### The Coercive Acts 1774

- Intended to isolate Boston and force patriots into submission. Their main aspects were:
  - **closure of the port of Boston** from the 1st June until all the tea was paid for.
  - Revising the charter of the colony to allow the governor to appoint and remove most officials - the governorship passed from Hutchinson to Gage, commander in chief of the army.
  - Arranging for the transfer of murder trials to England if deemed necessary (to prevent juries allowing patriots to get away with murder).
  - Giving **more powers to military commanders** to arrange the quartering of their troops.
  - Patriots pointed to the appointment of a governor without an assembly as further evidence of the intent of the British to erode liberties of Americans and establish tyrannical rule in all of their colonies.

### Rebellion to revolution 1775-76

- The Coercive acts did not succeed in isolating Boston as colonial assemblies continued to meet in defiance of British law.
- Military action in 1775 - the early fighting occurred in and around Boston. The British under general Gage only had 4,000 troops.
- **Lexington and Concord** - General Gage knew where the rebel weapons were stockpiled. He attempted a secret mission on April 18th 1775 to Concord to destroy a secret military store. They were met by 75 volunteers at Lexington and pushed onto Concord to destroy the stores, but were steadily fired on all the way back to Boston. Total British casualties were 273, and 73 were killed.
- **Bunker Hill** - Generals Howe, Clinton and Burgoyne arrived in May 1775 with a few thousand troops and attempted a full-frontal assault against the Rebels at Bunker Hill on the 17th June. More than 1,000 of the 2,500 British engaged in the battle became casualties. The Americans lost fewer than half of that number. Although the British carried the position, it can hardly be called a victory.

### The Declaration of Independence

- The second Continental Congress in Philadelphia met in May 1775 and took two important decisions: Issuing paper money to try to meet some of the costs of the war, and making George Washington the commander of the new Continental Army.
- The most widely read and influential pamphlet of the period, *Common Sense*, by **Thomas Paine**, was published in January 1776 and quickly sold 12,000 copies, helping to cement the opinions of many. It argued that reconciliation was no longer possible and that instead Americans should look to the future and the establishment of a new and fairer system of government.