

Patrick Henry's Speech

March 23, 1775

Shall we try argument?
Sir, we have been trying that for the last ten years...
We must fight!

Gentlemen may cry, "Peace! Peace!"
–but there is no peace.
The war is actually begun!
The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our
ears the clash of resounding arms!
Our brethren are already in the field!
Why stand we here idle?
What is it the gentlemen wish?
What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet,
as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery?
Forbid it, Almighty God!
I know not what course others may take; but as for me,
give me liberty, or give me death!