**CHAPTER 5**

**Toward Revolution, 1763–1775**

**Learning Outcomes**

* 1. Explain Britain’s main reasons for attempting to overturn salutary neglect.

**Objectives**

1. Describe the ways in which Britain attempted to tighten control over the colonies after the French and Indian War, especially in regard to the Proclamation of 1763.
2. Explain the various parts of George Grenville’s plan for raising revenue from the colonies, and describe the colonists’ reactions to the various acts passed under his leadership.
   1. Explain the colonists’ responses to the new acts, and trace the evolutionary process that brought the colonies closer to rebellion.

**Objectives**

1. List the three main reasons why the colonists were so set against the Stamp Act.
2. Discuss the actions decided upon by the Stamp Act Congress, and analyze the success of those actions.
3. Explain how and why the Stamp Act came to be repealed, and discuss the differences between Parliament’s intentions and the perceptions of the colonists.
   1. Trace the path to revolution from the Townshend Acts of 1767 to the meeting of the First Continental Congress in 1774.

**Objectives**

1. Discuss the Townshend Acts of 1767. Explain their implementation and the reactions in the colonies.
2. Explain the significance of the Tea Act of 1773, and describe how its provisions, and the colonists’ reactions to those provisions, led to the Boston Tea Party.
3. Describe Parliament’s response to the unrest in Boston and the colonies, and provide an analysis of each act passed as a part of what the colonists called the “Coercive Acts.”
4. Explain how and why the First Continental Congress came to meet, and evaluate its effectiveness.
   1. Explain how the American Revolution finally began, and describe the first battles of the conflict.

**Objectives**

1. Describe the actions taken by the colonists to establish and provision a colonial militia, and explain Britain’s actions in trying to contain the situation.
2. Discuss the meeting of the Second Continental Congress, and list the important decisions it made.
3. Analyze the significance of the Battle of Bunker Hill.

**Chapter Summary**

Less than fifteen years after fighting side by side in one war, the British and their colonial subjects were soon to be at war with each other. Britain began its attempts to rein in the colonies in 1760, shortly before the end of the war with France. In that year, the Privy Council, which advised the Crown on various matters, issued the “Orders in Council,” which required absentee officials to occupy their posts instead of collecting the salary and then paying a substitute to occupy the post.

From the moment Britain enacted the Proclamation of 1763, an attempt to limit American expansion to the west, it was inevitable that the mother country and her self-sufficient “children” in the colonies were headed for a family breakup. Even more controversial were continued British attempts to gain revenue from the colonies, usually in the form of taxes.

George Grenville, who became England’s prime minister in 1763, convinced Parliament to pass several specific acts in the 1760s that significantly increased the Crown’s interference in the economy of its colonies. It was these revenue acts as much as anything else that signaled the end of salutary neglect. The first of these acts was the Sugar Act of 1764, which was technically a cut in taxes on molasses and sugar brought into the colonies from non-British colonies in the West Indies. The next intrusive act, the Quartering Act of 1765, required the colonies to feed and house British troops stationed in their territory. Most disruptive of all, however, was the Stamp Act, which mandated the use of stamped paper for all official papers.

Indeed, British tax policies proved to be a major cause of mayhem in the colonies. Resistance to the taxes manifested in the form of early, tentative coordinated responses such as the Stamp Act Congress. Across the colonies, men and women protested by rioting and boycotting British products. A large portion of colonists, however, did not participate. Nevertheless, enough people did participate in the resistance against the taxes so that the boycotts forced cash-strapped England to repeal the act.

The lessening of tensions that followed turned out to be the calm before the coming storm of revolution. Charles Townshend, the British official in charge of financial policies, levied a series of taxes of the colonies, provoking renewed disorder. Tensions lead to violence in the Boston Massacre. From that city, committees of correspondence were organized, first at the local and then at the colonial level. Despite the growing resistance, many Americans, the soon-to-be loyalists, disapproved of disobedience to the crown. Britain reacted to the continued turmoil by rescinding all taxes except a tax on tea. Bostonians responded by symbolically and publically dumping imported tea into the harbor. The British, in turn, severely came down on the port city and the colony of Massachusetts. The newly imposed Coercive Acts, along with the subsequent Quebec Act, spurred the creation of unified American movement. At the First Continental Congress, an illegal meeting according to the English, the policy of pursuing autonomy within the empire resulted.

The heavy-handedness of the British in their occupation of Boston influenced surrounding communities in their efforts to stockpile weapons, a practice soon imitated in other colonies. After earlier creating defensible positions within the city, the British marched out of the city with the mission to capture the military supplies, resulting in the clashes at Lexington and Concord. The Second Continental Congress responded by creating an army and appointing a general, George Washington. Before he could assume control, the colonists fought their first major battle against the British, the Battle of Bunker Hill, in Boston. When the first military confrontations took place, the British realized that the rebellion was much more widespread than they had assumed. Now they knew that a full military conflict had commenced.

**Chapter Outline**

I. British Attempts to Rein in the Colonies

* 1. Tightening Control
  2. Limiting Settlement
  3. Raising Revenue

II. Beginnings of American Resistance

* 1. The Stamp Act Congress
  2. Boycotts
  3. Rioting
  4. Ideological Opposition
  5. Opposition to the Opposition
  6. Repeal of the Stamp Act

III. Taxation without Representation, 1767–1773

* 1. The Townshend Acts of 1767
     1. Opposition
     2. The Boston Massacre
     3. Repeal
  2. Local Conflicts, 1770–1773
     1. The Gaspée Incident
     2. Committees of Correspondence
     3. Choosing Sides
  3. The Tea Act, 1773
     1. Colonial Response
     2. The Boston Tea Party
  4. The Coercive and Quebec Acts, 1774
     1. The Coercive Acts
     2. The Quebec Act
     3. Colonial Response
     4. The First Continental Congress

IV. The Shot Heard ’Round the World

* 1. Militia Preparations
  2. Britain’s Response to the Preparations
  3. Lexington and Concord
  4. Colonial Response to Lexington and Concord
  5. The Battle of Bunker Hill

V. Looking Ahead…

**Suggested Lecture Topics**

1. Britain Loses Control of Her Colonists
2. Colonial Reaction to British Attempts at Control
3. The Stamp Act: Repealed before Collected
4. From the Boston Massacre to the Boston Tea Party: The Colonists Draw Together
5. The Business of the First Continental Congress
6. The Coercive Acts: Why So Named?
7. No Turning Back: The Battle of Bunker Hill
8. Comparing and Contrasting Colonial Militias and the Continental Army
9. George Washington: His Qualifications to Lead the Army

**The Reasons Why**

(5-2)—provoked a stronger colonial response than the Sugar or Quartering Acts for three principal reasons:

a. An educated resistance

b. Time to organize

c. Undermining colonial self-rule

Lead the class in a discussion about taxation issues. Was the British attempt to collect taxes fair? How should the British have handled their monetary issues with the colonies to avoid resistance? What actions are appropriate when protesting about taxes? Compare and contrast tax protests back then to anti-tax movements today.

**Research Topics—Projects and Papers**

Students might choose to complete a project to be presented in class or to write a more traditional research paper. Or instructors could decide which they prefer to have them do. Below are a few topics that are relevant to this chapter. Instructors may, of course, choose to develop their own topics.

1. Explore the work of the Sons of Liberty. Try to determine how many famous names were among their ranks.
2. Research the history of the East India Company.
3. Prepare a timeline of the events leading up to the Revolution. Post it in class.
4. Gather a selection of maps of the area that was at the center of colonial unrest. Include Boston, Lexington, and Concord. Students should make sure that they have maps that depict the events they are studying as well as what the area is like today.
5. Visit tourist web sites for the places and events mentioned in this chapter, and prepare a notebook with information on each one. Plan a tour of the area.
6. Have a classroom “planning session” for a recreation of the meeting of the First Continental Congress. Assign roles and have each person research his or her character beforehand.

**Additional www Resources**

“What was the Boston Massacre?” Boston Massacre Historical Society.

<http://www.bostonmassacre.net/>

“The Decisive Day Is Come—The Battle of Bunker Hill.” Massachusetts Historical Society.

<http://www.masshist.org/bh/>

**Primary Source Discussions**

**Assignment Name: Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress**

*Introduction*: The decade after the French and Indian War seemingly brought one crisis after another to the American colonists. One of their first efforts at true coordination among the colonies was the Stamp Act Congress of 1765. The resolutions sent to Parliament and the king were designed to strike just the right tone—not too brash, but also not too subservient. Read the resolutions and make your own conclusion as to how successful they were.

*Visit URL*: http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1751-1775/the-resolutions-of-the-stamp-act-congress-october-19-1765.php

[Learn more about (and read) the Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress](http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1751-1775/the-resolutions-of-the-stamp-act-congress-october-19-1765.php) and then take the brief quiz to check your understanding.

*Reflection Questions*:

1. Overall, how would you describe the tone of the Resolutions of the Stamp Act Congress? Why do you think they took this tone?

2. Which of the resolutions would you consider the most inflammatory, from the point of view of Parliament and the king?

3. What is the veiled threat the colonists were making in Resolution XI?

**Assignment Name: Henry**

*Introduction*: Patrick Henry served in the Virginia legislature. As a country lawyer, he was an outsider in the elite-dominated world of colonial politics, but the imperial crisis gave him an opportunity to emerge as an important leader. In response to the Stamp Act, Henry penned the Virginia Resolutions, which were widely distributed throughout the colonies and provided a standard of constitutional argument for other colonial legislatures to follow. In fact, several other colonies adopted the Resolutions almost verbatim, although most colonies shrank from Henry's bold assertion that supporters of the Stamp Act were enemies of their colony.

*Visit URL*: http://college.cengage.com/history/wadsworth\_9781133309888/unprotected/ps/henry.html

[Patrick Henry, Resolutions against the Stamp Act (1765)](http://college.cengage.com/history/wadsworth_9781133309888/unprotected/ps/henry.html)

*Instructions*: After reading the introduction and the primary source provided, answer the questions below.

1. What does Henry say about the citizenship rights of the colonists?

2. How does Henry justify his argument that the taxes are illegal and unjust?

3. According to Henry, what body or bodies are allowed to tax colonists?

4. How do Henry's writings connect with the later causes of the Revolutionary War?