

## Events leading to the American Revolution

During the late seventeenth hundreds, many tumultuous events resulted in Colonial opposition to Great Britain. The conditions of rights of the colonists will slowly be changed as the constriction of the parliament becomes more and more intolerable. During the Seven Years' War England was not only alarmed by the colonists' insistence on trading with the enemy, but also with Boston merchants hiring James Otis in order to protest the legality of the writs of assistance (general search warrants) used to hunt out smuggled goods. "let the parliament lay what burthens they please on us, we must, it is our duty to submit and patiently bear them, till they will be pleased to relieve us....". This is a very strong dictum, that in 1764, the colonists were of a submissive nature, and were weakly pleading for self-autonomy. This small fire of anger will become a huge conflagration as the rights are slowly rescinded.

On October 19, 1765 the Stamp Act Congress and Parliamentary Taxation committee's passed some laws that attempted to strengthen the grip of the English crown. "I. That his Majesty's subjects in these colonies, owe the same allegiance to the Crown of Great Britain that is owing from his subjects born within the realm, and all due subordination to that august body, the Parliament of Great Britain." This statement can be used as a summation of the entire document that the Stamp Act Congress had initiated. The statement depicts the colonists as having to be submissive and servile in the view of Great Britain, this policy angered the colonists very much, and was another component of the transition of the colonists' rights and liberties.

When the Declaratory Act was passed in March of 1766, many colonies were attempting to claim that they were "seceding" from England. "Whereas several of the houses of representatives in his Majesty's colonies and plantations in America, have of late, against law, or to the general assemblies of the same, the sole and exclusive right of imposing duties and taxes upon his Majesty's subjects in the said colonies....be it declared ....., that the said colonies and plantations in America, have been, are, and of right ought to be, subordinate unto, and dependent upon the imperial Crown and Parliament of Great Britain;".

The Parliament of course denounced the attempt at independence and still dogmatically passed the following law to show that the colonists were still British subjects. Again, the colonists were infuriated and later will resist the British imperialism on the colonies. "All before, are calculated to regulate trade, and preserve and promote a mutually beneficial intercourse between the several constituent parts of the empire", yet those duties were always imposed with design to restrain the commerce of one part". This statement by the colonist (John Dickinson), shows that the sole reason for new taxes is just for the British gov't to make money, at the expense of the economy of the colonies. Dickinson makes an important distinction between the rights of the colonies and the authority of the parliament. Dickinson's comments were ubiquitous among the

colonists, and thus infuriated them to rebellion, and the seizure of basic democratic rights. "From necessity of the case, and a regard to the mutual interest of both countries, we cheerfully consent to the operation of such acts of the British parliament as are bona fide restrained to the regulation of our external commerce, for the purpose of securing the commercial advantages of the whole empire to the mother country, and the commercial benefits of it's respective members excluding every idea of taxation, internal or external, for raising a revenue on the subjects in America without their consent ...."

The continental congress had presented it's colonial rights. These rights enable the colonies to be more autonomous with exception to those several states who are under the british control. One important element of the document, is the idea of taxation without representation; the said that raising taxes without consent was illegal and that the commercial benefits of the colony should be shared within the colonies, instead of England becoming more and more economically prosperous. The whole idea of mercantilism was about to be crushed, due to this idea, of self-autonomy with respect to colonial economics. "Ye that oppose independence now, ye know not what ye do, ye are opening a door to eternal tyranny....". This statement made by Thomas Paine shows the foreshadowing, of what colonists would do. The British are trying to prevent independence, and from doing so, they are being tyrannical. Again, the rights of the colonists are being questioned and rebellion shortly will be forthcoming. "That whenever any form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying it's foundations on such principles and organizing it's powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.". What the declaration is really saying, is that a society who has no or little rights (such as the colonies) should be destroyed, thus separation from England. A new society would follow, where the people of the society would have these rights necessary for self-autonomy. The Declaration of Independence was a strong justification for revolution. The Revolution follows the Declaration of Independence, where a transition occurs. The transition has to do with the rights of the colonists. The colonists acquire their rights through resistance to British imperial conformity, by resisting certain policies detrimental to the inalienable rights of a democracy. The transitional period was from 1760's to 1770's. This is a crucial period of time, because this is where the center of power is transferred from the british government (Parliament) to the colonial citizens. A major component to this center of power was the rights of the colonists, the colonists gained their rights through resistance to an imperial power. This transition is depicted through the progression of time in the documents.