

Doc. 5

## The Boston Pamphlet

The Boston Committee of Correspondence holds its first meeting on 3 November 1772. While the committee's creation is sparked by concern over the payment of judicial salaries, the committee uses this issue as a springboard to revisit the larger issue of colonial rights. A subcommittee chaired by James Otis prepares a statement of the colonists' rights "as Men, as Christians, and as Subjects." Other committees create a list of perceived infringements and violations of those rights, as well as a letter of correspondence to the other towns in Massachusetts. Boston selectmen approve the documents at a town meeting on 20 November, and vote to collate them into a single pamphlet for distribution. Six hundred copies are published and delivered to each of the 260 towns and districts in Massachusetts, as well as to every Boston clergyman and selectmen.

T H E  
VOTES and PROCEEDINGS  
OF THE  
FREEHOLDERS and other INHABITANTS  
OF THE  
Town of BOSTON,  
In Town Meeting assembled,  
ACCORDING TO LAW,

[ *Published by Order of the Town.* ]

To which is prefixed, an Introductory,  
An attested Copy of a Vote of the Town  
at a preceding Meeting,

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B O S T O N :  
PRINTED BY EDES AND GILL, IN QUEEN-STREET,  
AND T. AND J. FLEET, IN CORNHILL.

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Doc. 6

AS THE "BOSTON PAMPHLET" CIRCULATES IN MASSACHUSETTS, MANY TOWNS PONDER WHETHER TO CREATE THEIR OWN COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE. GOVERNOR THOMAS HUTCHINSON IS DISTURBED BY THE GROWING NUMBER OF TOWNS THAT SEEM TO BE FOLLOWING BOSTON'S LEAD. ON 6 JANUARY 1773, HE CONVENES THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND DELIVERS A SPEECH DESIGNED TO REMIND COLONISTS OF PARLIAMENT'S SUPREMACY OVER THE COLONIES. MEANWHILE, SUPPORTERS OF THE COMMITTEE EXTOL ITS VIRTUES FAR AND WIDE. THOMAS YOUNG, A BOSTON PHYSICIAN, WRITES TO HIS FRIEND HUGH HUGHES, A SCHOOLMASTER IN NEW YORK, PROCLAIMING THAT BOSTON WILL SURELY LEAD THE WAY IN EDUCATING THE PUBLIC IN THE VIRTUES AND REWARDS OF POPULAR GOVERNMENT.

LETTER FROM THOMAS YOUNG TO HUGH HUGHES,  
21 DECEMBER 1772, COMMITTEES OF  
CORRESPONDENCE:

Boston 21 Decbr. 1772

Dear Sir

You cannot imagine the pleasure it gives me to think I have regained your correspondence. I now labor between two opinions respecting you. I would fain have you nigh me that we might take sweet counsel together on many occasions, but, then say I, shall I altogether give up my native Province and not so much as hear from her again? Poor New York. I grieve, I mourn -- I lament thee! You blame us for succumbing under the imposition of a pension'd slave in room of a constitutional Governor of this Province. You are certainly precipitate (quick) my friend.

We have neither yielded nor mean to relinquish one iota of our just claims in this or any other regard, till we have regained every one of our ravished rights and privileges should the contest endure the remainder of the current century. If we must come to blows at least we can lose nothing by defering the combat till our forces are well disciplin'd and all mankind possessed with the justice of our cause. In neither case do we observe the least stirring among you.

You complain of the ignorance of the common people, you may as well complain of the roughness of a desert! Our people would have known as little as yours had we taken as little pains to instruct them. In such arduous enterprizes as these the motions must beslow, but, with us they are consistent, and determined. We need not spill the blood even of mistaken enemies, if we can otherwise reduce them to reason, and make them our friends. We have many advantages for this of which you are deprived, and we diligently avail

ourselves of them. The maintainance of the freedom of the press against the severe and repeated attacks made upon it has not been effected without some peril as well as much pains. We have had a subtle artful and hypocritical Tyrant to deal with, whose guise of philanthropy, justice and religion had endeared him to many considerable persons in every part of the Province. Power still remaining in his hands and an industry to learn where every gratification in his gift might be most advantageously bestowed, he had of consequence a considerable party. You are sensible my friend, that it requires some time to convince the bulk of the people that an apostle can be a thief and a traitor.

Instead of chiding us for proceeding so slowly and bringing no more to pass you owe us many Thanks; our enemies can testify that our industry, intrepidity (fearless) and perseverance have exceeded every idea they could form to themselves on the occasion, and when our plan is completed and explain'd you will join the general voice in proclaiming the Bostonians the saviors of America. Our people are quite different in their manners from our brethren in the southern Colonies. They must see thro' the matter to its utmost termination; they must be satisfied how many ways it may probably terminate, before they will engage in anything dangerous. When they are satisfied they will proceed gently, but with constancy, and finally attain their end, probably with as little danger as they now subject themselves to in their almost unimpeachable resolves and declarations. When I say unimpeachable, you are to understand they are so modestly expressed that tho' the Tories grin at them they dare not directly attack any part of them. The reflections cast upon us for our infidelity in the nonimportation agreement were very injurious. Our condition was disadvantageous to the last. We had the mighty board of Commissioners, some already connected, others immediately forming connexions; we had a navy and army, the provision for either or both of which were alluring baits. I cannot omit another material consideration, Entries at the Port of London are made in a very general and manner. This our defamers well knew to make all the show possible of everything imported here; even stores for the troops We appointed a Committee at that time to set these matters in their true light on which were the worthy Willm. Whitwell, Esqr. Etc. was taken ill, and remained so long incapable of going thro so

tedious an examination that the agreement was broken thro before we were ready to report. However so many abominable falsehoods appeared . . . I never can bear to hear the bulk of the people here stigmatized as canting hypocrites and designing knaves, while I believe them to be as fair and honest a society as inhabit any part of the British Empire.

We can never forgive the desertion of your writers. Your neglect in this point is inexcuseable! You will ever find matters grow worse . . . with you the longer you neglect them. We have wished even to see some smart things copied from our papers; but alas! a calm, a calm politics as deep as in 1752.

Would you even publish extracts from our letters we would write you largely. You see we always publish yours.

I have enclosed the pamphlet of our doings to Mr. Holt who will hand it you . I have now finished eight long letters, a draught of resolves and inscribed enclosed and directed half a dozen pamphlets since Saturday evening, therefore fatigued to death, I for this time bid you adieu

Thos Young  
Hugh Hughes  
Schoolmaster  
N York

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THROUGHOUT THE SPRING AND SUMMER OF 1773, TOWN MEETINGS ARE CONVENED ACROSS MASSACHUSETTS TO CONSIDER THE ARGUMENTS PUT FORTH IN THE "BOSTON PAMPHLET" ISSUED BY THAT TOWN'S COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE. BY APRIL, AT LEAST 119 (OUT OF 260) TOWNS AND DISTRICTS HAVE TAKEN SOME ACTION IN RESPONSE TO THE DOCUMENT, WITH SEVERAL COMMUNITIES FORMING THEIR OWN COMMITTEES OF CORRESPONDENCE. IN APRIL 1773, BOSTONIANS RECEIVE SOME ENCOURAGING NEWS FROM THEIR SISTER COLONY, VIRGINIA. THE HOUSE OF BURGESSES—THE COLONY'S LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY—PROPOSES AN EXPANSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF CORRESPONDENCE NETWORK.

BOSTON, APRIL 9, 1773.

SIR,

THE Committee of Correspondence of this Town have received the following Intelligence, communicated to them by a Person of Character in this Place. We congratulate you upon the Acquisition of such respectable Aid as the ancient and patriotic Province of *Virginia*, the earliest Resolvers against the detestable Stamp-Act, in Opposition to the unconstitutional Measures of the present Administration. The Authenticity of this Advice you may depend upon, as it was immediately received from one of the Honorable Gentlemen appointed to communicate with the other Colonies.  
We are,

*Your Friends and humble Servants,*

Signed by Direction of the Committee for Correspondence in *Boston*,  
William Cooper Town-Clerk.  
*To the Town-Clerk of [blank], to be immediately delivered to the Committee of Correspondence for your Town, if such a Committee is chosen, otherwise to the Gentlemen the Selectmen, to be communicated to the Town.*

*Extract of a Letter from a Gentleman of distinction in Virginia, to his Friend in this Town, dated March 14th, 1773.*

"I RECEIVED the papers you sent me, and am much obliged to you for them, our assembly sitting a few days after, they were of use to us. You will see by the enclosed Resolutions the true sentiments of this colony, and that we are endeavouring to bring our sister colonies into the strictest union with us, that we may RESENT IN ONE BODY any steps that may be taken by administration to deprive ANY ONE OF US of the least particle of our rights & liberties; we should have done more but we could procure nothing but news-paper accounts of the proceedings in Rhode-Island. I hope we shall not be thus kept in the dark for the future, and that we shall have from the different Committees the earliest intelligence of any motion that may be made by the TYRANTS in England to carry their INFERNAL purposes of enslaving us into execution; I dare venture to assure you the strictest attention will be given on our parts to these grand points."

*In the House of Burgesses, in Virginia March, 1773?*

"WHEREAS the minds of his Majesty's faithful subjects in this colony have been much disturbed by various rumours and reports of proceedings tending to deprive them of their ancient, legal and constitutional rights.

"And whereas the affairs of this colony are frequently connected with those of Great Britain, as well as of the neighbouring colonies, which renders a communication of sentiments necessary, in order therefore to remove the uneasinesses and to quiet the minds of the people, as well as for the other good purposes above mentioned.

"Be it resolved, That a standing committee of correspondence and inquiry be appointed, to consist of eleven persons, viz. the honourable Payton Randolph, Esq; Robert Carter Nicholas, Richard Bland, Richard Henry Lee, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton, Patrick Henry, Dudley Digges, Dabney Carr, Archibald Cary, and Thomas Jefferson, Esqrs; any six of whom to be a committee, whose business it shall be to obtain the most early and authentic intelligence

of all such acts and resolutions of the British parliament or proceedings of administration, as may relate to, or affect the British colonies in America, and to keep up and maintain a correspondence and communication with our sister colonies, respecting these important considerations, and the result of such their proceedings from time to time to lay before this house.

*"Resolved,* That it be an instruction to the said committee, that they do, without delay, inform themselves particularly of the principles and authority, on which was constituted a court of inquiry, said to have been lately held in Rhode-Island, with powers to transport persons accused of offences committed in America, to places beyond the seas to be tried.

*"Resolved,* That the Speaker of this House do transmit to the Speakers of the different assemblies of the British colonies, on this continent, copies of the said resolutions, and desire the will lay them before their respective assemblies, and request them to appoint some person or persons of their respective bodies, to communicate from time to time with the said committee.