

Chapter 4: The Empire in Transition (Part 2) (Page 109 on)

LOOSENING TIES

A Tradition of Neglect

- Increased English involvement in colonies = not going to be easy – colonists resistant to taxation and English policies
- English saw the colonies in terms of stronger trade, but people like William Pitt and Ben Franklin began to see it as the **land itself was of value to the empire**
 - Support population, it could produce taxes, and the imperial splendor
- English didn't end up giving up Canada to France in exchange for Guadeloupe, most commercial island in West Indies
- Conflict over who would control westward expansion – lots of tension
- Britain's war debt
 - High taxes in England to pay the government
 - Defending American settlements on Indian border added lots of cost
 - England decided that they had to do their system of taxation without cooperation from colonial government
- King George III takes the throne
 - Very determined to be active and responsible monarch
 - Removed stable coalition of Whigs who had governed the country for a time
 - In their place, he made a new coalition that was uneasy
 - Psychological problems – suffered disease that made him have spontaneous rants of insanity
 - Even when he was rational, he was still immature and insecure
- George Grenville appointed Prime Minister by George III
 - Bro-in-law to William Pitt
 - Did not share Pitt's view – he thought the colonists should follow laws and procedures that England will put on them

The British and the Tribes

- Proclamation of 1763
 - Prohibited settlers to expand west across the Appalachian Mts. (designed to minimize risk of losing western trade due to Indians)
 - Gave England control over westward expansion
 - Conflicts might be minimized b/c of slow, orderly progress
 - Tribes wary of it at first, but many groups succumbed to it, trying to get the best possible deal concerning land
 - White settlers continued to keep expanding west little by little, defeating the purpose of the Proclamation

The Colonial Response

- Mutiny Act of 1765
 - Colonists required to provision and maintain Regular British troops now permanently placed in America
 - Grenville ministry trying to gain more power and authority
- Sugar Act of 1764
 - Designed to stop illegal sugar trade between continental colonies
 - Strengthened duty of sugar
 - Established vice-admiralty courts to try accused smugglers
- Currency Act of 1764
 - Colonial assemblies have to stop issuing paper money – they must retire on schedule all the paper money already in circulation
- Stamp Act of 1765
 - Tax on printed documents (newspapers, almanacs, pamphlets, deeds, wills, licenses)
- Colonists didn't resist these new acts effectively
- Paxton Boys
 - From Pennsylvania
 - 1763
 - Demanded for relief from colonial taxes and for money to help them defend themselves from Indians
- Regular Movement
 - North Carolina
 - 1771
 - Farmers of Carolina upcountry in opposition of local sheriffs who collected the high taxes
 - Began to resist tax collection by force eventually
 - Governor William Tryon organized force of militiamen to fight them – Battle of Alamance – 9 on each side killed
- The new policies created common grievances among basically all colonists
- Grenville program did something to antagonize everyone (remember, he's the Prime Minister at this point in time)
- 1763: economic bust! – postwar depression. England pouring money into colonies to finance fighting
- Political Consequences of Grenville Program
 - Many people took an active interest in political affairs

STIRRINGS OF REVOLT

The Stamp Act Crisis

- Effects of the Stamp Act

- Impacted ALL Americans unlike the Sugar Act
- Printers had to buy stamps for their newspapers and publications
- Merchants and lawyers had to buy them for their ships' papers and legal documents
- It was obnoxious to the colonists because it was England's way of raising money in the colonies w/o their consent
- Virginia House of Burgesses calls colonists to action
 - Hoped to challenge the power of tidewater planters who (in alliance with the royal governor) dominated Virginia politics
- Patrick Henry
 - May 1765: Made speech to HOB (House of Burgesses) that if the policies weren't changed, George III may lose his head (cue cries of "Treason!")
 - Introduced a set of resolutions that said that America should only be taxed by their own representatives, not by England
- James Otis
 - Called for intercolonial congress for action against the tax
 - October 1765: met in New York, 9 colonies represented – made petition to the king, just neglected to show that the colonists should only be taxed through their own assemblies
- Sons of Liberty
 - 1765 summer – Boston: men in "sons of liberty" terrorize stamp agents and burn stamps
 - Intimidated colonists who were wary of joining the boycotting of British goods
- English merchants begged Parliament to get rid of Stamp Act in fear of their loss of colonial markets
- March 18, 1766: Stamp Act repealed (marquis of Rockingham convinced the king to do it)

Internal Rebellions

- New York Hudson valley: great estates were given to small farmers – farmers fight over ownership of land
- Vermont: farmers challenge landowners and took up arms and demanded ownership of land they worked

The Townshend Program

- King got rid of the Rockingham ministry (they kept persisting that backing down from taxing the colonists would lead gov't to increase taxes on English)
- Replaced them with William Pitt (who was friend to colonists but he suffered mental illnesses to do any real good)
- Leadership of administration pretty much went to Charles Townshend
- Mutiny (Quartering) Act of 1765
 - Required colonists to provide shelter and supplies for British troops

- Colonists hated this – it was now mandatory and it was dumb how they did it without our consent
- Townshend took action:
 - 1) disbanded New York Assembly until the colonists obeyed the Act
 - 2) levied new taxes (Townshend Duties) on goods from England to colonies: lead, paint, paper, tea
 - Ben Franklin kept trying for the distinction between “internal” and “external” taxes – that didn’t happen
- Massachusetts takes action: circulated a letter calling for colonial gov’ts to stand against acts and taxes from Parliament
- Lord Hillsborough, secretary of colonies, circulated his own letter saying that assemblies endorsing the previous letter would be dissolved
- Townshend established new board of directors in America – his hope was that the new board would stop the rampant corruption in the colonial customs houses
- Colonial Boycotts
 - Boycotted goods that were mentioned in the Townshend Duties
 - Homemade domestic products fell into fashion when English luxuries were being boycotted
- 1767: Townshend dies – new Prime Minister becomes Lord North – he repealed all of the Townshend Duties except tea

The Boston Massacre

- British soldiers were poorly paid and treated so they competed with colonists for jobs – clashes became frequent
- March 5, 1770: crowd of dockworkers, “liberty boys” and others began pelting sentries at the customs house with rocks and snowballs
- Captain Thomas Preston lined up troops to protect it
- In midst of this, British soldiers fired into the crowd, killing 5 people
- Samuel Adams – leading figure in fomenting public outrage of Boston Massacre
 - Argued that “England = corruption. Only in America could public virtue survive”

The Philosophy of Revolt

- Ideas that would support the Revolution
 - Drawn from religious sources or from political experiences in the colonies
 - Most important: “radical” ideas of those in Great Britain who stood in opposition of their government
 - Included Scots, “country Whigs”
 - Ideas from John Locke
 - Many people saw English constitution as the greatest thing ever – it distributed power among monarchy, aristocracy, and common people

- By mid 17th century: English and Americans began to see the constitution in danger – monarchy gaining so much power that it couldn't be checked
- English constitution wasn't written a written document or fixed set of unchangeable rules
- Americans were opposite: plans of government were written on paper and they were wary to change – drew inspiration from colonial charters
- “No taxation without representation” – main principle
- “Virtual representation”: multiple areas are “represented” in Parliament even though they don't have any representatives from those areas
- “Actual Representation”: each thing represented had its own representative, wasn't just generally represented like with virtual rep.
- Such ideas shows clear distinction b/w England and America

The Tea Excitement

- Even though Townshend Duties were repealed, customs commissioners were still there harassing the merchants and seamen and illegally took merchandise
- Writing and talking: spreading revolutionary sentiment alive
 - Leaflets, books, pamphlets
 - Ordinary people absorbed these new ideas and helped spread them as well as the intellectually strong people
- Occasional acts of rebellion
 - Colonists take British revenue ship on Delaware River
 - 1772: Rhode Island: set British schooner Gaspee on fire
- Tea Act of 1773
 - Said that Britain's East India Company the right to export its merchandise directly to the colonies without paying the navigation taxes that were imposed on the colonial merchants
 - East India Co. had a hard time selling their tea in England so they did this
 - Co. could now monopolize the colonial tea trade
- Colonists' reactions - anger
 - Colonial merchants feared being replaced and bankrupted by a powerful monopoly
 - Revived American passions about “no taxation without representation”
 - Didn't like how East India Co. didn't have to pay the normal customs duties like the colonists – put them on a serious disadvantage
 - Responded by boycotting – this helped bond the people together
- Daughters of Liberty
 - Women helped fan colonial resentments in the 1760s a lot
 - Women = mobilized and determined
- Boston Tea Party
 - December 16, 1773

- 3 sets of 50 men dressed as Mohawk Indians went aboard the 3 ships Boston refused to turn back and dumped the tea into the harbor
- Results
 - Parliament decided on policy of coercion just for Massachusetts – Boston’s port was closed in four acts of 1774
 - These Coercive Acts (Intolerable Acts) followed up with Quebec Act
 - Provide civil government for French-speaking Roman Catholic inhabitants of Canada and Illinois country
 - Coercive acts brought resistance up and down the east coast

COOPERATION AND WAR

New Sources of Authority

- Organizations were forming to provide a basis for an independent government, to get people thinking that way
- Samuel Adams
 - Helped organize the Sons of Liberty
 - Called convention of delegates from towns of colony to sit in place of the General Court which the governor had dissolved
 - 1772: most effective new group: committees of correspondence which Adams inaugurated
- Virginia established first intercolonial committees of correspondence – declared that Intolerable Acts menaced the liberties of every colony and called for a Continental Congress (first Continental Congress)
 - Delegates from each colony except Georgia
 - September 1774 in Carpenter’s Hall in Philadelphia
 - 5 major decisions
 - 1) rejected plan of colonial union under British authority (a lot like the Albany Plan)
 - 2) they endorsed statement of grievances whose tortured language reflected the conflicts among the delegates between modernists and extremists
 - 3) approved series of resolutions that let the colonists make military preparations against attack from the British
 - 4) agreed to nonimportation, nonexportation, and nonconsumption – meaning stop trade with Britain
 - 5) agreed to meet next spring – keep this thing going
- Parliament in London during winter of 1774
 - Lord Chatham (William Pitt) wanted the troops to leave America
 - Edmund Burke called for repeal of Coercive Acts
 - Lord North wins favor: series of measures known as the Conciliatory Provisions

- Said that colonists would tax themselves at Parliament’s demand (so Parliament isn’t directly taxing them anymore)
- Didn’t reach America until after the first shots of the American Rev. began

Lexington and Concord

- “Minutemen”: farmers and townspeople training to become this to prepare to fight on a minute’s notice
- General Thomas Gage in Boston thought that the Americans wouldn’t dare actually fight
 - Still hesitant when he got orders to arrest rebel leaders Sam Adams and John Hancock – known to be around Lexington
 - He heard that the minutemen had gunpowder in Concord (close to Boston) so he decided to act – April 18, 1775
 - Sent 1,000 soldiers out from Boston on to Lexington and Concord
- William Dawes and Paul Revere set out to warn villages and farms
- When British troops got to Lexington, several minutemen were ready and opened fire – some died
- British at Concord: discover that Americans hastily removed the gunpowder supply – British burned what was left
- “shots heard around the world”
- Different accounts of who actually fired the first shots
- Effects: rally colonists to the rebel cause