Chapter 4: The Empire in Transition

“We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately.” -Benjamin Franklin, 1774
Loosening Ties

➢ British government practiced salutary neglect after Glorious Revolution (1688)
  1. Limited enforcement of colonial laws
  2. Increased control by Parliament and reduced monarch control prevented strict policies
  3. No organization devoted to colonial affairs only
Loosening Ties

➢ Colonial governments were **not** like those of the British

1. More willing to bribe royal officials
2. Wanted fewer trade restrictions
3. Colonial assemblies saw themselves as “mini Parliaments”
Loosening Ties

➢ Colonies somewhat unified
  ○ Nearly continuous coastal settlement
  ○ Postal system, intercolonial trade, and roads established

➢ All still connected legally to Britain
  ○ Increased number of royal colonies (from 4 to 8)
  ○ More laws restricting trade
The Struggle for the Continent

The French

- New France had different types of colonists
  - Predominantly missionary zeal and fur trade
  - Mississippi River Valley as new farming site
- Laid claim to almost whole interior (Great Lakes to Gulf, Nova Scotia to Rockies)
- Shared their land with English and Indians
- Intermarrying and cultural adaptation with Indians
The Struggle for the Continent

- The Iroquois Confederacy
  - Most powerful Native American group
  - Five Indian nations in defensive alliance
  - Mostly commercial relationship with the English
  - Social interactions with French
  - YET avoided a close relationship with either and played each against the other
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ The English
  ○ Antagonized French more after William III (Dutch) ascended to throne in 1689
  ○ Resulted in a series of Anglo-French conflicts in America, including:
    ■ King William’s War (1689-1697)
    ■ Queen Anne’s War (1701-1713)
    ■ King George’s War (1744-1748)
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ The Ohio River Valley
  ○ Most sought-after land among the groups
    ■ Fort Duquesne - French, 1749
    ■ Fort Necessity - British, 1754 (under Washington)
  ○ French and Indian War started with the French victory at Fort Necessity (1754)
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ First phase (1754-56)
  ○ Conflict kept to America
  ○ Colonists **defending** their territory from raids
  ○ British Gen. Braddock defeated and killed 1755 when trying to retake Ohio
  ○ Popular colonial withdrawal from the Western frontier
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ Colonial unity was weak/nonexistent
  ○ Extremely varied societies
  ○ **Albany Plan** proposed by **Benjamin Franklin** 1754
    ■ Loose colonial federation with “general government”
    ■ Designed to help colonies fight in the French and Indian War
    ■ Rejected by all colonial assemblies
The Struggle for the Continent

➤ Second phase (1756-58)
  ○ Conflict begins in Europe with British losses
  ○ **William Pitt** takes charge of war effort
  ○ Friction between colonists and British soldiers/officials
    ■ Impressment (forced recruitment) and supply seizing
  ○ Acadian migration
    ■ British forced French natives out of Nova Scotia
    ■ Would make their way to Louisiana
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ Third phase (1758-60)
  ○ British begin winning the war
  ○ Pitt loosens policies and colonies unite
  ○ Victories at Louisbourg, Fort Duquesne, Quebec, and Montreal
    ■ Gen. Wolfe fought to the death with Marquis de Montcalm during siege of Quebec (1759)
➢ All fighting ended with the Peace of Paris in 1763
The Struggle for the Continent

➢ Results of the Peace of Paris

1. Ceding of French territory to **Britain** and to **Spain**
2. Staggering British war **debt**
3. Mutual resentment between colonists and British
   - British resented colonies for not paying
   - Colonies thought British were inept in war
4. Common foe unified the colonies for the first time
5. Incredible loss of Native American power
   - Former French allies lost all standing
   - Iroquois (British ally) were seen as **duplicitous** because of passivity
The New Imperialism

➢ Parliament issued **Proclamation of 1763**
  ○ Forbade settlements past the Appalachian mountains
  ○ Attempted to limit conflicts and control expansion
➢ Proclamation was unsuccessful
  ○ Difficult to enforce
  ○ Often ignored by colonists
  ○ BUT Anglo-Indian conflicts greatly reduced
The New Imperialism

➢ Expensive French and Indian War drained British treasury
  ○ Only suitable way to alleviate debt was to increase colonial taxes
➢ Salutary neglect ENDED --> British began to impose more authority
  ○ 1763 - King George III appointed George Grenville as prime minister
  ○ Preferred mercantilism and control in colonies - new taxes and programs
Policies of the Grenville Ministry:

1. **Sugar Act (1764)**: Meant to end illegal trade with the West Indies. Higher molasses duty.
2. **Currency Act (1764)**: Forbade colonial assemblies from issuing and circulating paper money.
3. **Mutiny (Quartering) Act (1765)**: Forced the colonists to provide for the British army.
4. **Stamp Act (1765)**: New tax on all printed documents (licenses, newspapers, etc.).

Something to antagonize everyone!
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Political Consequences for Grenville
  ○ More colonists involved in local politics to protect self government
    ■ Conserving liberties already possessed
  ○ British cut back on colonial governments as punishment
  ○ Americans still resistant to one another though
    ■ Representation unequal between new Western areas and established coasts
      • Paxton Boys in Pennsylvania (1763)
      • Ethan Allen leads Vermont protesters
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ The Stamp Act Crisis
  ○ First direct tax on colonists (paper goods)
  ○ British political motive offensive to colonists

➢ The Virginia Resolves
  ○ Patrick Henry’s speech in House of Burgesses
    1. State taxes are the *only* taxes
    2. Same rights as English--only their own representatives
    3. Any person advocating for Parliament taxation was colonial enemy
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ **Stamp Act Congress**
  ○ Gathered October 1765 with nine colonies represented
  ○ Respectfully rejected tax from afar, though still loyal to king

➢ **Radical Responses**
  ○ *Sons of Liberty* organized riots throughout colonies
  ○ Boycotting of stamps
  ○ Terrorizing of stamp agents and pro-British officials
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ British back down
  ○ Endured too much economic loss
  ○ Parliament **repealed** the Stamp Act 1766

➢ Declaratory Act
  ○ Passed on the same day as the repeal of the Stamp Act
  ○ Gave Parliament **complete** control over the colonies
    ■ Largely ignored in wake of Stamp Act’s disappearance
Stirrings of Revolt

- The Townshend Program
  - New prime minister **Charles Townshend** 1766
  - Needed to address the Quartering Act
    - Massachusetts and New York assemblies wouldn’t give supplies
  - Two measures made
    - Disband New York assembly
    - New duties on nearly all goods
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Colonial response to Townshend prompted rebellion
  ○ Taxes were raising revenue without consent
  ○ New York assembly suspension angered all colonies
  ○ 1768 boycott of goods subject to duties

➢ The North Program
  ○ New prime minister got all duties repealed--except on tea...
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ The Boston Massacre (1770)
  ○ Redcoats in Boston because of so much revolutionary activity
    ■ Angry mob threw rocks at customs house and at soldiers
  ○ Someone in regiment suddenly fired and regiment followed
    ■ Five civilians died in the gunfire
  ○ Sons of Liberty used propaganda to make it the “Boston Massacre”
  ○ Symbol of British oppression and corruption in getting people ready for war
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ **Regulator** Movement (1771)
  ○ North Carolina farmers resisting tax collections by force
  ○ Governor of North Carolina defeated Regulators with a militia
    ■ Six leaders hanged for treason

➢ **Gaspée** Incident (1772)
  ○ British schooner in Rhode Island
  ○ Angry Rhode Island colonists went aboard and set the ship on fire
    ■ Sank it in Narragansett Bay
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Philosophy of Revolt - The Fundamental Difference

British parliament practiced **virtual representation** - members represented the interests of the whole empire, not a specific group or location.

Colonists believed in **actual representation** - communities were entitled to their own elected representatives.
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Revolutionary Ideas
  ○ Drawn from religion and politics
    ■ Often from Britain herself (John Locke, etc)!
  ○ Dissenters published pamphlets in the 1770s to spread disenchantment with the British
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ The Tea Act (1773)
  ○ British East India Company given tax breaks to avoid Navigation Acts
    ■ Could undersell American merchants and monopolize the colonial tea trade
  ○ Enraged influential colonial merchants
  ○ Revived notion of taxation without representation
  ○ Many colonists responded by boycotting tea
    ■ “Rather than Freedom, we’ll part with our Tea” -- Daughters of Liberty
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Boston Tea Party (1773)
  ○ Around 150 local patriots, dressed as Mohawk Indians, boarded tea ships and heaved the chests into the harbor
  ■ Other seaports followed similar acts of resistance
Stirrings of Revolt

➢ Coercive Acts (Intolerable Acts) (1774)
  ○ British outraged by colonial behavior and refusal to pay for goods
  ○ Passage of four acts to limit colonies
    1. Closure of the port of Boston
    2. Reduction in colonial self-government
    3. Royal officers could be tried in England or America for crimes
    4. Further quartering of troops in Massachusetts
  ○ New colonial resistance in Boston and elsewhere to support
Stirrings of Revolt

- Quebec Act (1774)
  - Passed the ability to make a government for the **French Roman Catholics** of British territory
  - Enraged colonies because they felt threatened by a more powerful Catholic presence (not Protestant/Anglican)
Cooperation and War

➢ New Sources of Authority
  ○ Colonies began giving themselves authority
    ■ *Extralegal* bodies formed as governments
    ■ Sons of Liberty used vigilante bands to enforce boycotts/protests
  ○ **Committees of Correspondence** (1772)
    ■ Worked across colony lines to cooperate with resistance efforts
Cooperation and War

➢ First Continental Congress (1774)
   ○ Elected representatives from 12 colonies met and made five key actions/decisions
     1. Rejected a plan for colonial union (Galloway Plan)
     2. Statement of grievances for the king
     3. Resolution to make military preparations (especially Boston)
     4. Non-importation, non-exportation, nonconsumption (boycotts!)
     5. Adjourned and chose to meet again, making it a continuing body
Cooperation and War

➢ Conciliatory Propositions
  ○ Parliament **conceding** to some colonial pressure
  ○ Decided that instead of Parliament’s taxes, the colonies would tax **themselves** by Parliamentary order
    ■ Seen as no different and was too late to prevent war
Cooperation and War

➢ Lexington and Concord - April 18, 1775
  ○ British sent 1,000 soldiers from Boston to Lexington and Concord, where it was suspected that illegal gunpowder was being stored
  ○ **Paul Revere** and William Dawes rode out to warn villages and farms
Cooperation and War

➢ The Revolution Begins
  ○ Several dozen **minutemen** awaited the British troops when they arrived in Lexington the next day
  ○ Shots were fired - 8 colonists died and 10 wounded
    ■ “Shots heard round the world”
THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE HAD BEGUN.