

**Why does America Revolt?**

1. liberty - political
2. simply transfer of power from far away British elites to American power class that wanted to consolidate its hold over wealth of continent - economic
3. the Enlightenment – philosophy
4. British bungling

**British Bungling: Paying off War Debt**

1. Sugar Act of 1764
  - A. tariffs on sugar, coffee, wines & other imports to America
  - B. specifically designed to generate revenue for British Gov't
    - a. first colonial tax to specifically generate revenue
  - C. King George III & PM George Grenville
  - D. post war depression
  - E. Currency Act – forbade colonies to issue paper money
  - F. James Otis, “free from all taxes but what he consents to in person or by his representative”
  - G. eyes on larger prize: American Freedom
  - H. no real resistance to tax materialized
2. Stamp Act of 1765
  - A. stiff tariffs on virtually all printed materials – NP, legal docs, cards
  - B. a direct tax
  - C. established Vice-Admiralty Courts to try violators
  - D. protests grew loud & violent – riots & mobs
    - a. Sons of Liberty & Daughters of Liberty
    - b. VA - Patrick Henry drafted VA Stamp Act Resolves
    - c. Boston – Gov. Hutchinson’s home destroyed
    - d. Stamp Act Congress of 1765
      1. NYC
      2. 27 delegates from 9 colonies
      3. Drew up a statement of their rights & grievances

4. Requested Parliament repeal the act
  5. Eroded suspicions between the colonies
  6. A step toward intercolonial unity
  - e. Nonimportation Agreements
    1. boycott of stamps throughout colonies
    2. general boycott of British goods
    3. duty collectors unwilling to do their job
  - E. virtual representation is initial English response
  - F. hurt by economic warfare, London's merchants had law repealed in 1766
  - G. George III replaces Grenville with Lord Rockingham
  - H. London doesn't realize damage has already been done
  - I. Pass Declaratory Act – British Gov't right to tax and legislate in all cases anywhere in the colonies
3. Townshend Acts of 1767
- A. Charles Townshend becomes PM & drafts Acts
  - B. Taxed goods imported directly from Britain for the first time – mercantilism approved duties on other Euro Nations, not England
  - C. Some tax collected was set aside for payment of tax collectors, meaning colonial assemblies could no longer withhold gov't officials wages to get their way
  - D. Created more Vice-Admiralty Courts & new gov't offices
  - E. Suspended NY Legislature – it refused to comply with law requiring colonists to supply British troops
  - F. Provoked strongest colonial reaction yet
  - G. MA Assembly sent letter to all others asking for a protest in unison
  - H. English ordered other assemblies not to discuss MA letter
  - I. If legislature discussed letter they were dissolved by Governor
  - J. Protestors seek support of “commoners” for the first time
  - K. Protests affect British merchants, who join protest
  - L. After 2 years, Parliament repeals Townshend Duties (except on tea)
  - M. All other statutes of Townshend Acts remain

## N. Boston Massacre

- a. British stationed 4,000 troops in Boston (pop. 16,000)
- b. Soldiers competed with colonists for jobs
- c. Confrontations resulted
- d. March 5, 1770
  1. mob (60) pelts redcoats (10) with rock filled snowballs
  2. soldiers fire on the crowd - 5 colonists die, hence massacre
  3. propaganda: soldiers shot into crowd of innocent bystanders

## O. Committees of Correspondence

- a. Created by colonists to maintain intercolonial communications
- b. Organized a decade before the revolution
- c. Samuel Adams
  1. Master propagandist & engineer of rebellion
  2. Formed first local CoC in MA in 1772 (Sons of Liberty)
- d. House of Burgesses
  1. Lower House of VA Legislature
  2. Proposed each colony appoint a standing CoC in 1773
  3. Within a year almost all colonies joined in

**British Response: More Bungling**1. Tea Act of 1773

- a. Americans were buying so little taxed tea
  - i. British East India Company was near Bankruptcy.
- b. Tea Act Allowed the company to sell DIRECTLY TO CONSUMER
  - i. Even though there was an import duty, it still COST LESS than smuggled tea
- c. Colonists were still angered by the idea of paying taxes on items that could make \$\$ for Parliament

- i. Felt money would be used to pay off Royal Governors for passing act in the first place.
    - ii. Afraid this would corrupt representative government
    - iii. Afraid corrupt Americans if they accepted taxation.
  - d. No Ports accepted tea.
  - e. Mass. Governor insisted Bostonians receive the tea and paying duties on the shipment
- 2. Boston Tea Party 1773
  - a. December 16<sup>th</sup>
    - i. Sam Adams held a meeting in the Old South Church
    - ii. 5000 citizens were told about the governors demand
  - b. 50 Young men dressed as Indians
    - i. Went to the Wharf, the Crowd Followed
      - 1. Led by Sam Adams
      - 2. harmed no one and no cargo other than tea.
    - ii. Tossed 45 TONS of tea overboard into Boston Harbor
      - 1. tea piled up to the deck of the ship
      - 2. harbor/shore was filled with tea through the morning
    - iii. They the significance and the consequences of the act

### **British Response: Even More Bungling**

#### The Intolerable Acts 1774

- 1. was an American label for the laws sponsored by Lord North's ministry
- 2. Also called the Coercive Acts
- 3. enacted by the British Parliament in 1774 in response to the Boston Tea Party
  - a. Shocked by the defiance of law and the destruction of private property in the Boston Tea Party
  - b. most factions in Parliament supported King George III's fighting speech of March 17, 1774, in which he urged coercive action

- c. Either the colonies were subordinate to constituted law and authority as vested in crown and Parliament or the empire was faced with disintegration and anarchy.
  - d. Further retreat after the repeal of the Stamp Act of 1765 and the Townshend Acts of 1767 was deemed impossible
  - e. Assertion of authority appeared essential.
4. they were a major factor contributing to the outbreak of the American Revolution.
5. The Boston Port Bill
- a. passed on March 18, 1774
  - b. port of Boston was ordered closed until restitution for the tea was made and until royal officials were compensated for personal damages
  - c. the Massachusetts capital was moved to Salem
  - d. Marblehead was made the customs port of entry.
6. The Massachusetts Bay Regulating Act
- a. passed May 20, 1774
  - b. sought to redress what it considered to be defects in the administration of Massachusetts Bay
  - c. made the Council royally appointed rather than elected and made all law officers subject to the governor's appointment
  - d. increased the governor's patronage powers
  - e. provided that juries be summoned by sheriffs rather than elected
  - f. banned all town meetings not authorized by law or gubernatorial approval
  - g. to restrain the liberty-minded, no town meetings in the colony could be held without royal approval
  - h. freemen could no longer elect juries.

7. The Impartial Administration of Justice Act
  - a. introduced April 15, 1774
  - b. secure fair trials for British subjects and to prevent rioting
  - c. permitted the governor to move trials to other colonies or to England
  - d. permitted the governor to call for aid from the British Army to put down civil disturbances
  - e. Despite strong opposition to these acts from Edmund Burke, Isaac Barre, William Pitt (Lord Chatham), and the Marquis of Rockingham, they passed Parliament in mid-May and were signed by the King on May 20.
8. The Quartering Act
  - a. passed June 2, 1774
  - b. authorized civil officers to requisition houses and empty buildings to house royal troops where barracks were unavailable or unsuitable
9. Quebec Act
  - a. passed June 22, 1774
  - b. granted civil government and religious liberty to the Roman Catholic inhabitants of the former French colony
  - c. extended the Canadian boundary to the Ohio River
  - d. not technically part of Intolerable Acts

### **Results of Intolerable Acts**

1. intended primarily to prevent disorder in Massachusetts
2. united Americans in a common cause and led to the First Continental Congress.
3. A fleet blockaded Boston Harbor, and troops under Maj. Gen. Thomas Gage maintained order
4. But the Bostonians remained firm despite the threat of economic disaster, and surrounding towns and colonies sent in abundant food supplies.

5. Americans of all classes, political persuasions, and interests, whatever their misgivings about the Boston Tea Party, saw a general threat to their liberty in these acts.
6. The colonies united and responded quickly to a call from Virginia for a Continental Congress that was to meet in Philadelphia in September 1774 to seek a redress of the colonists grievances.
7. *Coercion provoked rebellion.*

### **First Continental Congress**

1. In response to the coercive acts
2. delegates from all colonies, (except Georgia) went to meet in Philadelphia
3. 56 Delegates come together to find a way of defending American Rights without war.
  - a. Declared that colonies owed no obedience to any of the coercive acts
  - b. A provisional Government would collect taxes until Massachusetts charter is restored
  - c. Defensive measures should be taken in event of attack by royal troops.
  - d. They voted to
    - i. Create the Association to Boycott British Goods
      1. Nonimportation, nonexportation, nonconsumption
      2. Most important outcome of the Congress
4. Would be enforced by locally elected committees
5. Not all delegates agreed to such extreme measures
6. They Sent a Petition to the King
  - a. They conceded power to the king to regulate colonial commerce

- b. but argues that previous efforts to impose taxes, enforce laws through admiralty courts, suspend assemblies and revoke charters (Mass.) was unconstitutional
  - c. They were going over parliament's head straight to the king
7. 1<sup>st</sup> steps toward independence but no declaration