**New British Policy and Colonial Resistance**

*In order to tighten control over the colonies, Great Britain instated many acts and taxes which enraged colonists who argued that it was unfair to tax them when they had no direct representation in Parliament. This resistance was the beginning of America’s revolt against its mother country.*

**Writs of Assistance:** The royal governor of Massachusetts allowed British revenue officers to use this in 1760 in order to capture goods imported illegally in: It was a search warrant allowing officials to enter buildings in which smuggled goods may be. It required no cause for suspicion and homes were often ransacked. It also contributed to the Revolution.

**Pontiac’s Rebellion:** Ottawa chief Pontiac attacked and besieged ten British forts in May, 1763, in order to keep British out of the Appalachians. An uneasy truce was negotiated by 1764, and as a result, the Proclamation of 1763 was put forth in order for Britain to maintain 10,000 soldiers in the U.S. to occupy French ceded territories.

**Paxton Boys:** This group of Rangers from Pennsylvania Paxton in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, killed some Sasquehannock Indians in 1764. The conflict arose as a result of the desire to expand westward. Governor John Penn in 1764 attempted to punish them, but the people of the area were so upset that a revolt ensued; Benjamin Franklin solved it.

**Grenville’s Program:** British Prime Minister George Grenville was the principal architect of the Sugar Act; his method of taxation and crackdown on colonial smuggling were widely disliked by Americans. He passed the Stamp Act arguing that colonists received virtual representation in Parliament, even though Americans didn’t elect members.

**Sugar Act, 1764:** George Grenville introduced this act which amended the Molasses Act that had taxed all foreign molasses entering the U.S. at sixpence a gallon in 1764. The new act ended the previous British policy of keeping Americans out of all revenue-raising measures. It stated that colonists exported certain items to foreign countries only if they passed through Britain first. Parliament hoped that Americans would buy more British items and it increased British sale of European wine.

**Deism:** most of the religious thinkers during the Enlightenment were deist. The deists believed that God was a clockmaker who created the world but now just watches it work. They believed that we lived in a perfect universe and that we are laws that we created were natural.

**Non-consumption:** The Sons of Liberty began the idea of non-consumption in 1774 with their vow of non-importation of British goods. When the Boston Port Bill was passed, colonists once again agreed to ban all British goods in order to boycott the British until demands were met. Because of this, state or individual opposition was despised.

**No Taxation Without Representation:** John Adams, in his Circular Letter, in 1768, openly criticized Parliament’s practice of taxation without proper colonial representation. It was said that no tax that was issued in order to produce revenue for Great Britain was constitutional because American representatives had not voted to allow the tax.

**Compact Theory:** First expressed by Jefferson and Madison in the Virginia and Kentucky Resolves of 1798, it declared that each state comprised the national government through a compact whose provisions were established in the Constitution. Hence, the states could decide when the compact was broken. It further led to the doctrine of States Rights.

**Stamp Act:** British Prime Minister George Grenville’s most detested act, the Stamp Act was introduced in 1765 as a means of raising revenue in the colonies, and was passed by Parliament. It stated that all legal documents, contracts, licenses, pamphlets, and newspapers must carry a stamp that is taxed. It was intended to raise money for keeping up defense in colonies. It infuriated colonists because it was an internal tax that few could escape. Opposition to the Stamp Act led to formation of the Stamp Act Congress.

**Stamp Distributors:** These were the men who had the job of accepting money from the special water-marked paper put into circulation with the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765. They were a target for such associations as the Loyal Nine and Sons of Liberty who attempted, through violence, to force the distributors to resign before taxes were due.

**Patrick Henry:** He was an orator and statesman who played a key role in igniting patriotism and leading the colonists toward the American Revolution. In 1763 he became a member of the House of Burgesses where he introduced seven resolutions against the Stamp Act. He is famous for his comment "Give me liberty or give me death."

**Virginia** **Resolves:** American leader Patrick Henry persuaded the Virginia House of Burgesses to state their opposition to taxation in 1765. They adopted several resolutions which refuted the power of Parliament to tax the colonies. Henry’s fiery orations caused, by the end of the year, eight other colonies to also denounce taxation and declare rights.

**Stamp Act Congress, 1765:** This was an assembly of delegates from nine of the original thirteen colonies in 1765 which was intended to protest the Stamp Act. They met in New York City and presented the Declaration of Rights and Grievances, but the group’s demand for no taxation without representation was refused by the House of Commons.

**Non-importation:** There existed, between many of the colonial merchants, an agreement to not import any British goods until the Townshend acts were repealed. When the tea tax was kept, they were unsure whether or not to keep the boycott going. When non-importation collapsed, the Sons of Liberty agreed not to consume British tea in protest.

**Sons of Liberty:** Members included Samuel Adams and Paul Revere; it was a secret society of patriots which was organized in 1765 in the colonies. They formed a Committee of Correspondence to defend themselves against British actions. One of the actions they took was to adopt a policy of non-importation in which merchants refused to import goods sent from Great Britain. They also participated in terrorizing the stamp distributors through house-wrecking and tar-and-feathering in order to achieve respect.

**Daughters of Liberty:** Upper class female patriots who formed a union in 1765 in order to give aid to the cause of defeating the reviled Stamp Act. They proved their value to the cause both by attending political rallies and protests and also by refusing association with men who were Loyalists, however, they ultimately played a small role.

**Internal/External taxes:** Introduced by the British Parliament in 1765, the Stamp Act was an *internal* tax which few colonists could escape; all of the colonists were drastically affected by this tax. An example of an *external* tax is the Sugar Act passed in 1764 which raised costs only for a select group of people; public opposition to the tax was minute.

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**Right of revolution:** In John Lock’s *Two Treatises of Government*, written in 1690, it is stated that "It is a state of perfect freedom [for man] to do as they wish and dispose of themselves and their possessions." He claims that any person has the right to revolt if the government does not fulfill its duties. His ideas led to the Declaration of Independence.

**The Loyal Nine:** A group of middle class workers joined this association in the summer of 1765 in order to resist the Stamp Act. They realized that if they could intimidate stamp distributors with house-wrecking and tar-and-feathers, they could bully them into resigning before the act could be put into effect, making it impracticable.

**Guy Fawkes Day:** Thousands of ardent Bostonians gathered to celebrate this day on November 5, 1765. The day was named for the anniversary of the day Catholic Guy Fawkes attempted to blow up Parliament and King James I. In celebration of his failure, mobs gathered in the streets of Boston to protest and to set fire to figures of the Pope.

**Declaratory Act. 1766:** This was a Parliamentary act which was issued in 1766 in order to confirm the British government’s right to pass acts which were legally binding to the colonists. Because the Stamp Act was so opposed by the colonists as well as the British business community, it was repealed, but only with the passage of this confirmation.

**Quartering Act (called the Mutiny Act by the British):** Passed by Congress, this was one of the Intolerable Acts in 1774. It effectively served to further punish the colonists. Basically, it allowed for much-hated British officers to be permitted to requisition empty, private buildings. All resistance was repressed by this blatant attempt to force troops in.

**Townshend Acts, Reaction:** Under the control of British Prime Minister Charles Townshend, Parliament passed these measures in 1767. The first called for suspension of the New York Assembly because it would not abide by the Quartering Act. The Revenue Act called for customs duties on imports of glass, lead, paint, paper, and tea. As a result of unrest over these acts, the Massachusetts legislature was dissolved. Colonial reaction was that of further discontent toward their motherland.

**John Dickinson, "Letters From a Farmer in Pennsylvania":** He was a lawyer in Philadelphia and a leader in the movement against taxation on the colonies in the 1760s. Formulating a declaration of rights at the Stamp Act Congress, he argued against the duties of the Townshend acts in this publication. He sought appeasement of the British.

**Sam Adams:** He was an outspoken advocate of the Sugar Act, and served on the General Court of Massachusetts in 1765. Moreover, he was a main proponent of opposition to the Townshend Acts and a key figure in the formation of the Sons of Liberty. Starting a movement for an uprising against the Boston Massacre, he led several other angry colonists in the Boston Tea Party of 1773. Due to his literary agitation, Adams contributed to the movement for revolution.

**John Hancock’s *Liberty*:** Customs commissioners in Boston requested an armed force for protection and the government dispatched the *Romney* to Boston in June, 1768. When told that a customs official had been locked up, while John Hancock unloaded without paying the duty, the *Liberty* was seized. This led to further discontent towards Britain.

**Boston Massacre, 1770:** British troops, (which were resumed in the city in 1770 in order to discourage opposition to the Townshend Acts), when hit by hecklers within the crowd, opened fire upon the innocent; five men were killed. Eight soldiers were tried for murder; their attorney was John Adams. Many were acquitted and anti-British feelings rose.

**Crispus Attucks:** He was the leader of a group of colonists who were killed in the 1770 Boston Massacre. Though he was the first man to be shot, he was only one of five colonists. He was either African-American or Native American and he may have been a runaway slave. In 1888 a monument of him was erected in his honor in Boston.

**John Adams:** He was the lawyer for the soldiers who were tried for murder in the Boston Massacre in 1770. He successfully defended his clients in defense that they were trying to protect their own lives. He additionally denounced the Stamp Act, analyzed the demands facing the colonists, and was a member of both Continental Congresses.

**Committees of Correspondence:** They were colonial groups in 1772 which were organized to form resistance to British tyranny. The Boston town meeting made up a 21 member committee "To state the Rights of Colonists and of this Province in Particular." This committee became a major political force responsible for the Boston Tea Party.

**Tea Act:** The Parliamentary Tea Act eliminated import duties entering England, lowering the selling price to consumers, also allowing selling directly to consumers, hurting middlemen. Colonial smuggling was very harmful to the East India Company which had held a monopoly on tea. The act provided savings for Britain.

**Boston Tea Party:** A group of Boston citizens organized a protest on December 16, 1773, which was against the British tax on tea imported to the colonies The citizens were angry and disallowed three British ships to unload their cargo in Boston. Led by Samuel Adams and members of the Sons of Liberty, the group, disguised as Indians boarded the ships and dumped all the tea into Boston Harbor in protest. The American government later refused to pay for the tea and was punished through closure of the port.

**Coercive Acts:** Passed by the British Parliament, several laws were composed in 1774 in response to colonial rebellion. The Boston Tea Party was the last straw leading to the passage of these harsh acts as measures against the colony of Massachusetts. The four measures passed were to serve as warnings to the rest of the colonies. They included the Boston Port Act, the Massachusetts Government Act, the Quartering Act, and the Administration of Justice Act. Americans united in sympathy for Massachusetts.

**Boston Port Act:** Parliament passed this act on April 1, 1774, as one of the Intolerable Acts; it ordered the U.S. navy to close Boston Harbor. Unless they paid for the ruined tea, the port would be subject to permanent closure. They imposed a deliberately short deadline to ensure that the harbor would close, which would lead to economic difficulties.

**Massachusetts Government Act:** Parliament passed this act in 1774 as the second of the Townshend Acts which revoked the Massachusetts charter and restructured the government. The Governor gained control over naming sheriffs, who, in turn, gained control over jurymen. The number of Massachusetts town meetings were also reduced.

**Quebec Act:** Parliament passed this greatly detested law which established Roman-Catholicism as the official religion in Quebec, making Protestants angry. Also, Canada’s government was awarded an abundance of powers, but was in turn, given no legislature. The law also extended Quebec’s 1774 land claims, further angering colonists.

**First Continental Congress, 1774:** The First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in September, 1774, to consider the situation resulting from the Intolerable Acts. They issued the Declaration of Rights and Grievances to George III, and called for the Continental Association, and agreement to boycott trade with Britain. committees of Safety were in charge of enforcing the Continental Association. Before it was adjourned, the delegates agreed to meet in May, 1775 if the situation still hadn’t been resolved.

**Suffolk Resolves:** The first Continental Congress passed this in 1774 in response to the Intolerable Acts. They called for non-importation and preparation of local soldiers in the event that the British should have resorted to military force. The passage of these resolves marked the willingness of the colonies to defend their rights militarily.