

King George III's Speech to Parliament October 26, 1775

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

The present Situation of *America*, and My constant Desire to have your Advice, Concurrence, and Assistance, on every important Occasion, have determined Me to call you thus early together.

Those who have long too successfully laboured to inflame My People in *America*, by gross Misrepresentations, and to infuse into their Minds a System of Opinions repugnant to the true Constitution of the Colonies, and to their subordinate Relation to *Great Britain*, now openly avow their Revolt, Hostility, and Rebellion. They have raised Troops, and are collecting a Naval Force; they have seized the publick Revenue, and assumed to themselves Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Powers, which they already exercise in the most arbitrary Manner over the Persons and Properties of their Fellow Subjects. And although many of these unhappy People may still retain their Loyalty, and may be too wise not to see the fatal Consequence of this Usurpation, and wish to resist it, yet the Torrent of Violence has been strong enough to compel their Acquiescence till a sufficient Force shall appear to support them.

The Authors and Promoters of this desperate Conspiracy have, in the Conduct of it, derived great Advantage from the Difference of our Intentions and theirs. They meant only to amuse, by vague Expressions of Attachment to the Parent State, and the strongest Protestations of Loyalty to Me, whilst they were preparing for a general Revolt. On Our Part, though it was declared in your last Session that a Rebellion

existed within the Province of the *Massachusetts Bay*, yet even that Province We wished rather to reclaim than to subdue. The Resolutions of Parliament breathed a Spirit of Moderation and Forbearance: conciliatory Propositions accompanied the Measures taken to enforce Authority, and the coercive Acts were adapted to Cases of criminal Combinations amongst Subjects not then in Arms. I have acted with the same Temper, anxious to prevent, if it had been possible, the Effusion of the Blood of My Subjects, and the Calamities which are inseparable from a State of War; still hoping that My People in *America* would have discerned the traiterous Views of their Leaders, and have been convinced, that to be a Subject of *Great Britain*, with all its Consequences, is to be the freest Member of any Civil Society in the known World.

The rebellious War now levied is become more general, and is manifestly carried on for the Purpose of establishing an independent Empire. I need not dwell upon the fatal Effects of the Success of such a Plan. The Object is too important, the Spirit of the *British* Nation too high, the Resources with which God hath blessed her too numerous, to give up so many Colonies which she has planted with great Industry, nursed with great Tenderness, encouraged with many Commercial Advantages, and protected and defended at much Expence of Blood and Treasure.

It is now become the Part of Wisdom and (in its Effects) of Clemency, to put a speedy End to these Disorders by the most decisive Exertions. For this Purpose I have increased my Naval Establishment, and greatly augmented My Land Forces; but in such a Manner as may be the least burthensome to My Kingdoms.

I have also the Satisfaction to inform you, that I have received the most

friendly Offers of Foreign Assistance; and if I shall make any Treaties in consequence thereof, they shall be laid before you. And I have, in Testimony of My Affection for My People, who can have no Cause in which I am not equally interested, sent to the Garrisons of *Gibraltar* and *Port Mahon*, a Part of My Electoral Troops, in order that a larger Number of the established Forces of this Kingdom may be applied to the Maintenance of its Authority; and the National Militia, planned and regulated with equal Regard to the Rights, Safety, and Protection of My Crown and People, may give a farther Extent and Activity to our Military Operations.

When the unhappy and deluded Multitude, against whom this Force will be directed shall become sensible of their Error, I shall be ready to receive the Mised with Tenderness and Mercy: And in order to prevent the Inconveniencies [sic] which may arise from the great Distance of their Situation, and to remove as soon as possible the Calamities which they suffer, I shall give Authority to certain Persons upon the Spot to grant general or particular Pardons and Indemnities, in such Manner, and to such Persons as they shall think fit; and to receive the Submission of any Province or Colony, which shall be disposed to return to its Allegiance. It may be also proper to authorize the Persons so commissioned to restore such Province or Colony so returning to its Allegiance, to the free Exercise of its Trade and Commerce, and to the same Protection and Security, as if such Province or Colony had never revolted....

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