
Stamp Act And The American Revolution

As the dictionary explains if something is inevitable, you give the sense that no matter what scheme you come with to get around it, it is going to happen sooner or later. There are things you can avoid in life but other things will always happen, like death or taxes. Now, was the American Revolution inevitable or could we have found a way around it? Did the acts of for financial gain and power contribute to our actions; is it fair to say that Great Britain dug its own grave for underestimating the power the Colonies had accumulated during the Seven Years War? Between 1763 and 1775 Great Britain carried out a succession of acts that led to the loss of what could have been their most valuable territory.

During the Seven years war, America had given England a hand both in soldiers and financial resources as Benjamin Franklin explains when testifying before a committee of the House of Commons "... The colonies raised, clothed, and paid during the last war, near 25,000 men, and spent millions"(Kennedy 80) and even though Great Britain won the war it took a toll on the financial aspect of the country. During times of struggle in 1763, Britain had a deficit of an estimated €122 million and the head of the treasury at the time George Grenville needed a plan. Grenville decided to focus on the colonies to bring Great Britain capital but his plan was not going to be taken lightly by the colonial people because it involved more taxation. Tensions started with the Stamp Act, before the Stamp Act Massachusetts taxpayers would contribute one shilling to Great Britain's treasury in return for the protection offered. Grenville suggested the Stamp Act in 1765 and it was put into effect on March 1765, this new tax would be stamped on nearly everything that was printed such as diplomas, newspapers, bonds and even playing cards. The tax affected basically every American but even though the tax was a huge issue, not only was the tax an issue but the idea behind the tax was absurd. Grenville wanted to raise money but also demonstrate with this tax that had control over the colonies.

The tax was taken unsurprisingly in a negative way, Americans had helped in the war with supplies and money. The issue was Americans already paid local taxes and felt like Parliament was taking advantage of them therefore in the summer of 1765 the colonies decided to oppose the tax. Great Britain did not change anything which led to bitterness towards Parliament in the colonies. During the midst of the downturn on August 14th, a group of men attacked the residence of Andrew Oliver the man supposedly responsible for collecting the tax. Later on that month the houses of officials and the colony's Lieutenant Governor were destroyed, the violence continued and the act was dead by the fall. Americans wanted full disclosure that the act would be appealed and in October of 1765, the colonies sent delegates to New York to take part in the Stamp Act Congress which was a gathering in which Americans proposed a method to pressure Parliament. Their strategy was to deny trading with and hopefully Parliament would revoke the act. Finally, in March 1766, revoked the Stamp Act.

Even though removed the tax they still had all the intentions to make a profit from the colonies. In 1767, Britain passed The Townshend Acts which taxed paper, lead, glass, and tea imported to the colonies. In response to the new act that went into effect on November 1767, colonists circulated documents in favor of a boycott of British goods. The documents circulating were "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania" and the "Massachusetts Circular Letter", these documents gave thrust to the movement in Massachusetts and Rhode Island and it was

decided to Boycott Goods in January 1768. The solution from Parliament to stop the rebellious colonists was to send troops to reside in Boston, by 1769 around 2,000 troops had arrived to reinstate command of the city. Tensions kept rising and finally the first altercation occurred on March 5, 1770, Soldiers shot a group of angry men, killing five American colonists, this day is now known as the Boston Massacre. Sadly that same day across the Atlantic ocean, Lord North the Prime Minister of Great Britain at the time had asked Parliament to revoke the Townshend Acts.

Although the Townshend Act was revoked in April 1770, there was still a tax on tea which remained an anger factor and a contributor to the Boston Tea Party. After the tea tax was imposed a group of men decided to organize a protest against the tax, Samuel Adams and his sons of liberty a group started to protest against the stamp act and John Hancock organized the Boston Tea party. The Sons of Liberty were a group of tradesmen founded to get rid of forms of taxation such as the Stamp act and to rally against Britain. On December 16 1773, three ships loaded with tea at Griffins Wharf in Boston were being held by Governor Thomas Hutchison because the colonists voted not to pay taxes on the tea. That night a group of men dressed in Native American Attire threw 342 cases of tea into the water.

Although no resistance was imposed during the Boston Tea Party, Great Britain was not going to stand down from this attack, the next move by George III and Parliament was going to spark the extra push needed for the Colonists to fight for independence. George III and the British Parliament passed the Coercive Acts or as better known by the Colonists the Intolerable Acts. The Coercive acts inflicted great restriction on the colonies, the act meant several things such as; the closing of the Boston Harbor until the Tea Party was paid off, gave more freedom of worship to French-Canadian Catholics which annoyed the Protestant colonists, required colonists to house troops in their private homes, etc. Britain's goal was to keep the colonies from being rebellious but the reverse happened, the colonies united even more and saw the intolerable acts as a better reason why to keep resisting.

Colonists agreed that the Intolerable acts went too far therefore on September 5 1774, delegates from the 13 colonies except for Georgia met in Philadelphia at the Carpenters Hall to find a way to oppose. During the time of the First Continental Congress, Georgia was dealing with a conflict involving Native Americans. During a deal between Georgia and the Creek Indian tribe, the tribe felt in the disadvantaged and required the Georgians to move out, therefore, Georgia was not in the position to go against because at the time they were receiving help from the red coats to fight the restless Creek. During the meeting, different opinions went around on how to move forward but the room was not coming to a solid plan. It was not until the Boston Tea Party unified the group and brought them to agree on fighting for independence. When the group reunited in October 1774, the Declaration was written; it involved Britain revoking the Coercive Acts, provoked the colonists to form a militia, started a boycott on goods and gave the rights to the colonies to govern themselves.

Even though the colonists took the right step towards independence, they knew it was going to require a lot of bloodshed but it was going to be all worth it at the end. The start of the conflicts began in April 181775, when a big group of troops marched to Concord, Massachusetts to capture a large storage of arms. A Patriot named Paul Revere and his comrades advised the colonial militiamen to move towards the British and the next day they clashed in the Battle of Lexington and Concord, this battle represented the onset of the Revolutionary War.

After the Seven Year's War, Great Britain acquired a vast amount of debt which lead to mediocre taxes to create profits for the crown. Great Britain taxed the colonies in all aspects starting with the Stamp Act of 1765, the Townshend Acts of 1767 and the Tea Act of 1773, these acts gave the colonists enough reason to rebel and fight for independence. The American Revolution was inevitable and as Thomas Paine once said "... but there is something absurd, in supposing a continent to be perpetually governed by an Island."