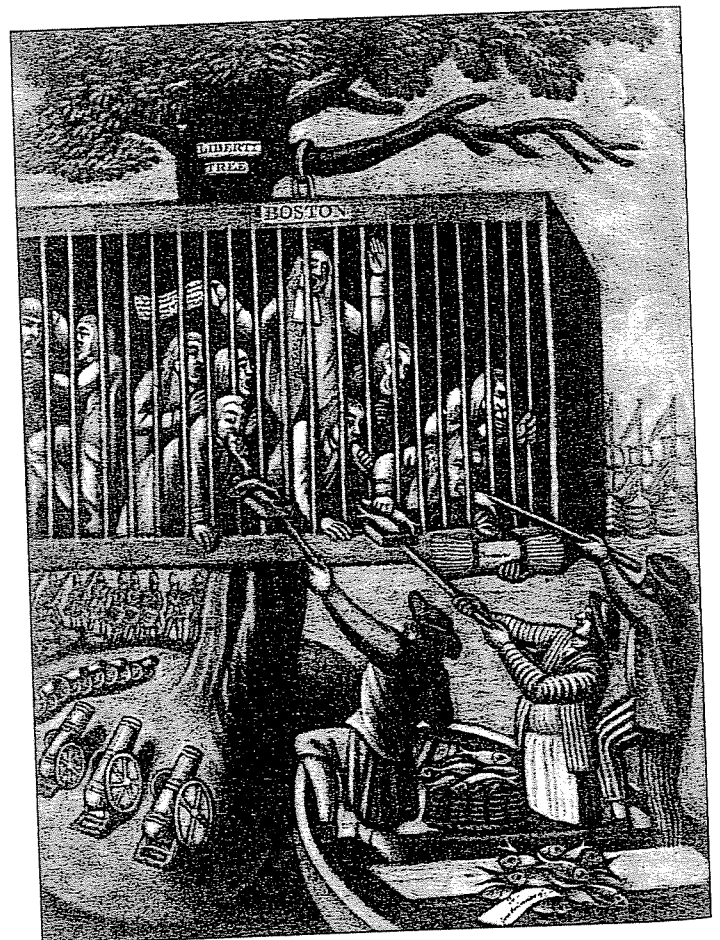
5-11 A British View of Rebellion in Boston (1774)

Philip Dawe

In response to the Boston Tea Party, Parliament closed Boston Harbor until the British East India Company received payment for the tea the “Indians” had destroyed. Closing the harbor, along with other punitive acts, further escalated the animosity between the colonies and the crown. British artist Philip Dawe’s satirical cartoon “The Bostonians Paying the Excise-Man” depicts several Bostonians forcefully “reimbursing” a British officer with tea, tar, and feathers, while rebels in the background continue to dump more tea into the harbor. The victim in the cartoon is John Malcolm, the much-despised commissioner of customs. According to the account in the *Massachusetts Gazette*, a crowd



(A) Philip Dawe, “Bostonians Paying the Excise-Man”



(B) Philip Dawe, “Bostonians in Distress”

dragged Malcolm from his house, gave him a “modern jacket” of tar and feathers, threatened to “cut his ears off,” and finally carted him to the gallows “as if they intended to hang him.” This violent retaliation strengthened England’s resolve to punish the colonists. Dawe’s cartoon “The Bostonians in Distress” derides the haughty radicals by depicting them as begging for food while suspended from their own “Liberty Tree.” British troops marching in the background are a thinly veiled threat.

Thousands of ordinary people in Massachusetts and other colonies rallied around the Bostonians and began sending them food and supplies while the port was closed. Thus, rather than subduing the radicals in Boston, the Port Act spread their cause to the surrounding colonies.

Sources: Philip Dawe, “The Bostonians Paying the Excise-Man, or Tarring and Feathering,” 1774, courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library at Brown University. Philip Dawe, “The Bostonians in Distress,” 1774, courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

Questions

1. How do the actions depicted in the background of each print indicate the escalation of the crisis? What is the significance of depicting Malcolm as being forced to drink tea?
2. What is the significance of the “Liberty Tree” in these prints? How is it being mocked? What role did the so-called Liberty Tree play during the Stamp Act crisis?
3. How might British and American audiences interpret these images differently? What opposing lessons might they have drawn from them?

5-12 The Edenton, North Carolina, Boycott Agreement (1774)

When colonists decided to attack the Tea Act of 1773 by boycotting British goods, they were using a tried and heretofore effective means of countering British legislation. Therefore, it was logical for the convention called in New Bern, North Carolina, in August 1774 to protest the Port of Boston Act to call for nonimportation of any British East India Company goods, British manufactures, slaves, and tea, and for a ban on all consumption of tea in the province. Furthermore, as Document 5-7 shows, women had signed such agreements before, at least in Boston in 1770. But the agreement that the women of Edenton, North Carolina, signed on October 25, 1774, shortly after the adjournment of the New Bern convention struck contemporaries as particularly unusual. Indeed, the women’s action was judged so extraordinary that a British print, reproduced in the textbook (p. 157), was issued to ridicule it.

Source: Peter Force, ed., *American Archives*, 4th ser. (1837), 1:891–892.

ASSOCIATION SIGNED BY LADIES OF EDENTON, NORTH CAROLINA, OCTOBER 25, 1774

As we cannot be indifferent on any occasion that appears to affect the peace and happiness of our country; and as it has been thought necessary for the publick good to enter into several particular Resolves by a meeting of Members of Deputies from the whole Province, it is a duty that we owe

not only to our near and dear relations and connexions, but to ourselves, who are essentially interested in their welfare, to do every thing as far as lies in our power to testify our sincere adherence to the same; and we do therefore accordingly subscribe this paper as a witness of our fixed intention and solemn determination to do so.

Signed by fifty-one Ladies

Questions

1. Do the women who entered into this agreement appear to be leaders of the boycott movement, or do they appear to be responding to the actions of others?
2. To what extent, if any, do the signers of the agreement clearly spell out the basic rights they believed they were supporting?
3. Does it appear that the specifics of the agreement, including any provisions for its enforcement, would help make the boycott effective?
4. If you compare this document with the agreements signed by Boston women in 1770 (Document 5-7), would you say that what the Edenton women did was much more radical than what the Boston women had done? Why or why not?

5-13 A Summary View of the Rights of British America (1774)

Thomas Jefferson

In the summer of 1774, Thomas Jefferson was barely thirty-one years old and a relatively obscure member of the House of Burgesses. It surprised no one, therefore, that he was not among the seven delegates chosen to represent Virginia at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia. Nevertheless, Jefferson's ideas on the proper relationship between the colonies and England became widely known in Williamsburg, Philadelphia, and London through the resolutions he prepared for the Virginia delegation to present. Without his consent these resolutions were published as a pamphlet under the title *A Summary View of the Rights of British America*. Although the resolutions were not adopted at the Continental Congress, the pamphlet succeeded in establishing Jefferson's reputation as a bold and passionate writer of considerable learning. Furthermore, his uncompromising defense of colonial rights and corresponding assault on parliamentary sovereignty placed him in the front ranks of the radicals almost immediately and foreshadowed the sentiments he later expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

Source: Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Federal Edition, vol. 2 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), 63–66, 73, 87.

Resolved, that it be an instruction to the said deputies, when assembled in general congress with the deputies from the other states of British America, to propose to the said congress that an humble and dutiful address be presented to his Majesty. . . . To represent to his Majesty that these his states have often individually made humble application to his imperial throne to obtain, through its intervention, some redress of their injured rights, to none of which was ever even an answer condescended; humbly to hope that this their joint address, penned in the language of truth, and divested of those expressions of servility which would persuade his Majesty that we were asking favours, and not rights, shall obtain from his Majesty a more respectful acceptance. And this his Majesty will think we have reason to expect when he reflects that he is no more than the chief officer of the people, appointed by the laws, and circumscribed with definite powers, to assist in working the great machine of gov-

ernment, erected for their use, and consequently subject to their superintendance. And in order that these our rights, as well as the invasions of them, may be laid more fully before his Majesty, to take a view of them from the origin and first settlement of these countries.

To remind him that our ancestors, before their emigration to America, were the free inhabitants of the British dominions in Europe, and possessed a right which nature has given to all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice, has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of there establishing new societies, under such laws and regulations as to them shall seem most likely to promote public happiness. . . .

America was conquered, and her settlement made, and firmly established, at the expense of individuals, and not of the British public. Their own blood was spilt in acquiring lands for their settlements, their own fortunes expended in

making that settlement effectual; for themselves they fought, for themselves they conquered, and for themselves alone they have right to hold. Not a shilling was ever issued from the public treasures of his Majesty, or his ancestors, for their assistance, till, of very late times, after the colonies had become established on a firm and permanent footing. . . . We do not, however, mean to under-rate those aids, which to us were doubtless valuable, on whatever principles granted; but we would shew that they cannot give a title to that authority which the British Parliament would arrogate over us. . . . That settlements having been thus effected in the wilds of America, the emigrants thought proper to adopt that system of laws under which they had hitherto lived in the mother country, and to continue their union with her by submitting themselves to the same common Sovereign, who was thereby made the central link connecting the several parts of the empire thus newly multiplied.

. . . Not only the principles of common sense, but the common feelings of human nature, must be surrendered up before his majesty's subjects here can be persuaded to believe that they hold their political existence at the will of a British parliament. Shall these governments be dissolved, their property annihilated, and their people reduced to a state of nature, at the imperious breath of a body of men, whom

they never saw, in whom they never confided, and over whom they have no powers of punishment or removal, let their crimes against the American public be ever so great? Can any one reason be assigned why 160,000 electors in the island of Great Britain should give law to four millions in the states of America, every individual of whom is equal to every individual of them, in virtue, in understanding, and in bodily strength? Were this to be admitted, instead of being a free people, as we have hitherto supposed, and mean to continue ourselves, we should suddenly be found the slaves not of one but of 160,000 tyrants. . . .

That these are our grievances which we have thus laid before his majesty, with that freedom of language and sentiment which becomes a free people claiming their rights, as derived from the laws of nature, and not as the gift of their chief magistrate: Let those flatter who fear, it is not an American art. To give praise which is not due might be well from the venal, but would ill besem those who are asserting the rights of human nature. They know, and will therefore say, that kings are the servants, not the proprietors of the people. Open your breast, sire, to liberal and expanded thought. Let not the name of George the third be a blot in the page of history.

Questions

1. According to Jefferson, what was Parliament's position within the British empire? How did Parliament's authority compare to the authority possessed by the colonial legislatures?
2. In 1774 many of Jefferson's contemporaries found the language he used to address the king unacceptable. Why?
3. What was the basis for Jefferson's reasoning on the rights of British America? In his view, what held the various constituent parts of the empire together?

5-14 The Continental Congress Creates the Association (1774)

As described in the textbook (pp. 154–155), the harsh British response to the Boston Tea Party spurred the colonists to create a Continental Congress to coordinate opposition to British imperial reform measures, especially the Coercive Acts. The Congress began deliberations in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, and adjourned on October 26, 1774. As part of its general effort to defend colonial rights, the Congress created a Plan of Association. The Association, as it was called, outlined actions that the Congress and the people would take to try to force Britain into rescinding the measures that the colonists believed threatened their basic rights. The Association was passed on October 18; the formal copy was signed two days later.

Source: W. C. Ford, ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789* (1904), 1:75–80.

We, his majesty's most loyal subjects, the delegates of the several colonies of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts-Bay, Rhode-Island, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, the three lower counties of New-Castle, Kent and Sussex, on Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, and South-Carolina, deputed to represent them in a continental Congress, held in the city of Philadelphia, on the 5th day of September, 1774, avowing our allegiance to his majesty, our affection and regard for our fellow-subjects in Great-Britain and elsewhere, affected with the deepest anxiety, and most alarming apprehensions, at those grievances and distresses, with which his Majesty's American subjects are oppressed; and having taken under our most serious deliberation, the state of the whole continent, find, that the present unhappy situation of our affairs is occasioned by a ruinous system of colony administration, adopted by the British ministry about the year 1763, evidently calculated for enslaving these colonies, and, with them, the British empire. In prosecution of which system, various acts of parliament have been passed, for raising a revenue in America, for depriving the American subjects, in many instances, of the constitutional trial by jury, exposing their lives to danger, by directing a new and illegal trial beyond the seas, for crimes alleged to have been committed in America: and in prosecution of the same system, several late, cruel, and oppressive acts have been passed, respecting the town of Boston and the Massachusetts-Bay, and also an act for extending the province of Quebec, so as to border on the western frontiers of these colonies, establishing an arbitrary government therein, and discouraging the settlement of British subjects in that wide extended country; thus, by the influence of civil principles and ancient prejudices, to dispose the inhabitants to act with hostility against the free Protestant colonies, whenever a wicked ministry shall chuse so to direct them.

To obtain redress of these grievances, which threaten destruction to the lives, liberty, and property of his majesty's subjects, in North America, we are of opinion, that a nonimportation, non-consumption, and non-exportation agreement, faithfully adhered to, will prove the most speedy, effectual, and peaceable measure: and, therefore, we do, for ourselves, and the inhabitants of the several colonies, whom we represent, firmly agree and associate, under the sacred ties of virtue, honour and love of our country, as follows:

1. That from and after the first day of December next, we will not import, into British America, from Great-Britain or Ireland, any goods, wares, or merchandise whatsoever, or from any other place, any such goods, wares, or merchandise, as shall have been exported from Great-Britain or Ireland; nor will we, after that day, import any East-India tea from any part of the world; nor any molasses, syrups, panes, coffee, or pimento, from the British plantations or from Dominica; nor wines from Madeira, or the Western Islands; nor foreign indigo.

2. We will neither import nor purchase, any slave imported after the first day of December next; after which time, we will wholly discontinue the slave trade, and will neither

be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures to those who are concerned in it.

3. As a non-consumption agreement, strictly adhered to, will be an effectual security for the observation of the non-importation, we, as above, solemnly agree and associate, that, from this day, we will not purchase or use any tea, imported on account of the East-India company, or any on which a duty hath been or shall be paid; and from and after the first day of March next, we will not purchase or use any East-India tea whatever; nor will we, nor shall any person for or under us, purchase or use any of those goods, wares, or merchandise, we have agreed not to import, which we shall know, or have cause to suspect, were imported after the first day of December, except such as come under the rules and directions of the tenth article hereafter mentioned.

4. The earnest desire we have, not to injure our fellow-subjects in Great-Britain, Ireland, or the West-Indies, induces us to suspend a non-exportation, until the tenth day of September, 1775; at which time, if the said acts and parts of acts of the British parliament herein after mentioned are not repealed, we will not, directly or indirectly, export any merchandise or commodity whatsoever to Great-Britain, Ireland, or the West-Indies, except rice to Europe.

5. Such as are merchants, and use the British and Irish trade, will give orders, as soon as possible, to their factors, agents and correspondents, in Great-Britain and Ireland, not to ship any goods to them, on any pretence whatsoever, as they cannot be received in America; and if any merchant, residing in Great-Britain or Ireland, shall directly or indirectly ship any goods, wares or merchandise, for America, in order to break the said non-importation agreement, or in any manner contravene the same, on such unworthy conduct being well attested, it ought to be made public; and on the same being so done, we will not, from thenceforth, have any commercial connexion with such merchant.

6. That such as are owners of vessels will give positive orders to their captains, or masters, not to receive on board their vessels any goods prohibited by the said non-importation agreement, on pain of immediate dismissal from their service.

7. We will use our utmost endeavours to improve the breed of sheep, and increase their number to the greatest extent; and to that end, we will kill them as seldom as may be, especially those of the most profitable kind; nor will we export any to the West-Indies or elsewhere; and those of us, who are or may become overstocked with, or can conveniently spare any sheep, will dispose of them to our neighbours, especially to the poorer sort, on moderate terms.

8. We will, in our several stations, encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially all horse-racing, and all kinds of gaming, cock-fighting, exhibitions of shews, plays, and other expensive diversions and entertainments;

and on the death of any relation or friend, none of us, or any of our families, will go into any further mourning-dress, than a black crape or ribbon on the arm or hat, for gentlemen, and a black ribbon and necklace for ladies, and we will discontinue the giving of gloves and scarves at funerals.

9. Such as are venders of goods or merchandise will not take advantage of the scarcity of goods, that may be occasioned by this association, but will sell the same at the rates we have been respectively accustomed to do, for twelve months last past.—And if any vender of goods or merchandise shall sell any such goods on higher terms, or shall, in any manner, or by any device whatsoever violate or depart from this agreement, no person ought, nor will any of us deal with any such person, or his or her factor or agent, at any time thereafter, for any commodity whatever.

10. In case any merchant, trader, or other person, shall import any goods or merchandise, after the first day of December, and before the first day of February next, the same ought forthwith, at the election of the owner, to be either re-shipped or delivered up to the committee of the county or town, wherein they shall be imported, to be stored at the risque of the importer, until the non-importation agreement shall cease, or be sold under the direction of the committee aforesaid; and in the last-mentioned case, the owner or owners of such goods shall be reimbursed out of the sales, the first cost and charges, the profit, if any, to be applied towards relieving and employing such poor inhabitants of the town of Boston, as are immediate sufferers by the Boston port-bill; and a particular account of all goods so returned, stored, or sold, to be inserted in the public papers; and if any goods or merchandises shall be imported after the said first day of February, the same ought forthwith to be sent back again, without breaking any of the packages thereof.

11. That a committee be chosen in every county, city, and town, by those who are qualified to vote for representatives in the legislature, whose business it shall be attentively to observe the conduct of all persons touching this association; and when it shall be made to appear, to the satisfaction of a majority of any such committee, that any person within the limits of their appointment has violated this association, that such majority do forthwith cause the truth of the case to be published in the gazette; to the end, that all such foes to the rights of British-America may be publicly known, and universally contemned as the enemies of American liberty; and thenceforth we respectively will break off all dealings with him or her.

12. That the committee of correspondence, in the respective colonies, do frequently inspect the entries of their custom-houses, and inform each other, from time to time, of the true state thereof, and of every other material circumstance that may occur relative to this association.

13. That all manufactures of this country be sold at reasonable prices, so that no undue advantage be taken of a future scarcity of goods.

14. And we do further agree and resolve, that we will have no trade, commerce, dealings or intercourse whatsoever, with any colony or province, in North-America, which shall not accede to, or which shall hereafter violate this association, but will hold them as unworthy of the rights of freemen, and as inimical to the liberties of their country.

And we do solemnly bind ourselves and our constituents, under the ties aforesaid, to adhere to this association, until such parts of the several acts of parliament passed since the close of the last war, as impose or continue duties on tea, wine, molasses, syrups, paneles, coffee, sugar, pimento, indigo, foreign paper, glass, and painters' colours, imported into America, and extend the powers of the admiralty courts beyond their ancient limits, deprive the American subject of trial by jury, authorize the judge's certificate to indemnify the prosecutor from damages, that he might otherwise be liable to from a trial by his peers, require oppressive security from a claimant of ships or goods seized, before he shall be allowed to defend his property, are repealed.—And until that part of the act of the 12 G. 3. ch. 24, entitled "An act for the better securing his majesty's dock-yards, magazines, ships, ammunition, and stores," by which any persons charged with committing any of the offences therein described, in America, may be tried in any shire or county within the realm, is repealed—and until the four acts, passed the last session of parliament, viz. that for stopping the port and blocking up the harbour of Boston—that for altering the charter and government of the Massachusetts-Bay—and that which is entitled "An act for the better administration of justice, &c."—and that "for extending the limits of Quebec, &c." are repealed. And we recommend it to the provincial conventions, and to the committees in the respective colonies, to establish such farther regulations as they may think proper, for carrying into execution this association.

The foregoing association being determined upon by the Congress, was ordered to be subscribed by the several members thereof; and thereupon, we have hereunto set our respective names accordingly.

IN CONGRESS, PHILADELPHIA, *October 20, 1774*

Questions

1. What essential tool did the Congress hope to use to get Britain to rescind its imperial reforms? Does it appear that the Congress was well versed in the use of that tool?
2. How fully and forcefully, if at all, does the Association state what the Congress considered to be the essential basic rights of the colonists?
3. What measures did the Congress propose to ensure that its dictates were followed? Would you expect those measures to be effective? Why or why not?

4. Judging from the Association, what kind of imperial policies did the Continental Congress want the British government to follow? What would the British government have to do to restore harmony?
5. What insights does the document give you into the principal economic activities of the American colonies at that time?

Questions for Further Thought

1. On the basis of these documents, what basic political rights did the Patriots believe they were supporting?
 2. In what ways are the statements about basic rights in these documents similar or dissimilar to those advanced in Documents 5-3 through 5-5?
 3. Did the colonists who opposed British imperial policies seem more concerned about basic political rights or about avoiding taxes?
 4. Considering the positions taken and the arguments advanced by the Patriots in the period after the Boston Massacre, what would the British government have had to do to restore harmony and stop the process that led to war in April 1775?
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