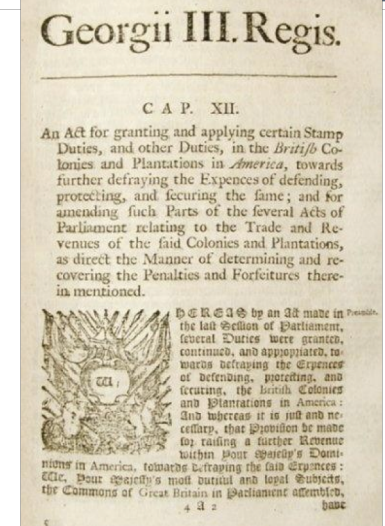# SSWH14: ANALYZE THE AGE OF REVOLUTIONS

Element B: Identify the causes and results of the Revolutions in the United States (1776)

American Revolution (1776)

❑ By the mid-1700s the British colonies in North America enjoyed thriving economies and a great degree of political autonomy.

❑ The generally congenial relationship between the colonies and Britain began to sour after the French and Indian War ended in 1763.

  ▪ The war put Britain in a considerable amount of debt and the British Parliament believed that the colonies had a responsibility to help pay off this debt.

    • Up to this point, Britain had only placed taxes on imports and left internal taxation to colonial assemblies to approve and levy.

    • This tradition changed after the French and Indian War.

  ▪ Britain imposed a variety of revenue measures between 1763 and 1776 including the Stamp Act and Tea Act.

    • The colonist, in part influenced by European Enlightenment ideas, rejected these taxes on the principle that they lacked representation in the Parliament that imposed them.

American Revolution (1776)

❑ Colonial protests against this taxation provoked a series of measures designed to pressure the colonist into compliance.

  ▪ These measures included military occupation, closure of Boston harbor, and the suspension of colonial governments.

❑ The escalating conflict between Britain and the colonies culminated in the Declaration of Independence which was issued by the Second Continental Congress after a series of attempts at compromise failed.

  ▪ The Declaration of Independence, written by Thomas Jefferson, put the ideas of Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke into practice.

❑ The Revolutionary War ensued and by 1781 America emerged victorious and independent.

❑ The newly independent United States initially formed a weak central government under the Articles of Confederation but by 1788 formed a government that combined the principles of the Enlightenment philosophies of John Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Voltaire.