

When our late petition to the throne produced no other effect than fresh injuries, and votes of your legislature, calculated to justify every severity; when your fleets, and your armies, were prepared to wrest from us our property, to rob us of our liberties or our lives; when the hostile attempts of General Gage evinced his designs, we levied armies for our security and defence; when the powers vested in the governor of Canada, gave us reason to apprehend danger from that quarter; and we had frequent intimations, that a cruel, and savage enemy, was to be let loose upon the defenceless inhabitants of our frontiers; we took such measures as prudence dictated, as necessity will justify. We possessed ourselves of Crown-Point and Ticonderoga. Yet give us leave, most solemnly to assure you, that we have not yet lost sight of the object we have ever had in view; a reconciliation with you on constitutional principles; and a restoration of that friendly intercourse, which, to the advantage of both, we still lately maintained.

The inhabitants of this country apply themselves chiefly to agriculture and commerce. As their fashions and manners are similar to yours, your markets must afford them the conveniences and luxuries for which they exchange the produce of their labours. The wealth of this extended continent centers with you; and our trade is so regulated as to be subservient, only to your interest. You are too reasonable to expect that by taxes (in addition to this) we should contribute to your expence, to believe after diverting the fountain that the streams can flow with unabated force.

It has been said that we refuse to submit to the restrictions on our commerce. From whence is this inference drawn? Not from our words, we having repeatedly declared the contrary, and we again profess our submission to the several acts of trade and navigation passed before the year 1763, trusting nevertheless in the equity and justice of Parliament, that such of them as upon cool and impartial consideration, shall appear to have imposed unnecessary or grievous restrictions, will, at some happier period, be repealed or altered. And we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British Parliament, as shall be restrained to the regulation of our external commerce for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefits of its respective members, excluding every idea of taxation internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America, without their consent.

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