

## George III on how not to handle a crisis

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Conspiracy

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Some 235 years ago on this date, King George III, in a Speech from the Throne at the opening of Parliament, [declared](#) the American colonies in rebellion and authorized a military response to quell the [American Revolution](#).

Of course, this was more than six months after actions at [Lexington and Concord](#) on April 19, 1775.

In the meantime, the 13 colonies had called out their militias, the [Battle of Bunker Hill](#) was fought, the Second Continental Congress convened and the [Continental Army](#) was created.

But, given the slow manner in which news traveled in those days, George can hardly be faulted for being a little slow on the uptake.

George insisted during his brief speech that the rebellion was being fomented by a “desperate conspiracy” of leaders whose claims of allegiance to him were insincere. What the rebels really wanted, he said, was to create an “independent empire.”

The king indicated that he intended to deal with the crisis with force and was even considering “friendly offers of foreign assistance” to suppress the rebellion.

“It is now become the part of wisdom ... to put a speedy end to these disorders by the most decisive exertions. For this purpose, I have increased my naval establishment, and greatly augmented my land forces,” he told Parliament.

A pro-American minority in Parliament warned that the government was driving the colonists towards independence, something that many colonial leaders had insisted they did not desire.

The speech was also said to undermine moderates in the Continental Congress like [John Dickinson](#), who had been arguing that the king wanted to resolve the dispute between the colonies and Parliament.

When it became clear that the king wasn't going to serve as a conciliator, colonial affection for the Empire was weakened and the drive for independence became a reality.