

3.2

Causes of the Revolution



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- **Describe the colonists' political heritage.**
- **Explain the colonists' reaction to new taxes.**
- **Describe the methods the colonists used to protest British taxes.**
- **Summarize how the colonists reacted to the Townshend Acts.**
- **Understand the significance of the First Continental Congress in 1774**

British Government & The Colonies

The colonists believed that Great Britain had the best government on earth

British Parliament Government had 3 branches: Executive (monarchy) & Legislative powers between 2 houses.

Government was far from democratic though with power to those who owned property & wealth

Britain did not have a constitution, just a collection of laws.

Colonies had a policy of **Salutary Neglect- Self-rule in the colonies.**

New Taxes, New Conflict

The French & Indian War doubled Britain's national debt & expanded its territories. Taxes were placed on the colonists.

The Sugar Act lowered taxes on molasses, but created courts to prosecute smugglers

The Quartering Act- Colonies had to provide housing & supplies for British troops.

The Stamp Act- required colonists to pay taxes on almost all printed materials

Opposition

Colonists argued NO TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION!

Many thought the Stamp Act was created to destroy American Liberty

Britain saw the colonial opposition as selfish & narrow-minded

Colonial resistance took 3 forms: Intellectual Protest, Economic Boycotts, & Violent Intimidation

Rise of the Resistance

John Adams, a prominent Massachusetts lawyer, began to write speeches against the new Taxes.

People were inspired by John Locke's writing & believed they had individual rights & government was for the good of the people.

Patrick Henry- Wrote the Virginia Resolve that argued that **ONLY** colonial assemblies had the right to tax the colonies.

While Virginia deemed the resolve too radical, colonial newspapers would print the entire document

The Patriots

Colonists hated the Stamp Act & began to form a sense of American Unity.

Samuel Adams & a group of “Patriots” formed a group known as the **Sons of Liberty** to protest

They would get into violent scuffles across the colonies to oppose the taxes.

The Stamp Act Congress enforced the **nonimportant agreements**- Boycotts of goods imported from Britain

The Daughters of Liberty would weave cloths to support the boycott

Growing Violence

Parliament repealed the Stamp Act but replaced it with the **Townshend Acts**- Taxes on everyday items such as glass, lead, paper, & tea

The taxes were to help pay the salaries of governors & judges which alarmed colonists

Protests & violence erupted in the colonies & the Crown would begin to send troops to occupy Boston

This continued involvement continued to anger the colonists

Major Events

The Boston Massacre- 5 colonists, including Crispus Attucks, were killed by British Troops

The **Committees of Correspondence** were created to provide leadership & cooperation in the colonies

Britain repealed the Townshend Acts but kept the tax on tea so Colonists began to drink smuggled Dutch tea

The Boston Tea Party- Boston Patriots went to the Boston Harbor to dump the tea to oppose the tax.

The Coercive Acts

**Known as the *Intolerable Acts* by colonists,
created to punish & force the payment of
the destroyed tea & sent more troops**

**Colonists grew angry & rejected the new laws
resulting in more violence**

The colony's formed the *First Continental Congress* to form a plan to protest the acts.

The idea that the colonists were not British, but American, began to grow.