

Question on the Passage of the Bill, Debate, The Bill Passed

Mr. Dowdeswell

On the question, that this Bill do Pass:

Mr. Dowdeswell said, he rose to give his dissent to passing the same into a law; that he had not the least degree of timidity in rising to oppose it; that he always thought the proposition totally unjust and unfair. By the Bill, a person is to understand, that the commerce of all his Majesty's subjects is interrupted; and, said he, I cannot give my assent to it, until I hear the complaints from the different manufactures of iron, leather, wool, &c., and the merchants of this country, which complaints, I imagine, the hurry of passing this Bill totally prevents. It is not, says he, that any other goods are interrupted in the port of Boston, but those which are charged with a duty from hence. Look to the consequences of this Bill; you are contending for a matter which the Bostonians will not give up quietly. I remember, said he, when it was held a doctrine in this House, by persons of great and extensive knowledge, that we had no right to tax America. There is now no such opinion; the question was then, "Whether with the profits which we receive from all our manufactures exported hence, it would be a wise measure to tax America?" What is the reason, said he, that you single out Boston for your particular resentment? Have there been no other towns in America which have disobeyed your orders? Has not Philadelphia, New York, and several other Provinces, sent back their tea? Has not the East India Company suffered nearly as much damage from the tea being sent back, as indeed where they have landed it? Charlestown is the only place where they have suffered the tea to be landed; and what have they done? They have put it into a damp cellar, and the whole has become rotten and useless. You find yourselves much at a loss about this Bill, and are hurt, because the innocent are likely to be involved in the same punishment with the guilty. You are now going to censure them, in the same manner as was done in the case of Edinburgh and Glasgow, where the People at large were to suffer for the neglect of their Magistrates. There is a great difference between the Magistrates of Edinburgh, and those of Boston; those at Edinburgh are chosen by the People; those at Boston are not; they are appointed by the Council, and the Council are elected by the Province at large. You are going to appoint a new port, where there are neither sufficient wharfs, quays, or ware-houses for carrying on business. You hereby punish the British merchants much more severely than the People of Boston. The folly and childishness of carrying on such a project is certainly very evident. All that you have effected, is to carry your merchandise seventeen miles further from the town of Boston, so that the Bostonians shall be obliged to be at an additional expense in conveying their merchandise from the port of Salem by land. You ask why the Americans do not pay their debts? If you stop the exports, you will of course stop the payment of those debts. Now, Sir, let us consider how this Bill is founded upon principles of justice; if Parliament continually passes Bills, sometimes to punish the person, at other times the places, you will, by and by, have your hands fully employed; you will soon inflame all America, and stir up a contention you will not be able to pacify. The passing this Bill in a week or so, does not give time to the injured persons in America to petition this House for redress. I rejoice, that you have at least had one petition from the natives of America residing in this country: the language of that petition bears the face of a well written, unanswerable argument; it is no common petition: it is the strong and pathetic language that tells their own feelings, and those of their fellow subjects in America. I

wish to hear some arguments offered against what is contained in it, for it will be said, both here and in America, that such reasons and arguments deserve an answer.

Mr. Welbore Ellis

Mr. Welbore Ellis said, he did not rise to answer the honorable gentleman to the first part of what he advanced, being arguments which had, in a former debate, been urged and sufficiently replied to. He said this behaviour of the Americans was the most direct opposition to the laws of this country that could possibly be conceived. If this country, said he, has not a right to pass a tax on America, they have no right to pass any law whatsoever relative to it. The present Bill confirms no tax; it enacts none; it imposes none; the tax upon tea was introduced to prevent tea being smuggled into that country. The

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honorable gentleman (Mr. Dowdeswell) has said, this Bill was unjust and unwise. I differ much from him, and think it both just and wise. This Bill makes it expedient for them to do their duty, and puts the Bostonians upon the inquiry to find out who were the parties that committed this riot; the persons or magistrates in the town, not inquiring into the proceedings, are much to blame, and I cannot think this Bill in the least unwise. Can it, Sir, be unwise, unless it is unwise to maintain the authority of this country, and to punish those who have been the aggressors against its laws? The honorable gentleman, he said, had mentioned that others were guilty, and why were they not punished? There is, said he, a different degree of crime in each of them, and some are more to blame than others. It is treason in the Bostonians, and can only be deemed a high crime and misdemeanor in the others; but, in my mind, it appears to be wise, first to single out Boston as the principal ringleader of the whole disturbance, and begin this punishment there, in order to see what effect the proceedings will have; I therefore think this Bill wise, prudent, and just.

Mr. Edmund Burke

Mr. Edmund Burke. I trouble you, Sir, in the last stage of this Bill, because I would not appear petulant when my objections run to the whole of it. I never knew any thing that has given me a more heart-felt sorrow than the present measure. This Bill is attempted to be hastened through the House in such a manner, that I can by no means assent to it; it is to be carried by force and threats into execution; and you have even refused to hear Mr. Bolland, the agent, declaring him to be no agent for Massachusetts Bay, or not properly authorized by them to present such petition; you have not now one left in England to be heard in behalf of any of the Colonies; the only obstruction that this Bill has had, has been owing to its own vis inertiae; but persons who oppose this Bill, are immediately put to the same kind of punishment in the public Papers which offenders in America are. Look, Sir, into the public Papers, you will see Cinna, and a thousand other Roman names, throwing out their invectives, and tarring and feathering all those who dare oppose the Bill. I suppose I shall reap my share for this opposition: but, Sir, at all events, I will enter my protest against this Bill, and will mount my little palfrey, and speak of the injustice which the Bill contains with the greatest Confidence. The grievance which is stated in the Papers before you on the table appears to be an universal resistance from all America against any goods or merchandise that shall be loaded with taxes. — He desired that that part of General

Haldiman's letter, declaring the resolution of the Americans not to submit to receive goods with duty upon them, might be read; he read the extract he had made in his place; he said, the whole meeting in the town of Boston consisted of six or seven hundred men of the first rank and opulent fortune in the place; that the proceedings were conducted with the utmost decency. He said, this was not a meeting of mean persons, but that the acts of resistance were all countenanced by universal consent. Observe, said he, that the disturbances are general; shew me one port, in all America where the goods have been landed and vended; the distemper is general, but the punishment is local, by way of, exchange. Whether it will be effectual or not, I do not know; but, Sir, let me paint to this House the impropriety of a measure like this; it is a remedy of the most uncertain operation; view but the consequence, and you will repent the measure; give orders at once to your Admirals to burn and destroy the town; that will be both effectual, proper, and moderate, and of a piece with the rest of your proceedings, *eventus tristis*. One town in proscription, the rest in rebellion, can never be a remedial measure for general disturbances. Have you considered whether you have troops and ships sufficient to enforce an universal proscription to the trade of the whole Continent of America? If you have not, the attempt is childish, and the operation fruitless. Only, Sir, see the consequence of blocking up one port; for instance, that of Virginia Bay; which, if you do, you will destroy the tobacco trade, and thereby bring, as it were, a certain ruin on your own merchants at Glasgow and Edinburgh. This Bill has been thought a vigorous, but not a rigorous punishment. It is my opinion that you might even punish the individuals who committed the violence, without involving the innocent: I should approve much of that; but, Sir, to take away the trade from the town of Boston, is surely a severe punishment. Would it not be a rigorous measure to take away the trade of the Thames, for instance, and direct the merchandise to be landed at Gravesend? I call this Bill most unjust, for is it not fundamentally unjust to prevent the parties who have offended from being heard in their defence? Justice, Sir, is not to be measured, by geographical lines nor distances. Every man, Sir, is authorized to be a magistrate, to put a stop to disturbances which he perceives to be committed against his Majesty's peace; but did you expect that the People who were not present at such disturbances, would be equally punished for not aiding and assisting in putting an end to those riots which they never saw or heard of? This, Sir, is surely the doctrine of devils, to require men to be present in every part of America wherever a riot happens: but this Bill involves those who have never in the least been guilty; and then you again say, that the disturbances which did happen ought to have been immediately put a stop to by the People of Boston, and that they were bound to preserve the good order of the town; but, Sir, I have too much reverence for the image of God to conceive that the honorable gentleman (Mr. Welbore Ellis) does really and truly imbibe such a doctrine. He then read part of Colonel Leslie's letter, No. 45, wherein the Colonel said, that neither the Governor, nor the Council, nor any of the custom-house officers, have ever yet applied to me for any assistance; if they had, I could most certainly have put a stop to all their riot and violences, but not without some bloodshed, and firing upon their town, and killing many innocent People. Why, Sir, did not the Governor at once send for this assistance? Was it contrary to, or do you think he would have broke through his instructions, if he had endeavoured, by such ways and means, to preserve the public peace, and prevent violences from being committed? The fault of this Governor ought not to be the means of punishment for the innocent. You have found that there was no Government there. Why did not the Governor exercise his authority? Why did not the ships execute their duty? What was the reason they did not act? Why is not Mr. Hancock, and the chief People, who are known, punished, and not the innocent involved with the guilty in

one universal calamity? You, surely, Sir, cannot have power to take away the trade of a port, and call it privilege! Why was not your force that was present applied to quell the disturbances? How came they to be so feeble and inactive? How are you sure that the orders and frigates which you now send will act better? I cannot think this, by any means, a prudent measure, in blocking up one port after another; the consequence will be dreadful, and I am afraid destructive; you will draw a foreign force upon you, perhaps, at a time when you little expect it; I will not say where that will end; I will be silent upon that head, and go no further; but think, I conjure you, of the consequence. Again, Sir, in one of the clauses of the Bill you proscribe the property of the People to be governed and measured by the will of the Crown. This is a ruinous and dangerous principle to adopt. There is an universal discontent throughout all America, from an internal bad Government. There are but two ways to govern America; either to make it subservient to all your laws, or to let it govern itself by its own internal policy. I abhor the measure of taxation where it is only for a quarrel, and not for a revenue; a measure that is teasing and irritating without any good effect; but a revision of this question will one day or other come, wherein I hope to give my opinion. But this is the day, then, that you wish to go to war with all America, in order to conciliate that country to this; and to say that America shall be obedient to all the laws of this country. I wish to see a new regulation and plan of a new legislation in that country, not founded upon your laws and statutes here, but grounded upon the vital principles of English liberty.

Mr. Grey Cooper

Mr. Grey Cooper said, he could not agree in the doctrines laid down by the honorable gentleman who spoke last, that the Bill was unjust or unwise; it was, in his opinion, a temperate and prudent law, to preserve the trade of this country, and protect the peace of America; he was sorry to find that honorable gentleman in particular should be upbraiding Government for not making use of military force; nor should he have expected that such a proposition would have come from him. It has been said that the Americans cannot be heard in their own defence before this measure takes effect. Look at the papers on the table, where you see the resolutions of their public meetings ordered to be sent over here, that we might be acquainted with them. After such a defiance, can it be expected, that they would come over here to be heard, and say any thing at your bar but what they had already told you, and sent to you expressly in the papers on your table, where they refuse a direct obedience to all your laws? It is asked again, Sir, whether the individuals are not to be punished when they are found out? I apprehend, Sir, that this measure by no means excuses the guilty persons from being brought to condign punishment. The Black Act of this country is a similar case with regard to this Bill, where the hundred are fined in the penalty of £200 for not suppressing the offences mentioned in that Act, such as cutting down trees, breaking banks, and other misdemeanors. The whole hundred, in this case, are not present at the commission of the crime, yet they are punished for it; nor does that fine excuse the criminal from being particularly punished, where the aggressor can be found out. The Bill before you is a law for the protection of trade; it is a mild measure, if they obey it; if they oppose it, the result of it will only make the punishment. The resolves at Boston I consider as direct issue against the Declaratory Act; they clearly proved a determined resolution in the Americans to oppose every law of this country; but the Bostonians alone have carried into execution what others have only resolved. This Bill, Sir, I look upon to be the act of a father chastising his son on one line, and restoring the trade and peace of America on the other, and therefore I highly approve of the measure.

Mr. Anthony Bacon

Mr. Anthony Bacon said there was not a port in New-England but what had sufficient ware-houses for the reception of all the merchandise of Great Britain.

Governor Pownall

Governor Pownall said, that he had always been of opinion, that internal taxes could not legally be laid, but that he agreed in external ones; that there wanted a revision of the general laws relating to America; he said he wished that the Tea Duty was repealed, but he did not think this the proper time or season to adopt the measure. There ought also to be a review of the Governments; the Americans have a real love for Government; they love order and peace, [here the House laughed;] he said, I do aver that they love peace, for I look upon this to be the act of the mob, and not of the People, and wait but a little it will regulate itself.

Lord Advocate

The Lord Advocate said, the question had been very fully argued, and he should give his hearty affirmative to the Bill.

Lord John Cavendish

Lord John Cavendish spoke a few words against the Bill, and said, he should give his negative to its passing in its present form.

Mr. T. Townshend

Mr. T. Townshend spoke also against the Bill, and said, he should be against its passing into a law.

Mr. Sawbridge

Mr. Sawbridge said, the offence of destroying the tea was done in the night time, and not tempore diurno; that this was an ex-post-facto law, and that the law of the Black Act, which had been mentioned, was not in force before the offence was committed; that as far as that, or any other precedent participated of this law, so far they were most iniquitous; that it was an act of cowardice in the Minister to come to Parliament to ask for that which had been allowed, and was in the power of the Crown to order and direct: he meant, he said, the removal of the custom-house officers, and other things mentioned in that Act, the preservation of the peace, and the executive authority in that country. All these might have been done by the Crown, without applying to Parliament, but the Minister was timorous of proceeding himself, and wanted to skulk behind the protection of the Legislature.

Lord North

Lord North said, he rose to explain himself, and was sorry to commit an offence to the House at that hour of the night, and especially as it would be to the disturbance of the neighbourhood, who are totally innocent, [alluding to the charge that had been made by Mr. Sawbridge, that the innocent People in the town of Boston would suffer equally with the offenders;] nor am I, Sir, ashamed, at any time to take shelter under the Legislature. The honorable gentleman says, the Minister might do certain things, which are to be enacted in that Bill, without application to Parliament, such as changing the custom-house officers, ordering the peace to be preserved, and a better regulation of internal Government to take place; but that they could not block up a port, or make it illegal for the landing, lading, and shipping of goods in any place heretofore granted, without the aid of Parliament. I will not undertake to say what will be the consequence or event of this measure; I am strongly of opinion it will be salutary and effective; but I will say, that it was not in the power of the Minister to sit still and take no measure. I believe, Sir, that no prosecution in that country, according to its present form of Government, will be effectual; I was therefore much for adopting the measure proposed. It certainly may be right to direct a prosecution against those individuals who may be found offenders; but can the honorable gentleman be of opinion, from what he has seen and read from the papers on the table, that any obedience will be paid to such a prosecution, or that it will be in the least degree effective? This measure will certainly not excuse the individual offenders, any more than the fine upon a county, between sun and sun, will excuse the person who committed the robbery. This is no ex-post-facto law; they committed the offence of destroying the tea, knowing and declaring at the same time, the law which they offended against. The Committee of Boston, Sir, gave the directions for the destruction of the tea, and have declared their resolution of resistance to the obedience of our laws; yet we are desired to hear them; to hear those very persons who have declared to you, and to all the world, that they intended this violence against the law; therefore, it is said, Sir, by some honorable gentlemen in this House, that we ought not to proceed in this measure till we have heard these very People, who are the great offenders, say at your bar, in their defence, that Great Britain has no authority to tax them: they can make no other plea; they can make no other declaration than what they have already done; but, Sir, we must adopt the measure, let what will be the consequence. I hope and conclude it will be a happy one. Is this then the best measure in the present case? It certainly is; I hear of none other preferable, or I would adopt it. It is to tell America, that you are in earnest. If we do not mean totally to give up the matter in question, we must assert our right at this time, while we can, whilst it is in our power. Instead of our treating America like a foreign enemy, America has treated us like one; disavowing our authority, and declaring against all obedience to the laws of Great Britain. We are threatened again, by one honorable gentleman, lest a foreign enemy should, in this emergency, start up — he stopped short, and said he would say no more upon that head. I suppose he meant that this foreign enemy would lay hold of America during our contest. Time of peace, Sir, is the only season for adopting regulations. This is the crisis, then, in which that contest ought to be determined. Another honorable friend of mine is for repealing the Tea Duty. I am of opinion, Sir, that repealing any measure whatever, at this moment, would stamp us with a degree of timidity, and would produce a totally different effect from what I expect this measure will do.

Governor Johnstone

Governor Johnstone, I find so much difficulty in pronouncing my sentiments at any time, that unless the House is kindly disposed to hear me at this late hour, I shall patiently sit down, because I am conscious it will require their greatest indulgence, to enable me to express myself in a manner worthy of their attention. A modesty becoming my situation prevented me from offering my opinion before, when I saw men of so much superior ability rising from the beginning of the debate.

It may appear arrogant in a member so inferior, as I confess myself to be, to offer objections to a Bill so extensive in its consequences, under every consideration, especially after it must have been so maturely considered, in every article, by men so distinguished by their talents, and high stations in office, besides the general applause which has followed the Bill in its rapid progress through this House: nevertheless, though naturally diffident of my opinion, when I had the good or bad fortune (I dont know which to term it) of prognosticating to the Chairman of the East India Company the consequences of sending this tea, on their own account, to America, and that the event has literally fulfilled my words, as it is well known to some members now in my eye, it makes me more confident in warning the House of what I apprehend will be the consequences of this Bill.

I told the Chairman of the East India Company, first in conversation, on asking my opinion, and afterwards by letter, that the evidence might appear in the progress of things; that I conceived the East India Company exporting tea, on their own account, was, under every consideration of their situation, and institution, **WRONG**, but, under the present discontents and disputed matters of Government in America, **CRIMINALLY ABSURD**, because they were presenting themselves as the butt in the controversy, where they would probably come off with the loss of the whole. The event has justified my prediction; for whatever repayment the Company may obtain from the town of Boston, under these cruel coercive measures now proposed, (the effect of which I still doubt,) yet the Company must remain great losers, even if the other Provinces, equally culpable, are made to refund the loss arising from their conduct, because it was not supplies of cash, at a distant period, the Company wanted, but an **IMMEDIATE SUPPLY**, to answer a temporary exigency, which a combination of the enemies of the country had produced.

I now venture to predict to this House, that the effect of the present Bill must be productive of a General Confederacy, to resist the power of this country. It is irritating, tempting nay, inviting men to those deeds by ineffectual expedients, the abortions of an undecisive mind, incapable of comprehending the chain of consequences which must result from such a law. I am not one of those who believe that distant Provinces can be retained in their duty by preaching or enchantments; I believe that **FORCE** or **POWER**, conducted with **WISDOM**, are the means of securing regular obedience under every establishment; but that such force should never be applied to any degree of rigour, unless it should carry the general approbation of mankind in the execution. However much such approbation may prevail at the particular moment in this House, it is impossible to believe the sense of Great Britain, or the sense of America, can go to the punishing a particular town, for resisting the payment of the Tea Tax, which is universally odious throughout America, and is held in ridicule and contempt by every thinking man in this country. The question of taxing America is sufficiently nice to palliate resistance, if the subject had never

been litigated in this country; but after the highest characters in this State had declared against the right of this country to impose taxes on America, for the purpose of revenue; after the general voice of the Senate had concurred in repealing the Stamp Act, upon that principle; after those men, who had maintained these doctrines, had been promoted by his Majesty to the first stations in the administration of civil and judicial affairs, there is so much mitigation to be pleaded in favor of the Americans from those circumstances (allowing them in an error at present) that every man must feel the height of cruelty, by enforcing contrary maxims, with any degree of severity, at first, before due warning is given.

It is in vain to say Boston is more culpable than the other Colonies. Sending the ships from thence, and obliging them to return to England, is a more solemn and deliberated act of resistance than the outrage committed by persons in disguise in the night, when the ship refused to depart. That of blocking up the harbour of Boston, to prevent the importation of British manufactures, or the exportation of goods, which are to pay for them, is a measure equally as absurd as if the Parliament here, upon the resistance which was made to their resolution, by the riots at Brentford, and other disturbances in the county of Middlesex, had decreed by way of punishment, that the freeholders should have been prohibited from sowing of wheat. For whose benefit do the inhabitants of Boston toil and labour? The springs in the circle of commerce bear so nicely on each other, that few men can tell by interrupting one, the degree and extent to which the rest may be exposed. By excluding the importation of molasses, and the exportation of that spirit which is distilled at Boston, the whole Guinea trade will be affected, and in consequence, the sugar trade, that depends upon it. In extending this kind of punishment to the other Colonies, every one must see the danger; and yet, if it can be approved for one, the same arguments will hold good to approve or reject it respecting the other; but let any man figure to himself the consequences to this country, if a similar punishment was applied to the Colony of Virginia; £300,000 a year diminution in revenue, besides the loss of all the foreign contracts, and perhaps of that beneficial trade forever. Notwithstanding the general approbation which has been given to this Bill, and the loud applauses which have been re-echoed to every word of the noble Lord in explaining it, yet no man will be bold enough to say, that this partial punishment is a remedy for the general disease. And yet without knowing what is to follow, no man can be vindicated (even supposing the Bill right in part) for giving his assent to it. Those gentlemen who are in the secrets of the Cabinet, and know how assuredly every proposition from them is adopted by this House, may be excused for their sanguine acclamations in favour of the measure, but the general mass, who must be equally ignorant with myself, of what is to follow, can have no excuse for giving their assent so readily for punishing their fellow subjects in so unprecedented a manner, and their eager zeal serves only to shew how ready they are to obey the will of another, without exercising their own judgment in the case. If the Government of this country is resisted in America, my opinion is, instead of removing the seat of Government in the Colony, and forcing the elements to bend to our will, (which is impossible) that an effectual force should be carried to the heart of the Colony resisting, to crush rebellion in the bud, before a General Confederacy can be formed. In the present case we abandon the Government, and drive the inhabitants to despair, leaving the multitude a prey to any ambitious spirit that may arise. For my own part, I am convinced, from experience in the Colonies, that good Government may be conducted there upon rational grounds, as well as in this country; but the power and means of governing, rewards and punishments, are taken from your supreme executive Magistrate in every sense, and then you are surprised that all order and obedience should cease. The Colonies can only be governed by their

Assemblies, as England by the House of Commons; the Patent Offices, as well as those in the Customs, which were formerly given at the recommendation of the Governors, to men supporting Government, and residing in the Provinces, are now in reversion three or four lives deep, to men living in this country. The command of the military, which was another great source of respect and obedience, is likewise taken from the Governor: so that in truth he remains an insignificant pageant of state, fit only to transmit tedious accounts of his own ridiculous situation: or, like a Doctor of the Sorbonne, to debate with his Assembly about abstract doctrines in Government.

I am far from wishing to throw any blame on Governor Hutchinson, or to condemn him, like the town of Boston, unheard. The absence of the man and the general clamour against him, will restrain me from saying many things respecting his conduct, which appear reprehensible; but I cannot admit a passage in the speech of a noble Lord to pass unnoticed. His Lordship alleges, "That the Governor could not apply to the Admiral in the harbour, or to the Commanding Officer of the troops in the castle, for the protection of the custom-house officers, as well as teas in question, without the advice of his Council." But I beg leave to inform the noble Lord, as I served in that station myself that there is a volume of instructions to every Governor on this subject, whereby he is commanded under the severest penalties, "To give all kind of protection to trade and commerce, as well as to the officers of his Majesty's Customs, by his own authority, without the necessity of acting through his Council." Nor can I conceive a possible excuse for the destruction of those teas, while two men-of-war lay in the harbour, without the least application having been made to the Admiral for protection, during so long a transaction.

The first essential point in those disputes which are now likely to become so serious by the weakness of Administration, in this country, in following no connected plan, either of force or of favour, but constantly vibrating between the two, is to put ourselves in the right, and for this purpose I would recommend the immediate repeal of the Tea Duty, which can be vindicated upon no principles, either of commerce or policy. Men may allege this would be giving up the point; but if we have no better points to dispute upon, I am ready to yield the argument. Raising taxes in America for the purpose of revenue, I maintain to be unnecessary and dangerous. A Stamp Act, as a measure of police, varied for the different Governments, and leaving the revenue raised thereby to be appropriated by the respective Legislatures, I hold to be a measure of the highest efficacy, for maintaining a due obedience to the authority of this country, and prolonging that dependence for ages to come. How far it can be executed, after what has already passed, I am rather diffident, but of this I am certain, that in case Great Britain is deprived of executing a measure of that nature, which by pervading every transaction, secures the execution in itself, she has lost one of the greatest engines for supporting her influence throughout the Empire without oppression. Some men who are for simplifying Government to their own comprehensions, will not allow they conceive that the supreme legislative authority shall not be paramount in all things, and taxation being fully comprehended in legislation, they argue, that the power of the one must necessarily follow that of the other; and yet we find mankind possessed of privileges which are not to be violated in the most arbitrary countries. The Province of Languedoc is a striking example in refutation of the doctrines respecting taxation, which are held by such narrow observers. The Kingdom of Ireland in another instance in our dominions. There is not one argument which can apply for exempting Ireland from taxation by the Parliament of Great Britain, that does not equally protect the Colonies from the power of such partial judges. Every man should now call to his remembrance by what obstinate infatuation Philip II, came to lose the

United Provinces. Can it be supposed that in a nation so wise as Spain was at that time, that no man perceived the injustice and futility of the measure in dispute? But I can easily suppose, from the pride of authority, where our vanity is so much flattered, that no man durst venture a proposition for receding from that cruel measure, after it had been resisted by violence.

These are the general heads.

The particular objections to the Bill are, first for continuing the punishment, "until satisfaction shall be made to the India Company," without stating the amount, or what that satisfaction shall be. Next, "until peace and good order shall be certified to be restored," when it is impossible, as to the subject in dispute, that such certificate can ever be granted, because the custom-house officers are removed, and all trade and commerce prohibited. The numerous disputes and litigations which must necessarily arise in carrying this law into execution, on contract made by parties before they could be apprized of it, and the despatch of ships in harbour, under the limited time, without any exception for the desertion of seamen, or wind and weather, is altogether, melancholy to consider! The power given to the Admiral or Chief Commander, to order the ships returning from foreign voyages, to such stations as he shall direct, is wild, vexatious, and indefinite. That of permitting his Majesty to alter the value of all the property in the town of Boston, upon restoring the port, by affixing such quays and wharfs as he only shall appoint, for landing and shipping of goods, is liable to such misrepresentation and abuse, that I expect to see every evil follow the exercise of it, and it must create infinite jealousies and distraction among the People.

I am therefore of opinion, that this Bill, both from the principle and manner in which it has been passed, and from forerunning the general regulations that are intended, and which ought at least to accompany it, instead of quieting the disturbances in Boston, it will promote them still further, and induce the inhabitants to cut off all communication with your ships of war, which may be productive of mutual hostilities, and most probably will end in a GENERAL REVOLT.

Mr. Sawbridge

Mr. Sawbridge said, he rose again, just to blame the Minister for being timid in doing his duty without the authority of Parliament. He was very certain, he said, that there were three things in the Bill; that there was this, and this, and this thing, which the Minister might have done without skulking behind the Legislative authority for shelter; that indeed the fourth, of stopping up their port, he believed it was proper to apply to Parliament for; but he was very certain that this, and this, and this, might have been done without the aid of Parliament.

Lord North

Lord North. Sir, I have been formerly blamed for being the only ostensible Minister of this country. I am now charged with not coming forth and doing the duty of an acting Minister without applying to Parliament. I never, Sir, am ashamed to have the sanction and direction of Parliament as the rule and guide of my conduct; but, Sir, if I had done, as the honorable gentleman who spoke last, wishes me to have done, this, and this, and this, I had done nothing, unless I had come to Parliament for that, and that, then the main object, what the honorable

gentleman thinks I ought to have come to Parliament for, and without that, he allows I should do nothing; but however he may wish me to have done this, and this, and this, of my own head as a Minister, the honorable gentleman, (fond as he is, and always has been, of prerogative,) would have disagreed to my proceeding, and objected against it.

The Bill Passed

The Bill was then Passed without a division.

Source: [The American Archives: Documents of the American Revolution.](#)