
How mercantilism caused problems for American colonists

Problems caused by mercantilism for the American colonists

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According to the theory of mercantilism, the colonies only existed to serve the interests of Britain. But it seemed as if Britain was abusing their right over the colonies. They enforced many policies such as the Stamp Act, the Townshend Duties, and the Tea Act which caused many problems for the colonists. One problem that the colonists faced was the Stamp Act of 1765. This act imposed a new tax on legal documents, newspapers, playing cards and dice. The Americans did not agree with it. It was not the cost of the stamp that angered them, it was the principle. They had no say in what the British Parliament did. The tax provoked a fire storm of protests, and the boycotting of British goods began. Some colonists did not limit their protests to words. In several cities, groups of people attacked officials who defended British policy. The Stamp Act was not a good idea, and one year later it was repealed. But that wasn't the end.

The Townshend Duties posed as another difficulty. These duties required the colonists to pay minor import duties on tea, lead, oil, papers and painter's colors. Since Britain had imposed unnecessary taxes on the colonies before, this was not new. John Dickinson encouraged protesters to join in the battle by writing the first twelve "Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania". Protests began once again and cut British trade in half. Britain sent troops to be stationed in Boston to enforce the Townshend Duties, and the colonists refused to quarter the troops. The Townshend Duties were repealed in 1770, three years after it began. And three years after that, a new act arose. Parliament passed the Tea Act in an attempt to save the East India Company from bankruptcy and reassert its right to tax. A group of Boston patriots destroyed a shipment of tea in a protest known as the Boston Tea Party. Residents threw the cargoes of several ships into the harbor. The pattern of events between 1763 and 1775 by the British complicated the lives of the colonists, but didn't last long. The policies that were enforced were often protested and then repealed. Soon after, the colonies broke free from Britain's rule, and no longer had to put up with tyrannical rules from their previous parent country.

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