Fact Sheet - Boston Tea Party

When: 16th December 1773

Where: Boston Harbour, Massachusetts

Who: American colonists; representatives of the British crown

Important Names: -Samuel Adams and John Hancock (opponents of the crown);

- Thomas Hutchinson (Governor of Massachusetts)

Historical Background:

Victory in the French and Indian War was costly for the British → Great Britain was in debt → they introduced new taxes in the colonies → considerable resistance of the colonists, because they did not feel represented in Britain ("no taxation without representation") → Conflict → Finance Minister Charles Townshend finally tried to defuse the conflict → the direct taxes were abolished and replaced by an "external tax" of tariffs (leather, paper and tea) → The colonists reacted strongly to these duties (Boston Massacre/boycotts/smuggling) → the duties were abolished with the exception of the duty on tea → The British crown tried everything to sell the tea ("tea act" ; i.e. there were no more duties when tea was imported into England ; the trading company received more autonomy in managing their trade) → The colonists were trying to avoid the sale of the discounted tea of the East India Company at all costs

Boston Tea Party:

The Boston Tea Party was a direct action against the British government and the monopolistic East India Company that controlled all the tea coming into the colonies. On December 16, 1773, after officials in Boston refused to return three shiploads of taxed tea to Britain, a group of 30 to 130 men, some of them disguised as Mohawk Indians, boarded the three ships and dumped all 342 chests of tea into the water.

Sources:

http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/teaparty.htm

http://www.americanet.de/boston_tea_party.html

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Tea_Party