



The American Revolution

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Sons of the American Revolution

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Colonial American Discontent Article 2 of 3

In Boston, the resentment boiled over into near revolutionary violence. During 1768, customs officials impounded a ship owned by John Hancock for alleged trade violations. This precipitated into an angry crowd mobbing customs offices and officials. On 1 October 1768, British troops occupied Boston and restored civil order. The colonial government opted to curb violence in favor of applying economic pressures by passing *Non-importation* agreements. Trade with England dried up. By 1770, *The Townsend Duties* had generated only 21,000 pounds in taxes, caused the shut down of trade with England, and gotten the attention of powerful English merchants, who interceded on behalf of the colonies. On 5 March 1770, Parliament repealed these duties with the exception of the tea duty.

Consequently on 10 May 1773, Parliament enacted *The Tea Act*, which was designed to prop up the failing East India Tea Company. The company held over 18 million pounds of tea, all of which was destined for shipment to America in the hopes of generating solvency for the company. Readers stay tuned, there is a party brewing. America's reaction to Parliament's *Tea Act* was immediate and uniformly negative. The harbors at Philadelphia and New York repulsed British "tea ships." In Charleston, tea

cargos were piled upon the docks to rot. The royal governor of Boston retained “tea ships” in port, but Bostonians refused to allow their unloading. Under darkness, colonists disguised as Indians raided the “tea ships,” and dumped their cargoes into Boston Harbor. This was treasonous, and would not go unnoticed and bore the popular title, “Boston Tea Party.”

King George prompted Parliament to take swift action by passing measures designed to assert its authority, and make the Americans pay for the loss in goods. These measures were known as *The Intolerable Acts*. The “tea party” and passage of these acts occurred during one of King George’s bouts of instability and lead to his over reacting. On 31 March 1774, Parliament passed the first Intolerable Act, *The Boston Port Act*. This act closed Boston Harbor. This action was followed on 20 May 1774, by the passage of *The Administration of Justice Act*, giving absolute power to British authorities in the control of commerce, and the suppressing of American discontentment. Simultaneously, the passage of *The Massachusetts Government Act* gave power to King George and Parliament to form governments in America.