

Ques:-American Revolution was a conflict between British mercantilism and American capitalism. Examine.

Ans:- Multiplicity of factors including ideological conflict, conflict between constitutional notions etc. played their role in American Revolution but the clash in economic interest between colonies and the metropolitan state definitely played a decisive role.

British mercantilism emphasized that the interest of the colonies is subservient to that of the metropolitan state. It was under this notion that navigation laws were introduced through the act of 1651. It ensured the primacy of British shipping industry at the cost of the shipping of other rivals as well as that of the colonies. It emphasized that all the exports or imports could be carried through ships on which three-fourth employees should have been from British origin. Apart from that industrialization in American colonies was consciously discouraged by British government. Furthermore, American colonists were supposed to sell certain products to British merchants alone. Lastly, British government imposed certain taxes like sugar tax and stamp tax on American colonies. So, it was clear that American capitalism could flourish only after the exit of the Britain from American colonies. Thus the protests which started on the issue of taxation were soon converted into a liberation movement.

It is in this context we can say that American Revolution was primarily a revolt of American capitalism against British mercantilism.

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