Guided Notes: Foundations and Review Part 1

As the colonies developed, Americans sought out their own form of **culture and style**. They developed a **social class system** that allowed for **mobility,** which was different from the social class system in Britain. The American system had a large “**middle class**” and **no aristocracy.**

The colonies had **a high rate of literacy, a strong work ethic, and spirit of inventiveness**. These folks arrived to the new world with nothing. They built their homes and communities from scratch. If they needed something, they invented it. They highly valued education.

**There were also two major shifts in cultural beliefs:**

**The Great Awakening:** A **Christian religious revival** allowing for one to develop a spiritual **relationship** with God and seek **forgiveness** for sins. This is different from past belief that no matter what you do, you are imperfect and will spend eternity in hell.

**The Enlightenment:** A movement stressing **human reason and science as paths to knowledge.** **John Locke** challenged the notion that God had given kings the right to rule. Instead, people were encouraged to use **rational thought** to improve their own society. They valued justice, equality, and political change.

**Causes of the American Revolution:**

**The French and Indian War:**

The **British** wanted to take over **French land** to **make money in the fur trade**. The British acquired all French territory east of the Mississippi, as well as Canada, and France lost most of its power in North America. **To pay for the war, Britain started taxing the colonies**.

**Proclamation of 1763:**

A declaration made by the British Parliament that **colonists could not settle west of the Appalachian Mountains.** The **British** thought this would **keep peace with the Native Americans**. The colonists thought Britain was impeding societal progress and colonial expansion.

**Stamp Act:**

In 1766, Parliament passed the **Stamp Act**. Colonists had to pay a **tax for EVERYTHING printed on paper**, including newspapers, diplomas, wills, legal documents, and even playing cards. It was repealed a year later.

Colonists reacted very strongly to being taxed. They formed groups called the **Sons of Liberty and Daughters of Liberty**, both which were **actively protesting British policies**. Their most effective means of rebellion was the **boycott of British goods**. They often lead to a repeal of the imposed taxes.

**Townshend Acts:**

Still needing to pay off debt, the British decided to institute another tax. In 1767, Parliament passed the **Townshend Acts, which taxed lead, glass, paper, paint, and tea.** Colonists used their boycotting skills and refused to buy these items. Eventually the tax was lifted on everything but tea.

**Quartering Act:**

In 1768, Boston was occupied by **10,000 British soldiers**. The King sent them there to **enforce** all the unfair laws that were passed. Since the soldiers needed a place to stay, Parliament passed the **Quartering Act. This required colonists to house British soldiers** without question or any form of payment. Colonists were furious about this!

**Boston Massacre:**

In 1780, a group of protestors of British policies got in an argument with British soldiers. A **snowball fight** ensued, which then **led to shots being fired. Five colonists died.** Revolutionary journalists called this the **“Boston Massacre”** to build support for independence. Technically, a massacre is the killing of someone who is unarmed and can’t fight back. While this is what happened, the term is often sensationalized to mean a killing of large amounts of people.

**Boston Tea Party:**

The colonists were not only upset about being unfairly taxed; they were also upset about British companies having monopolies in trade. In 1773, Parliament passed the **Tea Act, giving the British East India Company the exclusive right to sell Tea in the colonies.** In protest, the **Sons of Liberty** dressed up as **Native Americans**, boarded ships carrying tea, **and dumped the Tea into the Boston Harbor**. This event is known as the **Boston Tea Party**.

**Intolerable Acts:**

Furious over the Boston Tea Party, Britain passed stricter laws to **punish the colonists**. The port of Boston was closed until all the tea was paid for, town meetings were banned, and the elected council was replaced with an appointed one. This series of rules came to be known as **the Intolerable Acts**.

Furious Colonial leaders met in Philadelphia at the **First Continental Congress.** **They demanded more power in making decisions**. They were upset about being taxed by Parliament without having any representation in British Government or right to vote on laws that were being imposed upon them. No **taxation without representation** not only became their rallying cry, it became a founding principle of America’s government. When the king refused to grant colonists requests, the colonists revolted.

**Paul Revere:**

Paul Revere took a midnight ride **warning colonial militias of British troop movement**. He is remembered as a great American Patriot.

**Patriots/Loyalists:**

**Patriots:** **Supported of the revolution**. They were guilty of treason and faced death once the revolt was over.

**Loyalists:** **Loyal to the British King**

**After the Revolution begins at Lexington and Concord:**

The **Second Continental Congress** met in Philadelphia, and decided to form the **Continental Army** to fight the British. They also appointed a committee to write a document declaring independence for the 13 colonies. It is important to know that **not all of the colonists favored Independence.** Many just wanted more voice in government, and would gladly stand down if they were given more rights. Unsure of how the revolt would proceed, the committee wrote the **Declaration of Independence. Thomas Jefferson was the principal author**. Not being able to change the minds of the British, the declaration was signed on **July 4, 1776.**

**Main points of the Declaration:**

1. A **fair government** recognizes that people **are born with certain rights; life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness**. It is the **governments’ job to protect those rights**.

2. King George III and the British government **behaved unfairly**. The **declaration lists all the offenses the colonists put up with under British rule,** including taxation without representation.

3. **The colonies intend to form a new nation.** The British would not listen to the colonists, so they claim their independence from Britain.