

The boston tea party essay sample



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The Boston Tea Party was just one of the many attempts made by the American colonies to show their opposition to the British Parliament who is exercising much political and economic power over the Americans. The Boston Tea Party being an opposition to the Tea Act of 1773 was regarded as the major persuaders of the American Revolution (Jones, Jeremy). In line with this, a thorough investigation of the Tea Act and its provisions is required in order to establish its link to the Boston Tea Party.

The Tea Act was just one of the series of taxation policies implemented by the British Parliament to the American colonies. The Tea Act of 1773 was not repealed because it was actually ¹ intended to save the economic depression of the East India Company. Another reason was that the Tea Act served as the only means of the British Parliament to enforce its power over the American Colonies. Four of the five Townshend Duties were repealed in 1770 after a series of protests were made by the Americans. The East India Company is a major exporter of tea who was given the power to appoint wholesalers and agents to sell such tea to the American Colonies. The American colonies' boycott of the tea being exported by the East India Company was accounted as the reason for the company's economic fall down. In protest of the Townshend Duties, the American colonies united to boycott the tea which resulted to the accumulation of tea surplus in the warehouses of the East India Company.

In response to the need of the East India Company, the British government allowed the repeal of the Townshend Duties but retained the tax for imported tea. The Tea Act of 1773 therefore was designed both to save the East India Company and the political motive of challenging the American

colonies in the taxation issues. The Tea Act of 1773 required that the tea be shipped to the American colonies directly without the usual route of sending the ships first to England. This way, the East India Company will be able to avoid the payment of duties for the tea exportation. Another provision of the act is the payment of far lesser tax of just three pence per pound on tea that is to be sold to America. The East India Company was also allowed to appoint special consignees to market the tea to the American colonies of which commonly selected were leaders who directly oppose the leaders of the American colonies.

There were also issues raised on the motives behind the protest and boycotts by the American colonies to the imported tea and consequently the Tea Act of 1773. There is historical information that says that the East India Company's monopoly of the tea market has been a threat to the tea smugglers (Gerlach, Larry R). The situation therefore worsened when the tea act allowed the much lower taxes to be paid by the exporter. That way, colonial smugglers can no longer compete with the price of the imported tea from East India Company as lower taxes enabled the lower price for the tea. The threat of monopoly alarmed the radical political leaders because the colonies were expected to be given the choice of buying the tea from the smugglers who sell the goods at a higher price and the cheaper tea from the East India Company but with the corresponding tax.

If we are to analyze the situation, the Tea Act of 1773 was not merely taken as an economic threat by the colonial merchants and smugglers but also as having a political threat. Specifically, political leaders of the colonies would like to enforce the concepts of dignity and principle over the Americans and

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to show the Parliament that Americans can stand against them. In order to do this, radical patriots with the leadership of Samuel and James Adams silently encouraged merchants not to sell the tea imported from the East India Company. Those merchants and agents from New York, Philadelphia and Charleston who have orders were also encouraged to cancel them including their commissions. Despite the fact that the tea consignees in Boston were friends and relatives of the Parliament-loyal Gov. Thomas Hutchinson, colonial leaders like Josiah Quincy, John Hancock including Samuel and John Adams led the colonies to resist the Parliamentary power (Fowler, W. and W. Coyle, 1979).

As early as September 1773, the East India Company was able to send 500,000 pounds of tea to the American colonies: New York, Philadelphia, Charleston and Boston. A series of meetings and public demonstrations were made in opposition to the Tea Act. ³ Regarded as an attack to the liberty of America, leaders of Philadelphia passed series of resolutions to deny the right of the Parliament to tax the American colonies. Philadelphians demanded the return of the tea back to England. Meanwhile, the ship which arrived in Charleston was allowed to land but the tea was not sold but instead was just stocked in a warehouse where it stayed for three years. The same stock of tea was being sold during the American Revolution to raise fund for the revolutionists. Among others, Boston leaders were the most radical oppositionists as they drastically resorted to demanding the resignation of the tea consignees. When the consignees refused to do so, the Boston Committee of Correspondence threatened them by using its influence

to prevent the tea from landing the port and consequently the selling of the goods.

Three ships loaded with tea arrived at Boston port which ignited the furious reaction of the locales (Woods, Benjamin 1964). The first ship named ¹ *Dartmouth* arrived at the Boston harbor on November 27 and the other two arrived few days later. According to law, payment of customs duties should be paid within twenty days after the registration of the exporter otherwise the goods shall be subject to seizure. As initial protest, Bostonian leaders posted handbills all over the area warning Bostonians not to do anything with the tea shipment. In the morning of December 16, 1773, about seven thousand people milled about the wharf when the ships of tea docked. Consequently, a mass meeting was held in Old South Meeting House was held to find the best possible means of driving the ships back to England. As a result the Bostonians agreed to force the ships to leave the harbor even without the payment of the customs duties. To do this, a special committee was organized which task was to send a message to the Collector of Customs asking that the ships be sent back to England. The officer of refused to enforce the order unless the customs duties be paid by the East India Company. After reporting the same to the mass meeting, another plan was drafted: the Boston Tea Party.

George Hewes, being one of the participants and eyewitness, narrated the events which happened during the Boston Tea Party as their group of about 200 men disguised as Mohawk Indians. The three ships were docked at the Griffin's wharf with war ships around them. The war ships were actually strategically place at the port so to warn the Bostonian rebels not to oppose <https://assignbuster.com/the-boston-tea-party-essay-sample/>

to the landing of the ships otherwise they will be blown by their cannons.

Because Hutchinson promised to give his answer to the demand of the Bostonians to let the ships leave the port, the members of the committee who were tasked to send the message waited and later found out that the Governor at the designated time left for Milton. As the committee reported meeting attendees marched to the Griffin's wharf crying out loud, "*Let every man do his duty, and be true to his country.*"

The Boston Tea Party then was planned. Hewes and other members painted their faces and bodies and marched to the streets like real Indians. The three-party mission has to be able to board the tea out of the three ships all at the same time to the waters. Members fell in line with the other Indians in costume and marched in two towards the Griffin's wharf. The leaders of each party have to direct the operations. Hewes was the one asked by his commander he named Leonard Pitt, to ask the keys to the hatches containing the tea along with dozens of candles. Hewes in short succeeded in demanding the article and were promptly delivered to him as requested. With the commander's go signal, the chests were opened by cutting and splitting them with their tomahawks. After three hours, they successfully threw all the chests on tea to the water and every tea was thrown to be ruined into the waters.

Hewes also mentioned of the several attempts of the citizens to save some of the tea by pocketing them although such was strictly disallowed in the mission. This only shows how important and vital tea was in the culture of the Americans. However due to the purpose of the mission, saving any amount of the tea will lead someone to being seized. As the tea were

scattered into the waters, the citizens nearby attempted to snatch some for their families. Just after the mission, all member successfully went out of the ship without being noticed, went on their own way home with the secrets of the event kept within themselves. The plan was so detailed and keen as members who went on board never knew each other even after the mission. Hewes stressed that he knew only of his commander Leonard Pitt and no one else. The next day, the tea floating into the waters were discovered. These were however pushed and drenched into the water by sailors contained in small boats. They endure that every dose of tea will not be saved not even for a cup of tea for any Bostonian.

The Boston Tea Party was a symbol of a great success for the Americans. It was that event which gave the victory without shedding blood. It was a meaningful event which united the Americans, particularly the Bostonians to make efforts not merely to serve the economic purpose of saving the local merchants but of saving their political edge over the British Parliament. The Boston Tea party was indeed not all about the tax but it's about liberty and freedom from colonialism. The American colonies, being enslaved by taxes on tea were also made free by their love for the tea and liberty.

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