

8.16 Salutory Neglect

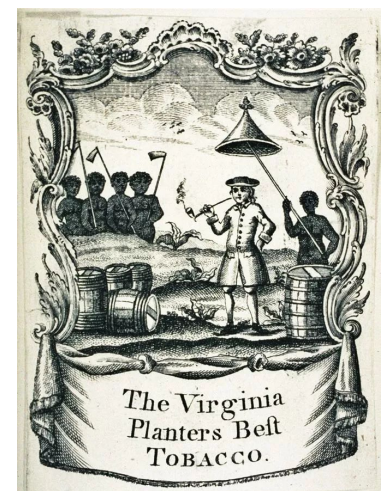
Read and annotate the following passage. Remember underline important phrases, circle unknown words, and ask questions (?) in the margin.



George III succeeded his grandfather, George II, to the throne of Great Britain on October 25, 1760. When he ascended the throne, Great Britain had been at war with France for a number of years. Though mindful of the restraints on his powers as a constitutional monarch, George III desired to be a strong ruler and wanted to influence government policy. The king used patronage (his personal power to appoint individuals to key positions in the government and the military) and his immense, personal prestige to influence government policy. When George III came to the throne, the Prime Minister of Great Britain was the Duke of Newcastle, and William Pitt served as the Secretary of State in Newcastle's cabinet. George III, on the other hand, wanted to avoid an escalation of the conflict with France. When Pitt was outvoted in the cabinet on the expansion of the war, he left his position as Secretary of State on October 5, 1761. Within the year, Newcastle's government would fall. By May 1762, Lord Bute, a close personal friend and former tutor of the King, replaced the Duke of Newcastle as Prime Minister.

The king's new advisors re-evaluated Britain's trade policies with the colonies. For over one hundred years, Great Britain had regulated colonial trade with a number of navigation and trade laws. These laws, stemming from the economic theory of mercantilism, generally promoted British shipping and commercial interests. Over the years, these trade laws had been essentially negated by the unofficial British practice of **salutory neglect**, which was the avoidance of strict enforcement of the laws. Lord Bute, and the Prime Ministers who followed him, ended the practice of **salutory neglect** and moved to aggressively enforce Britain's trade laws with the American colonies. The substantial increase in the size of the British Navy during the war with France gave the British government the strength to choke colonial smuggling and enforce trade laws more effectively after 1760.

To crack down on smuggling in the American colonies, the British government also increasingly began to use Writs of Assistance. A type of search warrant, the writs authorized government officials to look for contraband, such as smuggled goods, in private homes and businesses. The writs also placed no limits on the time, place or manner of a search. In 1761, sixty-three Boston merchants challenged the legality of the process. James Otis, Jr., an attorney who had formerly represented the royal government, argued the case for the merchants. Though they lost their case, the surrounding publicity fueled anger within the merchant classes of Boston against the British government.



Answer the following questions in COMPLETE SENTENCES based on the information in the passage above.

1. How did King George III come to power in Great Britain?
2. What country was Great Britain fighting with before and during King George III's time?
3. What were the king's new advisors focusing on? Why do you think they wanted to do that?
4. Explain salutary neglect. Give a modern-day example of salutary neglect.
5. Who benefited from salutary neglect? Why?
6. What helped change Great Britain's program of salutary neglect?
7. What does Writ of Assistance mean? How would you react if we used this practice today?