By the KING,

A PROCLAMATION.

George R.

We have taken into our Royal Consideration the several and sundry appeals to Arms, issued by the General in Chief of the late American Colonies, and the late Continental Congress; in which it is asserted, that the late Estates of the late King, George the Third, are and have been a Majesty, and that the late King, George the Third, has committed great and grievous outrages and oppressions upon the late Estates of the late King, George the Third, and that the late King, George the Third, has been and is a tyrant and oppressor of his people. Whereupon, We have resolved to issue this present Proclamation, to停止文中的内容
In 1773, Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) published a brief history of the British government's actions during the preceding decade. Its title: Rules by Which a Great Empire May be Reduced to a Small One. Beginning in 1763, successive British ministries made a series of political missteps that gradually stirred the colonists to assert American liberties against British oppression. Before 1763, the colonists largely accepted Parliament's right to take actions on their behalf—and even the primacy of England's economic interests over their own. Prior to the Seven Years' War, however, almost all parliamentary actions had been designed to regulate trade, and while the colonies sometimes regarded these acts as unfair or inexpedient, they did not regard them as especially oppressive or burdensome.

After 1763, however, Parliament's actions appeared to clash with the colonists' interests. At the end of the Seven Years' War, France surrendered Canada and much of the Ohio and Mississippi valley—two-thirds of eastern North America—to British rule. Many colonists regarded these new lands as a godsend. But the Proclamation of 1763 reserved lands west of the Appalachian Mountains for Indians and forbade white settlement there. Equally disturbing, new British politics restricted Indian trade to traders licensed by the British government. For the first time, power over westward expansion was placed in the hands of British officials, outside the colonists' control. By preventing the colonial population from moving inland, the British ministry hoped to avoid costly Indian wars, protect the western fur trade, and keep western land speculation under the control of the crown. To enforce the proclamation, the British cabinet decided to station up to 10,000 troops along the frontier, at a cost of 250,000 pounds sterling annually. The colonists, who wanted to expand westward without the interference of British troops, deeply resented the proclamation. They feared that if they were walled in along the eastern coast, the results would be overpopulation, the growth of crowded cities, and social stratification along rigid class lines.
An Act for granting certain Duties in the British Colonies and Plantations in America; for continuing, amending, and making perpetual, an Act passed in the Sixth Year of the Reign of His late Majesty King George the Second, (intituled, An Act for the better securing and encouraging the Trade of His Majesty's Sugar Colonies in America); for applying the Produce of such Duties, and of the Duties to arise by virtue of the said Act, towards defraying the Expenses of defending, protecting, and securing, the said Colonies and Plantations; for explaining an Act made in the Twenty fifth Year of the Reign of King Charles the Second, (intituled, An Act for the Encouragement of the Greenland and Eastland Trades, and for the better securing the Plantation Trade); and for altering and disallowing several Drawbacks on Exports from this Kingdom, and more effectually preventing the clandestine Conveyance of Goods to and from the said Colonies and Plantations, and improving and securing the Trade between the same and Great Britain.
DOCUMENT #2: TOWNSHEND ACT

Author: British Government

Date: 1764

Document Information:
To maintain the army and repay war debts, Parliament decided to impose charges on colonial trade. It passed the Sugar Act, imposed duties on foreign wines, coffee, textiles, and indigo imported into the colonies, and expanded the customs service.

Britain required colonial vessels to fill out papers detailing their cargo and destination. The royal navy patrolled the coast to search for smugglers, who were tried in special courts without a jury.

Document Text:
An act for granting certain duties in the British colonies and plantations in America; for continuing, amending, and making perpetual, an act passed in the sixth year of the reign of his late majesty King George the Second, (intituled, An act for the better securing and encouraging the trade of his Majesty’s sugar colonies in America;) for applying the produce of such duties, and of the duties to arise by virtue of the said act, towards defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing the said colonies and plantations; for explaining an act made in the twenty fifth year of the reign of King Charles the Second, (intituled, An act for the encouragement of the Greenland and Eastland trades, and for the better securing the plantation trade;) and for altering and disallowing several drawbacks on exports from this kingdom, and more effectually preventing the clandestine conveyance of goods to and from the said colonies and plantation, and improving and securing the trade between the same and Great Britain.

Whereas it is expedient that new provisions and regulations should be established for improving the revenue of this kingdom, and for extending and securing the navigation and commerce between Great Britain and your Majesty’s dominions in America, which, by the peace, have been so happily enlarged: and whereas it is just and necessary, that a revenue be raised, in your Majesty’s said dominions in America, for defraying the expences of defending, protecting, and securing the same; we, your Majesty’s most dutiful and loyal subjects, the commons of Great Britain, in parliament assembled, being desirous to make some provision, in this present session of parliament, towards raising the said revenue in America, have resolved to give and grant unto your Majesty the several rates and duties herein after-mentioned; and do most humbly beseech your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the King’s most excellent majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That from and after the twenty ninth day of September, one thousand seven hundred and sixty four, there shall be raised, levied, collected, and paid, unto his Majesty, his heirs and successors, for and upon all white or clayed sugars of the produce or manufacture of any colony or plantation in America, not under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs and successors; for and upon indigo, and coffee of foreign produce or manufacture; for and upon wines (except French wine;) for and upon all wrought silks, bengals, and stuffs, mixed with silk or herbs of the manufacture of Persia, China, or East India, and all callicio painted, dyed, printed, or stained there; and for and upon all foreign linen cloth called Cambrick and French Lawns, which shall be imported or brought into any colony or plantation in America, which now is, or hereafter may be, under the dominion of his Majesty, his heirs and successors…
Immediately on the receipt of your letter or finance, I put the thing in a train of inquiry—The person employed has not yet met with success—your name is not found—

The jury mentioned in my last have adjourned over to Monday Dec 1st (23°) the event will determine my movements—I am certain that a certain description of individuals and The Excellent Christ are in perfect harmony—In the estimation of the former, Chesterham is a gentleman and a citizen and Duvall will probably soon attain similar dignities.

your letter of the 20 June was particularly grateful.

The discourse, the frankness and the attachment which it manifests, flatten my pride and affect my heart—I concur fully with your opinion.

The 10 8 15 10, 4 5 1 2—being about 20,000 8 15 10, 4 5 1 2.—

Endorsed by J. Alden Esq.
In order to raise new revenue, Parliament in 1764 passed the Sugar Act, which imposed new charges on foreign wines, coffee, textiles, and indigo imported into the colonies and enlarged the customs service, requiring shippers to fill out documents detailing each ship's cargo and destination. The British navy was ordered to patrol the American coast to search for smugglers, who, if caught, were to be tried in a special court without a jury. That same year, the Currency Act banned the colonists from issuing paper money. Since the colonies had trouble getting gold or silver coins, the prohibition on paper money forced many colonists to resort to barter.

Also in 1764, the British ministry announced plans to institute a stamp tax, to go into effect on November 1, 1765, to make the colonists pay part of the cost of stationing British troops in America. This act required the colonists to pay a tax, represented by a stamp, on newspapers, playing cards, diplomas, and legal documents. Violations of the Stamp Act would be tried in Vice-Admiralty Courts, which had traditionally been used only in cases involving maritime law. Thus, the Stamp Act also appeared to threaten the right to trial by jury.

Reactions to the Stamp Act included riots and boycotts of British goods. Crowds calling themselves Sons of Liberty prevented stamped papers from being unloaded from British ships. Daughters of Liberty, organizations formed by colonial women, promoted the manufacture of homespun cloth, as a substitute for imported British cloth, and circulated protest petitions.

In October 1765, delegates from nine colonies met in New York City and prepared a statement protesting the Stamp Act. The Stamp Act Congress, which was the first united action by the colonies against unpopular British policies, acknowledged that Parliament had a right to regulate colonial trade. It denied, however, that Parliament had the power to tax the colonies, since the colonies were unrepresented in Parliament. The power of taxation resided only with the colonists themselves and their representatives.

Under pressure from London merchants, Parliament abolished the Stamp Act in 1766. But at the same time it passed the Declaratory Act, which stated that the King and Parliament had full legislative authority over the colonies in all matters.

In December 1765, John Adams (1735-1826), who would later become the second president of the United States, wrote that this had "been the most remarkable year of my life." The Stamp Act, "that enormous engine...for battering down all the rights and liberties of America," had raised a spirit of resistance throughout mainland British North America. "In every colony, from Georgia to New Hampshire inclusively," he observed, "the stamp distributors and inspectors have been compelled by the unconquerable rage of the people to renounce their offices. Such and so universal has been the resentment of the people, that every man who has dared to speak in the favor of the stamps, or to soften the detestation in which they are held, how great soever his abilities and virtues had been esteemed before, whatever his fortune, connections, and influence had been, has been seen to sink into universal contempt and ignominy."

Adams was particularly struck by the political consequences of the Stamp Act. "The people, even to the lowest ranks, have become more attentive to their liberties, more inquisitive about them, and more determined to defend them, than they were ever before known.... Our presses have groaned, our pulpits have thundered, our legislatures have resolved; our towns have voted; the crown officers have everywhere trembled, and all their little tools and creatures been afraid to speak and ashamed to be seen...."

The following document offers a first-person account of the escalating conflict over the Stamp Act from a pro-British perspective.

Document Text:
I had the pleasure to receive your letter...and am greatly obliged to you for your kind remembrance of me, and the pains you have taken to get me appointed for the disposal of the stamps in this province [Nova Scotia]....

There is a violent spirit of opposition raised on the continent against the execution of the Stamp Act, the mob in Boston have carried it very high against the Secretary [Andrew Oliver]...for his acceptance of an office in consequence of that Act. They have even proceeded to sow violence, and burnt him in effigy. They threaten to pull down & burn the stamp office row building; and that they will hold every man as infamous that shall presume to carry the Stamp Act into execution, so it is thought Mr. Oliver will resign.

I don't find any such turbulent spirit to prevail among us, if it should, the means are in our Hands to prevent any tumults or Insults; what the consequences may be in the colonies who have no military force to keep the rabble in order, I cannot pretend.
Declaratory Act

Georgii III. Regis.

CAP. XII.

An Act for the better securing the Dependency of His Majesty's Dominions in America upon the Crown and Parliament of Great Britain.

WHEREAS several of the Houses of Representatives in His Majesty's Colonies and Plantations in America, have of late, against Law, claimed to themselves, or to the General Assemblies of the same, the sole and exclusive Right of imposing Duties and Taxes upon His Majesty's Subjects in the said Colonies and Plantations; and have, in pursuance of such Claim, passed certain Clauses, Resolutions, and Orders, derogatory to the Legislative Authority of Parliament, and inconsistent with the Dependency of the said Colonies and Plantations upon the Crown of Great Britain: May it therefore please Your most Excellent Majesty, that it may be declared, and be it declared by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by
DOCUMENT #4: DECLARATORY ACT

Author: British Government

Date: 1766

Document Information:
The Declaratory Act of 1766 stated that the British Parliament's taxing authority was the same in America as in Great Britain.

Document Text:
An act for the better securing the dependency of his majesty's dominions in America upon the crown and parliament of Great Britain.

Whereas several of the houses of representatives in his Majesty's colonies and plantations in America, have of late against law, claimed to themselves, or to the general assemblies of the same, the sole and exclusive right of imposing duties and taxes upon his majesty's subjects in the said colonies and plantations; and have in pursuance of such claim, passed certain votes, resolutions, and orders derogatory to the legislative authority of parliament, and inconsistent with the dependency of the said colonies and plantations upon the crown of Great Britain: may it therefore please your most excellent Majesty, that it may be declared; and be it declared by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, in this present parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, That the said colonies and plantations in America have been, are, and of right ought to be, subordinate unto, and dependent upon the imperial crown and parliament of Great Britain; and that the King's majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the lords spiritual and temporal, and commons of Great Britain, in parliament assembled, had, bath, and of right ought to have, full power and authority to make laws and statutes of sufficient force and validity to bind the colonies and people of America, subjects of the crown of Great Britain, in all cases whatsoever.

II. And be it further declared and enacted by the authority aforesaid, That all resolutions, votes, orders, and proceedings, in any of the said colonies or plantations, whereby the power and authority of the parliament of Great Britain, to make laws and statutes as aforesaid, is denied, or drawn into question, arc, and are hereby declared to be, utterly null and void to all in purposes whatsoever.
GENTLEMEN,

You are already too well acquainted with the melancholy and alarming Circumstances to which this Province, as well as America in general, is now reduced. Taxes, equally detrimental to the Commercial Interests of the Parent Country and her Colonies, are imposed upon the People, without their Consent — Taxes designed for the Support of the Civil Government in the Colonies, in a Manner clearly unconstitutional, and contrary to that, in which 'till of late, Government has been supported, by the free Gift of the People in the American Assemblies or Parliament; as also for the Maintenance of a large Standing Army, not for the Defence of the newly acquired Territories, but for the old Colonies, and in a Time of Peace. The decent, humble and truly loyal Applications and Petitions from the Representatives of this Province for the Redress of their heavy and very threatening Grievances, have hitherto been insufficient, being suffered from authentic Intelligence, that they have not yet reached the Royal Ear. The only Effect of transmitting their Applications hitherto perceivable, has been a Mandate from one of His Majesty's Secretaries of State to the Governor of this Province, to dissolve the General Assembly, merely because the late House of Representations refused to refund a Regulation of a former House, which implied nothing more than a Right in the American Subjects to state in humble and dutiful Petitions to their gracious Sovereign, when they found themselves aggrieved: This is a Right naturally inherent in every Man, and expressly recognized at the glorious Revolution as the Birthright of an Englishman.

This Difficult situation has taken Place; the Governor has publicly and repeatedly declared, that he cannot call another Assembly; and the Secretary of State for the American Department in one of his Letters, communicated to the late House, has been pleased to say, that "no proper Care will be taken for the Support of the Dignity of Government," the Meaning of which is too plain to be misunderstood.

The Concern and Perplexity into which their Things have thrown the People, have been greatly aggravated, by a late Declaration of his Excellency Governor Braddock, that one or more Regiments may soon be established in this Province.

The Duties of their Troops is in every one's Apprehension nothing short of Enforcing by military Power the Execution of Acts of Parliament in the forming of which the Colonies have not, and cannot have any Constitutional Influence. This is one of the greatest Difficulties to which a free People can be reduc'd.

The Town which we have the Honor to serve, have taken these Things at their late Meeting into their most serious Consideration: And as there is in the Minds of many a prevailing Apprehension of an approaching War with France, they have passed the General Vote, which we address to you; deeming that they may be immediately laid before the Town, whose Prudences are in your Care, at a legal Meeting, for their candid and particular Attention.

Desirous of the Councils of a General Assembly in this dark and difficult Season, the loyal Subjects of this Province, will and are persuaded, immediately to proceed to the Property and Utmost Propriety of the proposed Committee of Convention: And the found and wholesome Advice that may be expected from a Number of Gentlemen chosen by themselves, and in whom they may Repose the greatest Confidence, must tend to the real Service of our Gracious Sovereign, and the Welfare of his Subjects in this Province, and may happily prevent any sudden and unconsidered Movements, which is their present Anxieties, and even Agony of Mind, they may be in Danger of falling into.

As it is of Importance that the Convention should meet as soon as may be, so early a Day as the 2nd of this Instant September has been proposed for that Purpose, and it is hoped the remoter Towns will by that Time, or as soon after as conveniently may be, return their respective Commissions.

Not doubting but that you are equally concerned with us and our Fellow-Citizens for the Preservation of our Invaluable Rights, and for the general Happiness of our Country, and that you are disposed with equal Ador to assert yourselves in every constitutional Way for so glorious a Purposes,

We are

Gentlemen,

With the greatest Esteem,
Your obedient humble Servants,

John Hockman
Samuel Ryder
John Parker
Samuel M'Cullouch

N.B. The other two Selectmen are out of the Province.

To the Gentlemen Select-Men of [Town].
You are already too well acquainted with the melancholy and very alarming Circumstances to which this Province, as well as America in general, is now reduced. Taxes equally detrimental to the commercial interests of the Parent country and the colonies are imposed upon the People, without their consent; Taxes designed for the Support of the Civil Government in the Colonies, in a Manner clearly unconstitutional, and contrary to that, in which 'till of late, Government has been supported, by the free Gift of the People in the American Assemblies or Parliaments; as also for the Maintenance of a large Standing Army; not for the Defence of the newly acquired Territories, but for the old Colonies, and in a Time of Peace. The decent, humble and truly loyal Applications and Petitions from the Representatives of this Province for the Redress of these heavy and very threatening Grievances, have hitherto been ineffectual, being assured from authentick Intelligence that they have not yet reach'd the Royal Ear: The only Effect of transmitting these Applications...has been a Mandate from one of his Majesty's Secretaries of State to the Governor of this Province, to Dissolve the General Assembly, merely because the late House of Representatives refused to Rescind a Resolution of a former House, which imply'd nothing more than a Right in the American Subjects to unite in humble and dutiful Petitions to their gracious Sovereign, when they found themselves aggrieved: This is a Right naturally inherent in every Man, and expressly recognized by the glorious Revolution as the Birthright of an Englishman....

The Concern and Perplexity in which these Things have thrown the People, have been greatly aggravated by a late Declaration of his Excellency Governor [Francis] Bernard, that one or more Regiments may soon be expected in this Province.

The Design of these Troops is in every one's apprehension nothing short of Enforcing by military Power the Execution of Acts of Parliament in the forming of which the Colonies have not, and cannot have any constitutional Influence. This is one of the greatest Distresses to which a free People can be reduced...