

The General Congress met in Philadelphia in September 1774, and agreed upon a definite plan of action. Public meetings to ratify this policy were held in all the counties of Maryland, committees chosen to carry it out, and delegates elected to a second Convention, which met in November, and before it the deputies to the Congress laid the report of their proceedings. This Convention passed a series of resolutions approving the action of the Congress, and providing more specifically for carrying out the non-importation policy, and especially for the organisation and drill of the militia, and the purchase of arms and ammunition.

It was now seen that the Convention embodied the spirit of resistance, and all matters and measures connected therewith came within the scope of its duties. Otherwise, the civil polity of the Province was unaffected: the courts were still open, the ordinary business of the government went on, and Governor Eden, an amiable and liberal man who was both liked and respected, was not only undisturbed in his office, but treated with undiminished consideration and social regard, notwithstanding all his efforts to dissuade the leading men from a course which he believed ruinous. In his correspondence with the Ministry he endeavored to act the part of a peacemaker, and to represent the conduct and character of the leading Marylanders in the most favorable light (*vid.* p. 342); and it was probably in consequence of his representations that the British cruisers, in the first year of the war, abstained so markedly from serious injury to Maryland.

The Convention met again in April 1775, and during this session the news arrived of the battle of Lexington. After its adjournment the battle of Bunker Hill was fought, and open war had begun.

As so large a body as the Convention could not remain continuously in session, it appointed a certain number of its members a standing Executive Committee with the title of Council of Safety, which was the permanent administrative body for all matters and measures connected with the policy of resistance, within the limits provided in its constitution; and it had the power to call together the Convention whenever any matter should arise transcending the Council's authority, or demanding a wider responsibility. It was assisted by a Committee of Observation in each county, who kept the Council constantly advised, and carried out its orders.

There was thus a perfect democratic government existing side by side with the phantom of Proprietary rule—the Convention and the Council representing the people in their sovereign capacity, chosen by them and carrying out their will. Even the deputies to the Congress were appointed by the Convention.

The next meeting of the Convention was on July 26, 1775. As in Green's published Journals of the Conventions neither the daily proceedings nor the names of members of this session are given, the Journal has here been reproduced in full from the original manuscript, as preliminary to the Journal of the Council of Safety.