

Us history



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Was the American Revolution necessary? Given the pattern of events leading up to the American Revolution and the subsequent Declaration of independence, there is an air of inevitability to it. Considering that the revolution was not a planned course of action, its validity can only be assessed in retrospect. The rest of the essay will discuss the circumstances and developments during the decades preceding 1776 that made revolution an imperative.

While Americans colonialists were loyal to the British high command during the French and Indian War, they started realizing that they have an identity of their own that differed from the English tradition. For instance, " American values, traditions, institutions, interests, and aspirations increasingly diverged from those of England". The bitter memories of suffering in the hands of British redcoats during the war had also helped induce a feeling of camaraderie among the Americans. To add to this growing divide, King George II and later King George III were indifferent and arrogant in their attitude toward the colonials. The Americans were also intent on vengeance for the excesses committed against them by the redcoats in the form of " extortion of supplies, homes and men" during the war. Moreover, as the Crown was in heavy debt after the war, it imposed an array of taxes on Americans, which the latter found unacceptable.

The seeds for the American independence that were sown during the French and Indian War gained momentum after the conclusion of the war in 1763. American colonials were growing indignant due to the barrage of new taxes that were imposed on them by the British crown. The public unrest was understood by its leaders, who responded according to the dictates of their conscience. The political and intellectual culture in America during and after

the year 1763 is a primary factor in the success of the revolution. For example, the literate and well-read populations of colonials were presented with the case for an independent America. They communicated to the colonials the necessity to fight for their rights and freedom from oppression. To quote,

“ From 1763 through 1775, 43 newspapers across the colonies deepened feelings of outrage among ever more Americans by publicizing an ever-expanding litany of the Crowns abuses of power. Printing presses cranked out thousands of copies of hundreds of books, pamphlets, sermons, and broadsides whose authors boldly condemned the Crowns violations of the British " Constitution" and the rights of all Englishmen. During those dozen years, an average 372 such tracts appeared yearly, with the peak of 694 on the eve of the Revolution in 1774” (Nester, 2000).

The Revolution ultimately gained momentum with the rise of “ American national sentiments and liberal democratic values and institutions”. The Seven Years’ War gave rise to the concept of a separate national identity; after 1763 most colonists regarded themselves Americans first and subjects of British Empire next. American political leaders and intellectuals, who would later be known as the founding fathers communicated this idea of an American identity to the general public. A movement that started in a small way in 1765 in the form of a protest against an unfavorable legislation would subsequently lead to the Declaration of Independence a decade later. In hindsight, it can be inferred that there was not much that the British Crown or the American Colonials could have done to prevent American independence.

References:

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