

SEEDS OF LIBERTY CAUSES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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INTRODUCTION

This video traces the events in the period from 1754 to 1767 which led to the American Revolution. It begins in 1775 with a brief preview of future events and the excitement of the Battle of Lexington, the first battle of the revolution. Then it returns to 1754 and the French and Indian War and continues with a chronological review of events to 1767 and passage of the Townshend Acts.

The program traces the social, economic, and political changes taking place in the American colonies during that period. The increasing independence of the colonists is examined as well as the strong ties between the colonies and the mother country. The difficulties of governing a colony across an ocean are highlighted. Economic and political issues, such as British trade policies and the tensions arising from the variety of taxes imposed by the British Parliament on its colonies, are explored.

The political differences between the increasingly restless colonists and the British King and Parliament are also examined. English voices provide the British perspective on the issues separating colonists from King and Parliament. Native American, African American, and female voices offer a multicultural perspective on the seeds of conflict as well.

Throughout the program, segments with students help reinforce information about the causes of the American Revolution. Students are seen in classrooms and other school settings talking about the topics discussed in the video and responding to questions. Quiz frames reinforce the students' learning by offering questions. Immediate answers are given to these questions.

OBJECTIVES

To explain how tension between the colonies and Britain began

To explain how the outcome of the French and Indian War affected relations between the colonists and Britain

To trace the impact of British colonial trade policies on the American colonies

To examine the responses of the colonists to specific Parliamentary acts and to show how this opposition affected relations with Britain

To explain why the colonists resisted the Stamp Act and the Townshend Acts

SUMMARY

The video program opens with a glimpse into the future—the fateful day in April 1775 when the first shots of the American Revolution were fired on Lexington green. Viewers are encouraged to speculate on what might have caused the rift between the once loyal Americans and the mother country. The video next provides a profile of the American colonists in the 1760's, highlighting rural farm life, the servitude of the African slave, and the bustling cities where immigrants from many parts of Europe met and mingled. A national identity begins to emerge as colonists start their own newspapers and colleges, and most importantly, share in governing themselves in their colonial assemblies. At the same time the colonists continue to maintain close ties with Britain through language, customs, trade, law, and government. Yet even in the vital area of government problems arose because the great distance separating England from its colonies made rapid political decision making impossible. The colonists grew accustomed to looking after their own affairs.

In 1754 the French challenged the British for control of North America in the French and Indian War. Britain's victory in 1763 was a costly one. Although France gave up most of its North American lands, Britain was saddled with a huge debt and now ruled over a greatly expanded empire. Shortly after the war ended, an uprising led by Ottawa Indian leader Pontiac caused Britain to ban westward expansion, through the Proclamation of 1763, to reduce conflict between Native Americans and colonists living on the frontier.

This ban on westward expansion angered the colonists. It was followed by new taxes which further fueled colonial resentment. Believing the American colonists should help pay the costs of the French and Indian War, the Parliament passed the Sugar Act in 1764. Eight colonies petitioned the Parliament for repeal of the act, and outspoken colonists like Boston's Sam Adams labeled the law "Taxation without Representation".

In 1765 Parliament passed two more unpopular laws, the Quartering Act and the Stamp Act. The tax on stamps evoked a heated reaction from the colonists. Five colonial assemblies called for an end to the hated tax. In Virginia, young Patrick Henry called for passage of the incendiary Virginia Resolves, and in Boston an effigy of the unpopular stamp agent was burned in a bonfire made from the remains of a stamp office demolished by an angry mob.

Resistance to the Stamp Act brought new cooperation among colonists. Throughout the colonies groups of citizens calling themselves the Sons of Liberty formed. In 1765 representatives of nine colonies held a Stamp Act Congress in New York. The following year a successful colonial boycott of British goods convinced Parliament to repeal the stamp tax, but the British government was still determined to make the colonists help pay for upkeep of the American colonies.

In 1768 Parliament passed new taxes called the Townshend Acts. Once again the colonists responded vigorously with protests and boycotts of British products. After two years of such protests, Britain's new prime minister, Lord North, persuaded Parliament to repeal the Townshend Acts. While one source of discontent was ending in England, across the ocean in Boston, clashes between soldiers and colonists turned violent. Five Massachusetts colonists died in the incident which became famous throughout the colonies as the Boston Massacre. Although the next two years were quiet ones in the colonies, the video ends with the warning that the troubles between colonists and their English rulers had not really ended because as Benjamin Franklin observed, "the seeds of liberty had been planted."

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What ties linked the colonies to England?

The American colonies were linked to Britain by language, customs, trade, laws, and government.

2. What differences were starting to pull them apart?

The colonies were becoming ethnically and racially diverse with settlers from Africa and many parts of Europe, not just England. Each brought its own customs, religious practices, and language. The colonies, through their colonial assemblies, began to exercise political power through self-government. Furthermore, the vast transatlantic distances slowed communication and encouraged a sense of independence.

3. What was the French and Indian War? Who fought in it?

It was a war between France and Great Britain for control of North America.

4. What were the effects of the French and Indian War on the American colonists?

The British incurred a huge debt fighting the war and now they had an enormous empire to police and protect. The British Parliament decided the colonists should share the economic burdens of war and empire, and imposed taxes on the colonists. In an effort to bring about peace with the Native Americans, they also drew the Proclamation Line of 1763 which prohibited further westward expansion by the American colonists.

5. In what ways might the history of the U. S. have been different if the French had won the French and Indian War?

Answers will vary, but students might suggest that the colonists might eventually have become part of a large French colonial empire which itself sought independence from its French mother country.

6. What was the Stamp Act and why did the colonists object to it?

The Stamp Act was a tax on all kinds of documents including newspapers, calendars, and legal papers. Purchase of the stamps provided revenue for the Crown. Colonists considered the act taxation without representation since they had no vote in Parliament.

7. What effect do you think Britain's trade plan had on the growth of American industries and manufacturing?

7/5 trade plan, called mercantilism, discouraged the growth of native industries by making the American colonists consumers of British goods but not producers.

8. How did the colonists show their unhappiness with the Stamp Act?

Angry crowds forced stamp agents to shut their doors, representatives of the colonies attended the Stamp Act Congress and initiated a boycott of British goods.

9. Who were the Sons and Daughters of Liberty?

The Sons of Liberty were groups of men organized in several colonies to oppose the Stamp Act and encourage, sometimes with force, acceptance of the boycott. The Daughters of Liberty were groups of women who showed their opposition to the British interference in American affairs by boycotting British goods.

10. How did the women of Edenton and other colonial towns help make the boycott a success?

They helped make it a success by cutting into the profits of the British merchants and importers. They did this by making and wearing homespun cloth instead of buying English cloth, drinking substitutes for British teas, and feeding their families foods grown in the colonies.

11. Why do you think the boycott of British goods was a successful tactic for protesting British rule?

It had economic consequences for British merchants, people who were likely to have influence with the King and members of Parliament. It was a method of peaceful protest which did not require either economic or military resources.

12. How did the Boston Massacre start? What was its effect on the "hearts and minds" of American colonists?

American colonists taunted a group of British soldiers by throwing rocks and snowballs at them and by name calling. Nervous and angry Redcoats eventually responded by firing into the crowd after someone yelled "Fire!" Patriots viewed the deaths of the colonists as one more sign of the violent and unlawful use of force by the British and the incident became a symbol of British tyranny.

13. Why was the Boston Massacre a useful symbol for the Patriot cause?

It united colonists, who might have disagreed among themselves about other issues, around a single, easy-to-understand event.

14. If Parliament had not passed the Townshend Acts, would the movement toward independence have ended? Give reasons for your opinion.

Answers will vary. Students might suggest that although the drive toward independence would probably have slowed, it was not likely to be halted until the underlying issue of political representation was resolved.

ACTIVITIES AND TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

These activities are designed to encourage students to learn more about topics covered in the video. The activities vary in difficulty. Some of the research suggestions may be more appropriate for older or more advanced students.

1. History Makers

a) The following colonists participated in various ways in events leading up to the American Revolution. Students might research those lives and present their findings in a panel discussion, question and answers interviews, or reenactment of significant events in their lives.

John Adams	Patrick Henry
Samuel Adams	Thomas Hutchinson
James Otis	Mercy Otis Warren

b) African American Crispus Attucks was the first colonist to be killed by the British in the Boston Massacre. Have students research his life and events surrounding his death and write an obituary or draw a tombstone marker for Attucks. Class members can also design a monument to be placed at the site of the massacre to commemorate the death of the five colonists killed that day. Remind students that their marker inscription should include the date, the causes of the conflict, the actions of the five, and the significance of their actions.

c) Some of the most important participants in the events of the period preceding the American Revolution came to the American colonies rarely if at all. Among the key British players in the conflict were King George III, George Grenville, William Pitt, Lord North, Charles Townshend, and General Gage. For a class activity, assign various students to research and role play the part of each of these men. Put each in the Revolutionary Hot Seat, a chair at the front of the room. Have student "patriots" question them regarding their views on the proper

role of the colonists in the British Empire, English trade policies, colonial rights and responsibilities, and the paying of taxes.

2. Quotable Quotes

a) In 1815 many decades after the American Revolution, John Adams wrote in a letter to Thomas Jefferson: "...the revolution was in the minds of the people and this was effected, from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years before a drop of blood was drawn at Lexington." Ask students what they think Adams meant by this statement. Why did he choose the dates 1760 to 1775? How did events change the minds of colonists?

b) Ottawa chief Pontiac, who led an unsuccessful rebellion against the British after the French and Indian War, expressed his reasons for waging war this way:

"These lakes, these woods and mountains were left us by our ancestors. They are our inheritances, and we will part with them to no one...you ought to know that He, the Great Spirit and Master of life, has provided food for us in these spacious lakes and on the woody mountains..."

Ask students how the view of land and property suggested by this quote differs from the colonists' perception of land rights. Then have students research the life of Pontiac or the Ottawa people following their defeat in Pontiac's Rebellion and write a brief history of this period from the perspective of Pontiac and his people.

3. Thinking Visually

a) Provide students with Paul Revere's famous picture of the Boston Massacre, found in most middle school American history textbooks. Remind the class that Revere's picture represented a form of patriot propaganda, portraying the events of March 1770 from an anti-British perspective. Have students study the picture to find examples of this anti-British bias. Then students might read more about this event and the subsequent

trial in which the British soldiers, defended by patriot John Adams, were given light sentences. Have students create either their own "unbiased," or pro-British, depictions of this event.

b) Divide students into groups. Put boys together and girls together. Tell the male groups to imagine that they are members of the Sons of Liberty, while the girls can be Daughters of Liberty. Have each group create a banner, poster, placard, or broadside protesting the Stamp Act. Along with the visual each group should prepare a written strategy statement explaining how this piece will be used to gain support for the boycott.

4. Time Lines

a) Divide students into groups. Have each group prepare a time line of events for the period from 1763 to 1772. Students might use encyclopedias and books on the Revolution to add dates to their time lines. Then have each group pick a different year from its time line and illustrate the events of that year. Collect the illustrations and use them to make an illustrated time line for the classroom bulletin board.

b) Organize a group of volunteers into a Living Tune Line. Assign each student one event from this period, to be lined up according to date. Students must figure out the sequence of events by talking with each other. Once each has found his or her proper place, have each one in the line explain the event to the class and how it relates to the event that preceded it.

5. Thinking Critically

a) Point out to students that one of the problems facing the colonists during this period was the slowness with which communication between England and the colonies took place. Have students describe the reasons for this poor communication and its results for governmental decision making. Then ask students to speculate on whether Britain and the colonies could have settled their differences peacefully if modern communications and transportation had been available at that time. Have students give reasons for their opinions.

- b) The colonists used many methods to express their differences with England, including meetings, boycotts, and petitions. Ask students which of these methods are still used in the twentieth century. Have students give examples of modern uses of these tactics (anti-apartheid boycotts in support of South Africa, the civil rights era boycotts in the U.S.). Then have students brainstorm other ways Americans today peacefully express their differences with their government.
- c) Bring to class a copy of the Bill of Rights and display it on an overhead projector showing the Third Amendment. Have students explain what event during this period might have made inclusion of this amendment seem important to the newly independent nation.
- d) Write the phrase "taxation without representation" on the board. Have a volunteer explain what this phrase meant to the American colonists. Then discuss with the class how American citizens are represented in, and influence, governmental decisions regarding the kinds of taxes, and how much tax, they pay.
- e) Point out that at the time of the Boston Massacre, American colonists were angry with their British rulers but not ready to declare their independence. Have students list the benefits for the American colonies of remaining a part of the British Empire. Then have them list the risks of trying to separate from England. Students can then speculate about what kinds of events would be necessary to push the colonists to call for independence.

GLOSSARY

boycott - refusal to buy a product or service, as a protest

colonial assembly - lawmaking body of a colony. In addition to making laws, assemblies had the power to tax and spend the money acquired through taxation.

currency - money that is used in a country **massacre** -

brutal, bloody killing of many people **militia** - army of volunteers who fight in emergencies

minutemen - civilian group willing to fight the British at a minute's notice

Parliament - the lawmaking body of Britain

petition - formal request to a person in authority

plantation - very large farm in the South

proclamation - official announcement

rebel - person who fights against, or will not obey, authority

repeal - do away with officially

tyranny - cruel use of power or authority

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SEEDS OF LIBERTY

Early on the morning of April 19, 1775, seventy armed American colonists approached a company of British soldiers in the Lexington, Massachusetts, town square. They called themselves Minutemen, and their leader, Captain John Parker warned:

"Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon. But if they mean to have war, let it begin here."

Seconds later a shot rang out. The British had fired and eight colonists lay dead. The American Revolution had begun.

Just a few years earlier, who could have imagined a war between the Thirteen Colonies and their mother country. At parties, loyal Americans toasted King George III, and they proudly waved the British flag as they marched in parades. Why were the colonists and the British ready to make war?

Many years after the Revolution, John Adams, second President of the United States, was asked when he thought the American Revolution began.

"The revolution, you see, was in the minds of the people and this took place long before a drop of blood was drawn at Lexington."

What was this "revolution in the minds of the people"? How had distance and differences turned them from loyal

subjects to rebels? What were the causes of the American Revolution? To understand the answers, we must first of all ask: Who were these Americans?

Native American people had dwelled in these vast forest lands for many thousands of years. The rest were newcomers, many the children and grandchildren of immigrants from the British Isles, from Germany, France and other places in Europe. They had come to seek a better life, and often for religious freedom. Nearly all were farmers. Other colonists had come against their will. African people were brought to work the farms of the southern colonies.

Life for the first American colonists was very hard. They carved roads, farms, and cities out of the forests. Much was learned from the Native Americans, who knew the land well.

From small beginnings in the early 17th century, the population of the English colonies grew to over 2 million by 1763.

Alexander McAllister was typical. He came to America from Scotland, and he wrote his friends back home:

"As for the country it is a very good one for a poor man who will work hard. Everything he puts in the ground will grow. Tell all poor people whom you wish well to take courage and come to this country."

Many colonists agreed. Living far from Europe and often far from each other, they were proud of their new communities in the wilderness, and had learned to think for themselves.

The American colonies were multicultural, unlike any other in the world. Each new immigrant group added its own customs and beliefs, from Jews to Quakers to Moravians. Africans taught ways to plant rice, and introduced new musical instruments like the banjo. By 1763, the colonists had their own newspapers and their own colleges. They were beginning to call themselves Americans.

Americans also shared in governing themselves. They elected officials to represent them in colonial assemblies, as their lawmaking branches were called. Of course, not everyone had the right to vote. Only white males who owned a certain amount of land could vote. Women, blacks, and Native Americans could not vote.

Still, the colonial assemblies encouraged Americans to believe they had a right to take part in government. No one liked taxes, but the colonists accepted being taxed by their own representatives.

At the same time, strong ties also continued with England. Colonists learned to speak and read English. Judges and lawyers dressed in traditional English style. People of wealth copied British styles. Virginia planters even enjoyed fox hunting, a popular sport of English lords and ladies.

Another powerful link with the mother country was trade. Ships crossed the Atlantic Ocean to England, carrying logs from New England forests, barrels of tobacco from Virginia plantations, and tar and turpentine from the Carolinas. They

returned with silver dinnerware, fine pianos, and beautiful dresses made in England. Americans were good customers for British goods.

The strongest tie between the colonies and the mother country was government. But ruling the colonies across a vast ocean was hard. It could take months to deliver a letter or newspaper from England to the colonies. Piracy and storms were always a threat. Americans therefore learned to look after their own affairs. But this was about to change.

QUIZ

Q. What ties linked the colonies to England?

A. Language, customs, trade, laws and government.

Q. What differences were starting to pull them apart?

A. Cultural differences—the colonies drew people from many different nations; political differences—the colonies enjoyed much self-government; and the vast distances that slowed communication and encouraged a sense of independence.

STUDENT DISCUSSION:

HEIDI: It's funny to think this little country (points to Great Britain) controlled most of America.

NATHAN: Yeah, well the French, the Spanish and the Dutch also tried to control America.

HEIDI: They must not have gotten along very well.

NATHAN: No, they didn't at all. The British had gotten into a war with the French and they ended up taxing the American colonists to help pay for it. The colonists really hated that.

HEIDI: I guess that's another reason why the colonists rebelled against the British.

NATHAN: Yup.

The British were not the only Europeans in North America. The French, Spanish, and Dutch were there too. In 1754, Britain began fighting the French for control of North America. This struggle was called the French and Indian War.

Many Indian nations sided with the French, while others fought alongside the British. However, some felt like this Creek chief:

"Young men and warriors! The sky is blue—
everything is quiet on the face of the earth, and the
blood of men ought not to be spilt."

For many Native Americans the warfare among the Europeans was one more disturbing aspect of colonial settlement.

British victory in 1763 forced France to give up most of its North American lands. Now Britain had a larger empire, but it also had bigger worries. First, the war had cost a lot of

money. Who would pay the costs? Second, England now had to rule over French Canadians and many more Native Americans.

Just then, the Indian leader Pontiac led a major attack on British forts all along the Great Lakes. To stop the fighting, the government issued the Proclamation of 1763. This drew an imaginary line down the Appalachian mountains. Americans could not settle west of this line until the Indians agreed to give it up. The fighting stopped, but many colonists resented the ban on westward expansion.

And there was still the question of who would pay for the new empire? The British wanted Americans to pay more. Americans paid very few taxes and they had gained the most from English victory. They no longer had to worry about the French. It seemed fair that they should help pay for the war.

So, in 1764 Parliament passed two new taxes. The Currency Act said colonists could not print their own paper money. The colonists were disturbed, because it made it harder for them to do business with each other.

They were even more unhappy about the Sugar Act. It taxed goods such as sugar, wine, and coffee that came from other countries. This was part of Britain's trade plan for all its colonies. Raw materials were sent to England, where they were manufactured into products such as clothing, ships, and smoking tobacco. These finished goods were then sold back to the colonists.

For years most colonists had ignored these laws. They had smuggled in all kinds of things from other countries. They drank French wines and ate Dutch cheeses. Now the British taxed sugar and meant to enforce the law.

The colonists were angry. Sugar was important, especially in New England. People used it to make molasses and rum. They cooked with it and traded it for other goods. Eight colonies officially asked Parliament to repeal the Sugar Act.

Many colonists denounced the Act as "taxation without representation." Sam Adams of Boston said:

"With this tax, you have made us slaves, not subjects of the King. You have no right to tax without giving us a representative in Parliament."

QUIZ:

Q. What was the French and Indian War?

A. It was a war fought between France and Great Britain for control of North America.

Q. What were the effects of the French and Indian War on the American colonists?

A. New taxes were imposed by the British and the Proclamation Line of 1763 was drawn prohibiting further westward settlement.

STUDENT DISCUSSION:

OMAR: So how did the colonists show their anger toward Great Britain?

TRACY: Well, they'd write angry letters to the leaders of the British government, they'd boycott British products, and they even burned effigies of the tax collectors.

OMAR: So they taxed things like sugar with the Sugar Act...

TRACY: ...And paper products with the Stamp Act, and they also had the Quartering Act.

The next year, in 1765, Parliament passed two more unpopular laws. One was the Quartering Act. This law said the colonists had to pay to room and feed British soldiers if army quarters were full. Many colonists saw no reason to have soldiers remain in America, eating their food and sleeping in their beds!

Then there was the hated Stamp Act. People would need special stamps for everything from newspapers and playing cards to deeds and wills. Pennsylvania's leader, Benjamin Franklin, spoke for many:

"Americans all agree that Parliament has a perfect right to decide whom we should trade with and what we should trade, but no right at all to tell us what taxes we should pay for our own country."

Five colonies joined in demanding an end to the Stamp tax.

English lawmakers were shocked. The new taxes would pay only a small part of the cost of protecting the colonies. British leader Charles Townshend said:

"These Americans are spoiled children who have been raised, fed, and protected by us until they grew strong. Now they complain about giving us the small amount we ask of them to lighten the burden which we lie under."

Virginia's young leader, Patrick Henry, denounced the Stamp Act in the Virginia assembly. He claimed that only Virginians could tax Virginians. Excited lawmakers backed Henry's ideas, but the next day they changed their minds. By then, though, news had spread to other colonies that all of Patrick Henry's radical resolves had been endorsed.

Virginia was the first and oldest colony, and other colonies looked up to her. Patrick Henry's resolves made colonists elsewhere bolder. Colonists in Boston decided to stop the stamp distributors. If they couldn't give out stamps, England could not collect her taxes.

On August 14, 1765 a crowd gathered to hang a puppet of Boston stamp agent, Andrew Oliver, from a tree in the center of town. They went to a building they thought was a stamp office, tore it down, built a huge fire, and burned the puppet. Their protest worked. Andrew Oliver gave up his job.

All over the Thirteen Colonies groups soon formed, called

the Sons of Liberty. In one case they tarred and feathered an agent and poured tea into his mouth. By November 1765 when the Stamp Act was supposed to start, there was only one agent left. He quit after two weeks.

Colonists also found peaceful ways to fight the Stamp Act. In October, 1765, representatives of nine colonies met in New York. This "Stamp Act Congress" told Parliament that Americans had the same rights as other English citizens.

Many store owners in the colonies agreed not to buy goods from Britain until the Stamp Act was dropped. Merchants who resisted the trade boycott soon faced angry crowds. One merchant was treated roughly:

"While I resisted, my house was smeared with paint and with the filth of an old outhouse. It smelled so bad that I could hardly stay in it for two or three days. I thought my life was in danger. I asked the government to protect me, but they said they could not. So to save my life and property I gave in."

The boycott of British goods was successful. London merchants begged Parliament to end the Stamp Act, and early in 1766 it was repealed.

QUIZ

Q. Why did colonists object to the Stamp Act?

A. *They called it taxation without representation, since they had no vote in Parliament.*

Q. How did they show their unhappiness with that tax?

A. Angry crowds forced stamp agents to shut their doors, and the Stamp Act Congress and boycott of British goods caused Britain to withdraw the tax.

STUDENT DISCUSSION:

TOM AS: Why did the British choose to tax sugar?

GILLIAN: I think they chose sugar because it was something that the colonists used in everyday life for making things like rum and molasses.

TOM AS: So that's why the Stamp Act taxed legal documents and newspapers...because people liked to read those too.

PAYTON: Well, they also taxed things like dice and playing cards because the colonists did like to gamble sometimes.

GILLIAN: I think the British chose to tax things the colonists had to use in everyday life so that they could get more money.

TOMAS: Well I can see why they resisted that, because it affected their daily lives so much.

GILLIAN: Yeah, it must have really bothered them.

Parliament was still determined to raise money to pay for its American colonies. When Charles Townshend was put in charge of the British treasury in 1767, he called for new taxes on paper, glass, and even tea.

Throughout the colonies women showed their outrage at this new tax by refusing to buy tea and joining protest groups. However, even in their anger at the British, this poet noted that women had little say in the affairs of the colonies:

"Let the Daughters of Liberty, nobly arise, And though we've no voice but a negative here, Stand firmly resolved and bid Townshend to see That rather than Freedom, we'll part with our tea."

Led by Massachusetts, the American colonial assemblies began circulating a strong petition of protest. Royal officials were very angry. The governor of Massachusetts ordered the assembly to recall the petition, and lawmakers were ordered not to discuss it. Instead of canning the colonists, it just stirred up more cooperation between them.

When the Massachusetts assembly refused to recall the letter, the governor promptly sent them home. The same thing happened elsewhere when assemblies tried to discuss the Massachusetts letter.

Colonists found many ways to display their resistance. In Boston, silversmith Paul Revere made a punch bowl he engraved with the names of the men in the Massachusetts legislature who had voted against withdrawing the letter of protest.

Women also joined the fight against the Townshend Acts. Throughout the colonies, groups called the Daughters of Liberty formed. Members spun their own cloth to show they

did not need to buy English cloth. They fed their families food grown in America and made teas from herbs instead of drinking tea from England.

The most famous protest by women was a tea party in Edenton, North Carolina, where women agreed to fight British laws. An Englishman thought all of this was absurd:

"I see in the newspapers that Edenton ladies have held a protest against tea drinking. Is there a female assembly at Edenton too? I hope not, for we Englishmen are even more afraid of the women. If the Edenton ladies attack us, they might crush us into atoms."

Stores selling British products were picketed. Newspapers printed the names of people caught buying British products. Finally, after two years, the British had had enough of American protest. In April 1770 a new prime minister, Lord North, persuaded Parliament to end all the Townshend taxes except for the one on tea.

On the very day that the Townshend Acts were ended, a clash between soldiers and colonists in Boston led to the death of five colonists. On the evening of March 5, 1770, crowds began throwing rocks and snowballs at a group of soldiers. In the crowd was a runaway African American slave named Crispus Attucks. The mob made fun of the soldiers in their red coats, calling them "bloody backs" and "lobster backs." Attucks urged the crowd on, yelling:

'Don't be afraid, they dare not fire.'

Suddenly, someone shouted "Fire" and troops shot into the crowd. Four people were killed and eight were wounded. One died a few days later. Boston patriots quickly named this incident the Boston Massacre. (A massacre is the killing of people who cannot defend themselves.)

The colonists saw these deaths as one more sign of British tyranny. Paul Revere's images burned into the hearts of colonists everywhere.

Over the next two years, the colonies were quiet. But tensions had not vanished. The colonists still felt that taxation without representation was wrong. King George III said:

"King and the Parliament have complete power. For Americans to challenge this power is treason."

Few Americans spoke openly about independence. But the colonists and the mother country seemed set on a collision course. Benjamin Franklin warned the British:

"The seeds of liberty have been planted in America."

Soon, those seeds would grow and flower into a "revolution in the minds of the people."

FINAL REVIEW:

The "seeds of liberty" had been planted in the American colonies for many decades.

Differences in religion, country of origin, language and ways of earning a living helped cultivate a distinctive American identity.

Vast distances between the colonies and the mother country made strict governing difficult.

The colonies formed their own representative assemblies, and resented laws passed without their consent.

British trade policies treated the colonies as sources of raw materials, and markets for her manufactured products. But Americans hoped to build their own industry and control their own trade.

The Sugar Act, Stamp Act and Townshend Acts were resisted because Americans resented taxation without representation.

These areas of conflict caused tension. But separation was not inevitable. Time would tell whether the seeds of liberty would flower into independence.

END