

First Continental Congress and Protests to King George III

Some of the colonial leaders decided that it was time to act. A congress of all the colonies was called to discuss a response to the actions of Parliament and the king. Twelve of the 13 colonies sent delegates to a meeting in Philadelphia in the fall of 1774. The royal governor of Georgia would not allow any representatives from his colony to attend.



The First Continental Congress, as it was called, adopted the Suffolk Resolves, which had been passed earlier in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. The resolves declared the Intolerable Acts unlawful and called for

- a boycott of British goods,
- the formation of a government in Massachusetts to replace the one disbanded by the king (the colony was then under the control of General Thomas Gage, who also commanded the British army in the colonies), and
- all colonies to establish militias.

In addition, the First Continental Congress drafted and sent the Declaration of Rights and Grievances to King George III. As its name suggests, this document listed the colonists' rights as English citizens and their grievances against the actions of Parliament since 1763. In effect, the colonists were now proposing not only that their legislatures alone had the right to tax them, but that their legislatures alone could pass laws for them. In this view, Parliament had no right to adopt any legislation concerning the colonies.