

Resolves of the Pennsylvania Assembly on the Stamp Act, September 21, 1765

The House taking into Consideration, that an Act of Parliament has lately passed in England, for imposing certain Stamp Duties, and other Duties, on his Majesty's Subjects in America, whereby they conceive some of their most essential and valuable Rights, as British Subjects, to be deeply affected, think it a Duty they owe to themselves, and their Posterity, to come to the following Resolutions, viz.

Resolved, N. C. D. 1. That the Assemblies of this Province have, from Time to Time, whenever Requisitions have been made by his Majesty, for carrying on military Operations, for the Defence of America, most cheerfully and liberally contributed their full Proportion of Men and Money for those Services.

Resolved, N. C. D. 2. That whenever his Majesty's Service shall, for the future, require the Aids of the Inhabitants of this Province, and they shall be called upon for that Purpose in a constitutional Way, it will be their indispensable Duty most cheerfully and liberally to grant to his Majesty their Proportion of Men and Money for the Defence, Security, and other public Services of the British American Colonies.

Resolved, N. C. D. 3. That the inhabitants of this Province are entitled to all the Liberties, Rights and Privileges of his Majesty's Subjects in Great-Britain, or elsewhere, and that the Constitution of Government in this Province is founded on the natural Rights of Mankind, and the noble Principles of English Liberty, and therefore is, or ought to be, perfectly free.

Resolved, N. C. D. 4. That it is the inherent Birth-right, and indubitable Privilege, of every British Subject, to be taxed only by his own Consent, or that of his legal Representatives, in Conjunction with his Majesty, or his Substitutes.

Resolved, N. C. D. 5. That the only legal Representatives of the Inhabitants of this Province are the Persons they annually elect to serve as Members of Assembly.

Resolved, therefore, N. C. D. 6. That the Taxation of the People of this Province by any other Persons whatsoever than such their Representatives in Assembly, is unconstitutional, and subversive of their most valuable Rights.

Resolved, N. C. D. 7. That the laying Taxes upon the Inhabitants of this Province in any other Manner, being manifestly subversive of public Liberty, must, of necessary Consequence, be utterly destructive of public Happiness.

Resolved, N. C. D. 8.1 That the vesting and Authority in the Courts of Admiralty to decide in Suits relating to the Stamp Duty, and other Matters, foreign to their proper Jurisdiction, is highly dangerous to the Liberties of his Majesty's American Subjects, contrary to Magna Charta, the great Charter and Fountain of English Liberty, and destructive of one of their most darling and acknowledged Rights, that of Trials by Juries.

Resolved, N. C. D. 9. That it is the Opinion of this House, that the Restraints imposed by several late Acts of Parliament on the Trade of this Province, at a Time when the People labour under an enormous Load of Debt, must of Necessity be attended with the most fatal Consequences, not only to this Province, but to the Trade of our Mother Country.

Resolved, N. C. D. 10. That this House think it their Duty thus firmly to assert, with Modesty and Decency, their inherent Rights, that their Posterity may learn and know, that it was not with their Consent and Acquiescence, that any Taxes should be levied on them by any Persons but their own Representatives; and are desirous that these their Resolves should remain on their Minutes, as a Testimony of the Zeal and ardent Desire of the present House of Assembly to preserve their inestimable Rights, which, as Englishmen, they have possessed ever since this Province was settled, and to transmit them to their latest Posterity.