

Causes of the Revolutionary War- part 2

Directions: Read through some more of the causes of the American Revolution. Please underline information about the cause (its description or definition) and highlight the effect that came out of it.

The Stamp Act really irritated the American colonists! Protests broke out over it. Many times in history, protest movements have had a core group of leaders involved. For the American colonists, those leaders were the **Sons of Liberty**. “The Sons of Liberty was a secret political organization in the American Colonies that protested against British taxes and laws...” (<https://www.ducksters.com>) Some of their members became very well-known such as Samuel Adams, John Adams, Patrick Henry, and Paul Revere. The Sons of Liberty began in Boston, MA, in 1765 but eventually spread throughout the colonies with various groups. They would help lead the fervor (passion) against many of the British actions.

After the Stamp Act was repealed (taken away and made void), Britain tried a couple years later to pass some more taxes on the colonists. The **Townshend Acts** (1767) put taxes on such products such as glass, paper, and tea that came into the American colonies. The money that was gotten from these taxes gave the British governors of the colonies their paychecks. Obviously the colonists did not want to pay taxes on these items and would be tempted to smuggle (illegally bring in) these products into the country without paying taxes. To prevent this, the British government allowed writs of assistance to be used. Writs of assistance were search warrants that allowed government officials to search any building or boat that they thought was bringing in illegal goods.

As they had done with the Stamp Act, the colonists began to boycott British products, refusing to buy them. Sons of Liberty members attacked homes of those who collected these taxes. British troops were sent to Boston to try to keep chaos from breaking out. However, in 1770, the British government repealed the Townshend Acts, except the tax on tea. Of course, tea would come into play at a very famous event a few years later.

A very infamous event occurred during 1770, the **Boston Massacre**. Many colonists despised the fact that British soldiers were in the colonies. A conflict broke out between British troops and colonists in Boston. The colonists were throwing snowballs and insults at the officers. The soldiers ended up shooting their weapons and 5 colonists were killed. Many people were furious with this, and a trial was held, accusing the soldiers of murder. However, they were found not guilty.

Most people are very familiar with the **Boston Tea Party** (December 1773). Colonists were still forced to pay taxes on tea and hated it! On a cold winter night, over 100 colonists disguised themselves as Native Americans and boarded three ships that were full of tea that sat in the Boston Harbor. They dumped over 300 chests of tea overboard! Britain's prime minister was outraged! In 1774, the **Intolerable Acts** were passed by the British Parliament. Among other things, this closed the Boston Harbor until the damaged tea was paid for. This would extremely hurt the city economically. In addition, town hall meetings were not allowed. The stage was being set for the Revolutionary War, which began in April 1775.

Note: Information in this document was taken from the following sources:

1. [Ducksters.com](https://www.ducksters.com),
2. *Call to Freedom: Beginnings to 1877* (Holt, Rinehart, and Winston)