

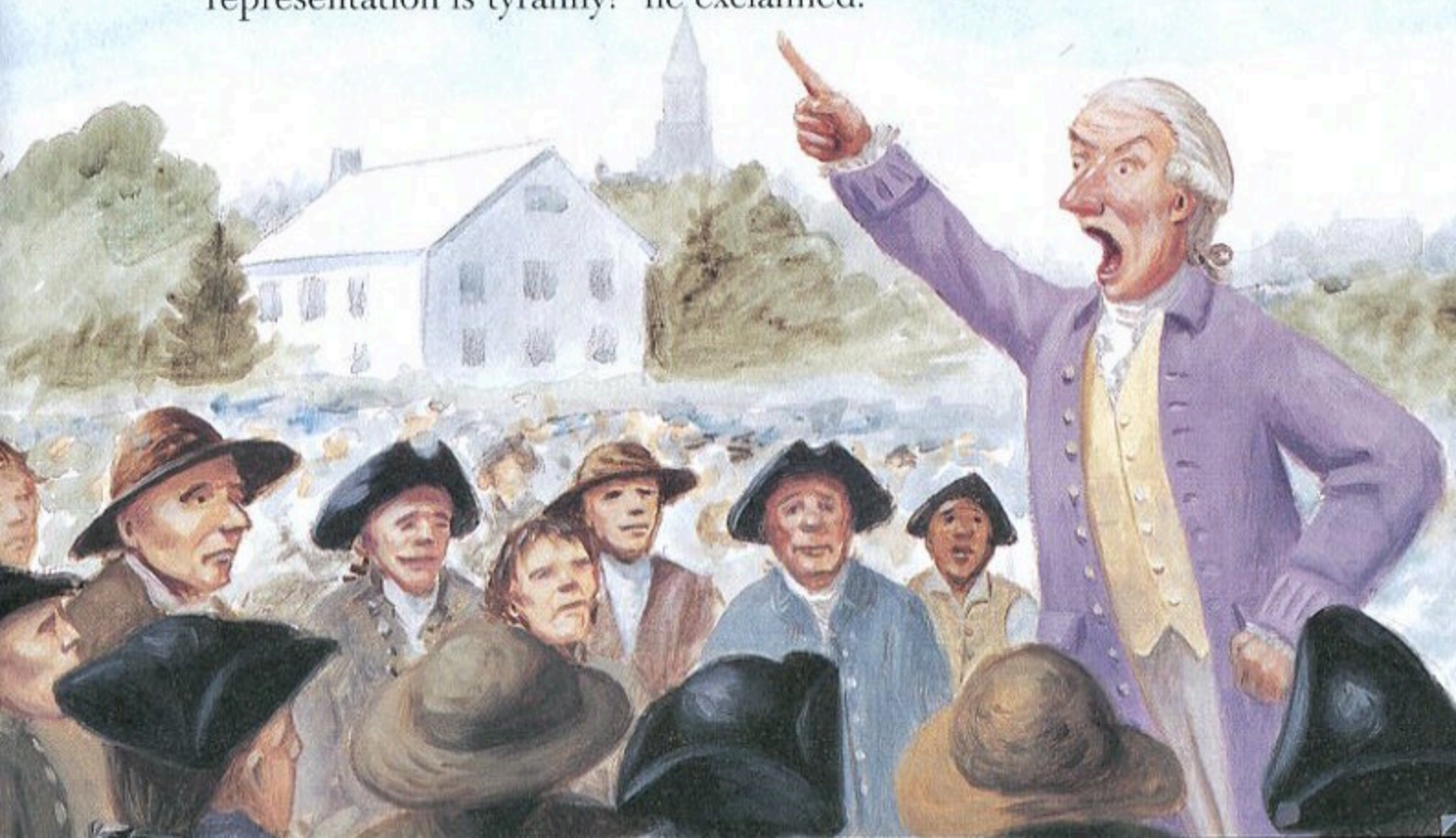
## *What started the Revolution?*

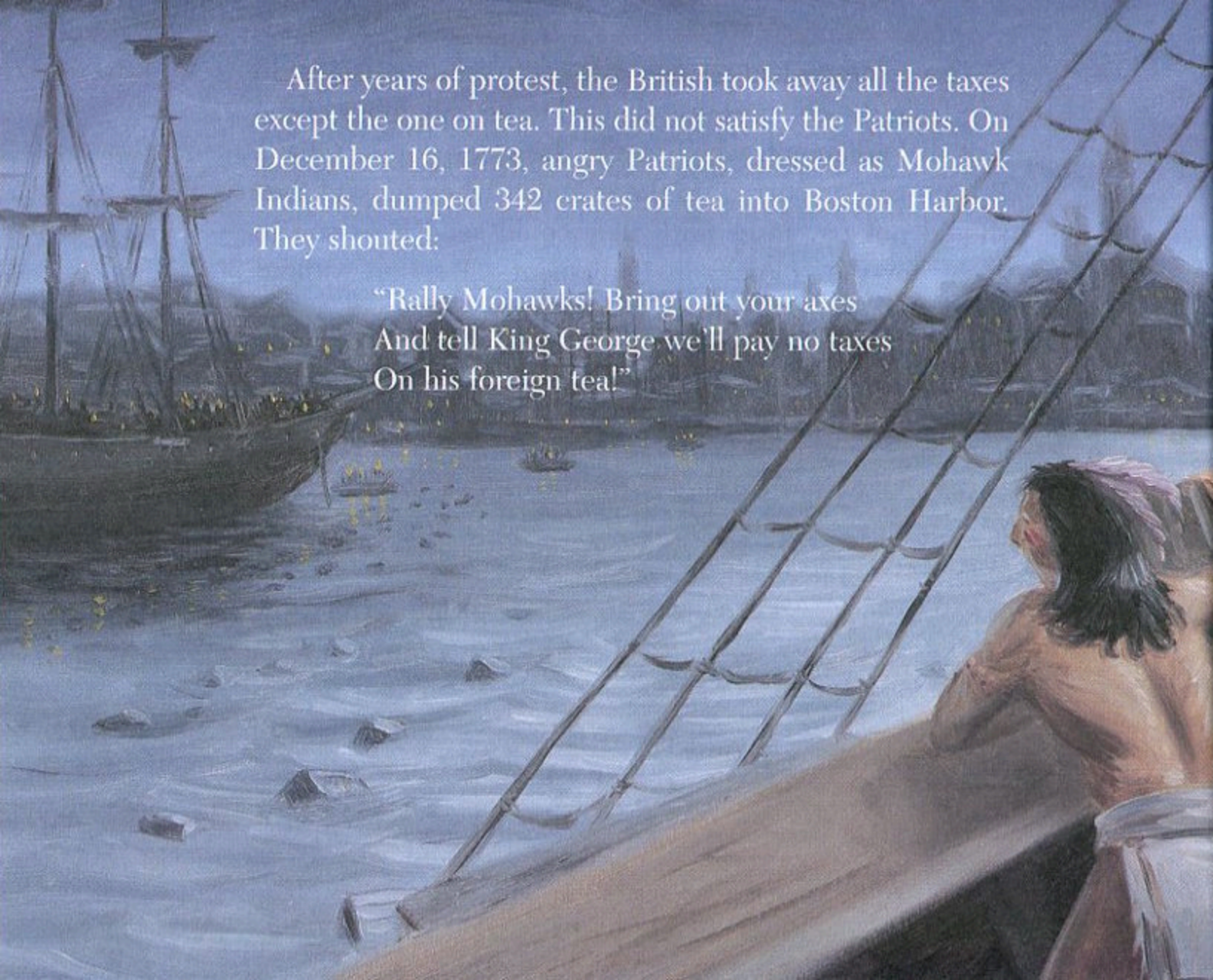
The first settlers in the colonies liked having British help and protection. British soldiers were there to help them fight Native American enemies and to keep other countries, such as France and Spain, from invading. It was like your mother watching over you. However, as you grow older, you will want more freedom to make your own decisions. That is how many of the colonists felt.

The colonists grew tired of following British rules. England controlled trade and told people where they could settle. They forced the colonists to provide housing and food for the British soldiers sent to protect them.

Since 1760, the colonists had also had to pay taxes for various products. Under a law called the Stamp Act (1765), the colonists had to pay extra money for newspapers, land deeds, card games, dice games, and even for graduation diplomas.

The colonists had no direct way to complain, since no one from the colonies was allowed to be a member of the British Parliament, which made the rules. James Otis, a Boston lawyer, stirred up the colonists when he said they should not pay taxes until they could send a person to speak for the colonies in Parliament. "Taxation without representation is tyranny!" he exclaimed.

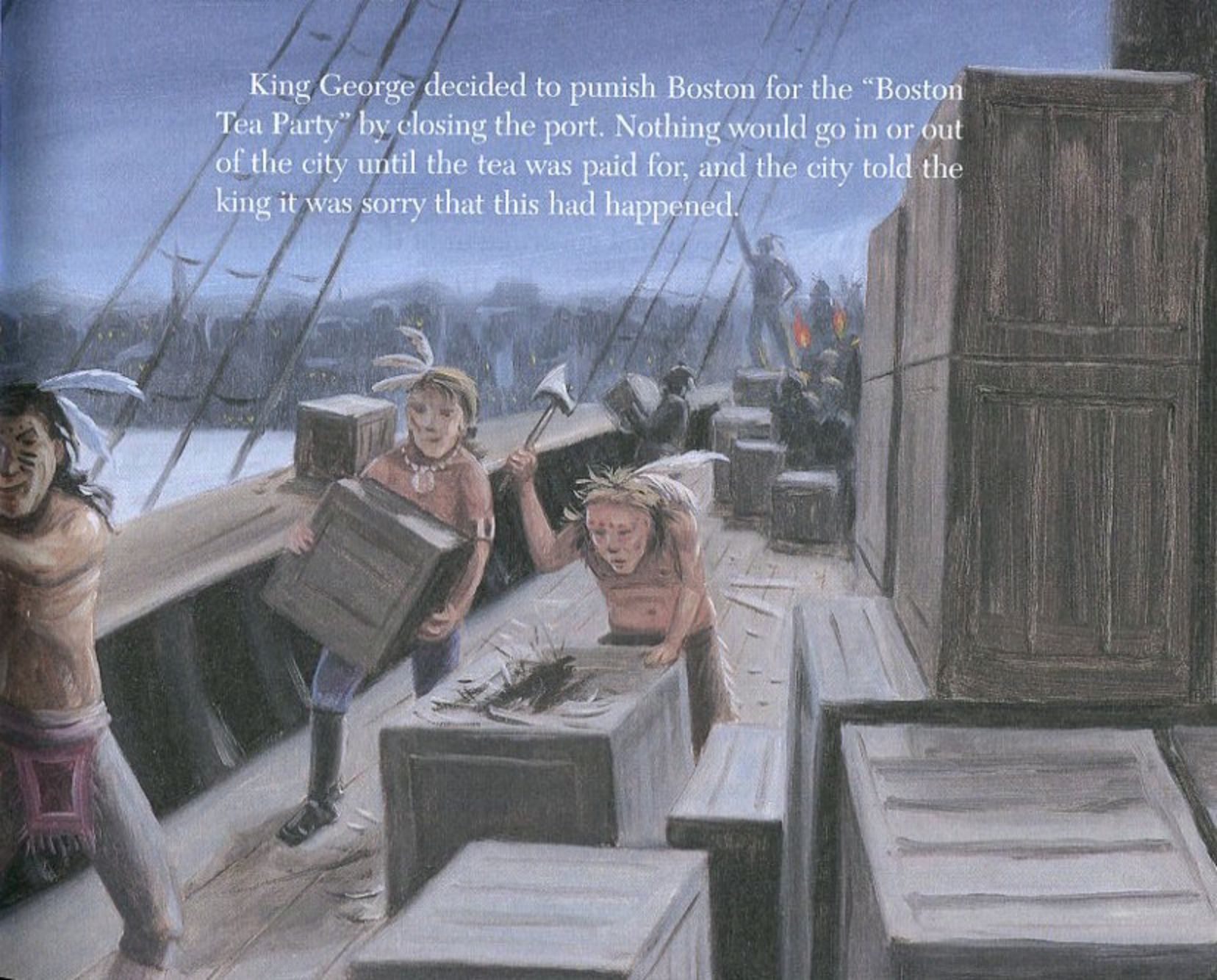




After years of protest, the British took away all the taxes except the one on tea. This did not satisfy the Patriots. On December 16, 1773, angry Patriots, dressed as Mohawk Indians, dumped 342 crates of tea into Boston Harbor. They shouted:

“Rally Mohawks! Bring out your axes  
And tell King George we’ll pay no taxes  
On his foreign tea!”

King George decided to punish Boston for the “Boston Tea Party” by closing the port. Nothing would go in or out of the city until the tea was paid for, and the city told the king it was sorry that this had happened.



Some people thought it was time for the colonies as a group to protest British taxes. In September 1774, men from the colonies met together in Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia. Called the "Continental Congress," this group became the informal government of the colonies.

Bad feelings continued. Finally, British soldiers and Patriots fought at Lexington and Concord, Massachusetts, on April 19, 1775. This was the start of the American Revolution.

