

Acts of resistance by americans against the british from 1773 to 1775: were they e...

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Acts of Resistance by Americans against the British from 1773 to 1775: Were they effective? From 1773 to 1775 the Americans felt the pressure put to them by the imperial policies. The combination of the harsh taxes and the lack of an American voice in Parliament gave rise to forms of resistance which led thirteen colonies in North America to join together to break free from the British Empire, combining to become the United States of America. Prior to the conclusion of the Seven Years War there was little, if any, reason to believe that one day the American colonies would undertake a revolution in an effort to create an independent nation-state. As a part of the empire the colonies were protected from foreign invasion by the British military. In return, the colonists paid relatively few taxes and could engage in domestic economic activity without much interference from the British government. However, during the French and Indian War, Britain collected a great amount of debt. In order to raise money, they decided to tax the colonists. The Sugar Act is one of the many taxes imposed by Parliament that was to tax sugar that was bought by the colonists. Another act was the Stamp Act which is considered the first direct tax imposed by the British. This law required all colonists to pay a tax to Great Britain on all of the printed materials that they used, newspapers, magazines, and even playing cards. All of these materials were required to have a stamp placed on them, in order to show that the tax had been paid. These taxations caused upheaval protests within the colonies. A successor to the debunked Stamp Act was the Townshend Act which were designed to collect revenue from the colonists in America by putting customs duties on imports of glass, lead, paints, paper, and tea. The colonists, however, objected strenuously (Reid 196). Colonists were

outraged, and responded by boycotting all British goods which in turn affected the English merchants. This caused British merchants to appeal to Parliament to repeal the law. They also attacked officials who were sent by Great Britain to enforce the stamp act, and burned the stamps in the street. This caused royal officials to resign in midst of the threats. Opposition came in a variety of forms. Some was reasoned and informal, such as James Otis' *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, a pamphlet that proclaimed the unconstitutionality of taxation by agencies in which the colonies were not represented (Rainey 1). In a formal response, many of the colonies sent representatives to a special meeting in New York, which they called The Stamp Act Congress, where the colonies voted and declared that Parliament did not have the right to pass taxes on the colonies because they did not have any representation in parliament. Many of the colonists began crying 'No taxation without representation (Boyer 100). The greatest impact arose in what is called the Sons of Liberty. A colonial secret organization composed of merchants, lawyers, farmers, laborers which joined the resistance to British rule. They tried to petition the government for a redress of grievances, but the government refused to heed the popular outcry against policies that the people considered tyrannical. Finally, in 1773, a group of citizens decided to protest in a way the government could not ignore. On December 16, they tossed 342 crates of British tea into the Boston harbor. That was the first Tea Party protest in America, and it is rightly celebrated as a symbol of the determination of the American people to be free instead of allowing a tyrannical government to tell them how to live their lives (Aptheker 62). The effects of the resistance delivered a blow

to the British rule. When news of the destroyed tea reached England in January 1774; Parliament responded with a series of acts that were intended to punish Boston for this illegal destruction of private property, restore British authority in Massachusetts, and otherwise reform colonial government in America. It came in the form of the Intolerable Acts and what it did was to escalate tensions, the American Revolutionary War broke out the following year in Lexington, Massachusetts, 1775. Perhaps the greatest effect of the American Revolution was the acknowledgment by Great Britain that the former colonies were now independent. The Dutch had been the first to recognize an independent United States followed by France. By signing the 1783 treaty ending the war, Britain accepted independence as well as officially declared and agreed upon boundaries of the new nation. But the end of war also changed life in the colonies dramatically and it would take several years to assess and rectify the problems that followed independence.