We Americans will soon be celebrating the 200th Anniversary of our United States on July 4, 1976. Although the first shots of the American Revolution were not fired until April 18, 1775, there were numerous events during the years before that led to the revolution. As John Adams wrote "The Revolution was effected before the war commenced. The Revolution was in the minds and hearts of the people."

The Causes of the American Revolution were:

- Acts of 1763: England declared a British army was to stay in North America after French and Indian War. This army was to protect colonies from French, Spanish, and Indians. The Act also prohibited settlement west of Appalachian Mountains. Colonists feared this British army could be used against them and resented the limitations to western expansion.

- Navigation Acts: This series of laws was passed to limit colonial trade with countries other than England. This law was usually ignored by colonists.

- Sugar Act, 1764: Levied three penny per gallon tax on molasses brought to colonies from West Indies. In 1776, England reduced the tax to one penny on all molasses, including British. Would have had serious effect on colonial commerce had it been enforced.

- Quartering Act, 1765: Required colonists to provide quarters, transportation, fuel, candles and beer for British troops in colonies. Colonists felt this was an illegal way of taking money from them.

- Stamp Act, 1765: Required colonists to use special tax stamps on legal documents, diplomas and newspapers. Colonists refused to allow stamps to be sold and cried, "Taxation without representation is tyranny."

- Declaratory Act, 1766: Claimed full British authority over American colonies. Colonists interpreted this as an act to curtail freedom.


- Boston Massacre, 1770: Fatal clash between British soldiers and angry townspeople resulted in death of 3 townsmen, and the wounding of 8, two of whom died later.

- Tea Act, 1773: Allowed British East India Co., instead of colonists to pay Townshend tax on tea. This made British tea cheaper than other tea. Colonists would not accept this deal since it eliminated their argument of taxation without representation.

- Boston Tea Party, 1773: Angered colonists, disguised as Indians, boarded British ships in Boston harbor and tossed their cargo of tea overboard.

- Intolerable Acts, 1774: Closed Boston harbor to commerce until city showed repentance for its "Tea Party." Also allowed for increased British authority in Mass. Caused colonists to denounce British laws and led to further boycotting of British goods.

- Restraining Act, 1775: England declared Mass., R.I. and Conn. to be in rebellion, and barred these colonies from fishing on Grand Banks and from trading with any country other than England. England further ordered Gen. Gage to arrest colonial leaders in Mass., organize a tory militia, and to use force to restore order. This led to the outbreak of hostilities at Lexington.