

## IV THE DIE IS CAST

done; and you, in all your's, have done what you ought not to have done; let me intreat you, as a friend, and as you regard your reputation and the approbation of your American brethren, to reform and turn from your evil ways; for, believe me, you will not, for your doughty performances, be closetted by your sovereign, nor be made a Privy Counsellor; you will neither be made a Knight of the Garter, a Knight Banneret, nor a Knight of the Bath; neither will you be made even one of the poor Knights of Windsor. You will not receive the thanks of the House of Lords or Commons; nor if I had my will, should you get (what you are seeking after and expect) either place or pension.

Y.

1. The meeting of lawyers in Perth Amboy on September 19, 1765 which resulted in an agreement by the attorneys not to use stamps or stamped paper in their legal transactions.

2. John Lawrence (1726-1796), assemblyman from Burlington City from 1761 to 1768, served as clerk of the meeting. Is Lawrence "Z"? A wealthy lawyer, devout Anglican, and former mayor of Burlington, Lawrence became a Loyalist exile in December 1776.

3. Alcoran: The Koran.

4. See Sec. III, Doc. 10.

## 2 Governor William Franklin to the General Assembly

[*Votes and Proceedings, January 11-February 13, 1775 (Burlington, 1775), pp. 5-7.*]

The current imperial crisis weighed especially heavily upon the shoulders of Governor William Franklin. Cognizant that he lacked the authority and ability to stem the tide of resistance, he looked for a way to counter the popular front. Extralegal organizations and activities had proliferated in part because the legislature, which had largely directed the protest movement in the past, had not sat since March 1774; yet to call the assembly was to risk escalating the problem by means of legislative endorsement of the congressional program. Deciding to gamble, Franklin summoned the General Assembly in January 1775. His opening message to the solons reveals his strategy: by stressing the responsibilities of the representatives and the stakes at hand, he hoped to dissuade the assembly from sanctioning the action of the Continental Congress. In particular, he endeavored to break the united front of opposition by inducing the lower house to send a separate remonstrance to the king instead of acquiescing in the congressional petition. He realized neither objective (see Docs. 4 and 7).

## NEW JERSEY IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

January 13, 1775

Gentlemen of the Council, and Gentlemen of the Assembly,

It would argue not only a great Want of Duty to His Majesty, but of Regard to the good People of this Province, were I, on this Occasion, to pass over in Silence the late alarming Transactions in this and the neighbouring Colonies, or not endeavour to prevail on you to exert yourselves in preventing those Mischiefs to this Country, which, without your timely Interposition, will, in all Probability, be the Consequence.

It is not for me to decide on the particular Merits of the Dispute between Great-Britain and her Colonies, nor do I mean to censure those who conceive themselves aggrieved for aiming at a Redress of their Grievances. It is a Duty they owe themselves, their Country, and their Posterity. All that I would wish to guard you against, is the giving any Countenance or Encouragement to that destructive Mode of Proceeding which has been unhappily adopted in Part by some of the Inhabitants in this Colony, and has been carried so far in others as totally to subvert their former Constitution.<sup>1</sup> It has already struck at the Authority of one of the Branches of the Legislature in a particular Manner. And, if you, Gentlemen of the Assembly, should give your Approbation to Transactions of this Nature, you will do as much as lies in your Power to destroy that Form of Government of which you are an important Part, and which it is your Duty by all lawful Means to preserve. To you your Constituents have intrusted a peculiar Guardianship of their Rights and Privileges. You are their legal Representatives, and you cannot, without a manifest Breach of your Trust, suffer any Body of Men, in this or any of the other Provinces, to usurp and exercise any of the Powers vested in you by the Constitution. It behooves you particularly, who must be constitutionally supposed to speak the Sense of the People at large, to be extremely cautious in consenting to any Act whereby you may engage them as Parties in, and make them answerable for Measures which may have a Tendency to involve them in Difficulties far greater than those they aim to avoid.

Besides, there is not, Gentlemen, the least Necessity, consequently there will not be the least Excuse for your running any such Risks on the present Occasion. If you are really disposed to represent to the King any Inconveniences you conceive yourselves to lie under, or to make any Propositions on the present State of America, I can assure you, from the best Authority, that such Representations or Propositions will be properly attended to, and certainly have a greater Weight coming from each Colony in it's separate Capacity, than in a Channel, of the Propriety and Legality of which there may be much Doubt.

You have now pointed out to you, Gentlemen, two Roads—one evidently leading to Peace, Happiness, and Restoration of the publick Tranquility—the other inevitably conducting you to Anarchy, Misery, and all the Horrors of a Civil War. Your Wisdom, your Prudence, and your Regard for the true Interests of the People, will be best known when you have shewn to which Road you give the Preference. If to the former, you will probably afford Satisfaction to the moderate, the sober, and the discreet Part of your Constituents. If to the latter, you will, perhaps for a Time, give Pleasure to the warm, the rash, and the inconsiderate among them, who, I would willingly hope, violent as is the Temper of the present Times, are not even now the Majority. But it may be well for you to remember, should any Calamity hereafter befall them, from your Compliance with their Inclinations, instead of pursuing, as you ought, the Dictates of your own Judgment, that the Consequences of their

#### IV THE DIE IS CAST

[not] returning to a proper Sense of their Conduct, may prove deservedly fatal to yourselves.

I shall say no more at present on this disagreeable Subject, but only to repeat an Observation I made to a former Assembly on a similar Occasion. "Every Breach of the Constitution, whether it proceeds from the Crown or the People, is, in its Effects, equally destructive to the Rights of both. It is the Duty, therefore, of those who are intrusted with Government, to be equally careful in guarding against Encroachments from the one as the other. But *It is* (says one of the wisest of Men) *a most infallible Symptom of the dangerous State of Liberty, when the chief Men of a free Country shew a greater Regard to Popularity than to their own Judgment.*"<sup>2</sup>

WM. FRANKLIN

1. The implementation of the Continental Association.
2. Franklin is quoting from his November 30, 1765, address to the assembly in which he criticized the legislators for their conduct during the Stamp Act crisis.

### 3 The Testimony of the People Called Quakers

[*Pennsylvania Gazette*, February 22, 1775.]

The burgeoning protest movement and the action of the Continental Congress placed New Jersey Quakers, especially numerous in the western and southern portions of the province, in a delicate situation. Religious scruples forbade participation by members of the Society of Friends in the extralegal activities of the popular front, but community pressures (social ostracism and threats of violence) induced an increasing number of Quakers to give at least tacit—and sometimes overt—support to the common cause. To alleviate the tensions between Friends and radicals, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, comprised of Quaker leaders from Pennsylvania and New Jersey, issued *The Testimony of the People Called Quakers* outlining the neutrality-based-on-conscience position of Friends. Willing to render unto Caesar, they would fight neither for nor against the state.

*The Testimony of the People called Quakers*

Given forth by a Meeting of the Representatives of said People, in Pennsylvania