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From Number to Prime Number

An existential and numerical approach to American history. "I see the ruin of all things shattered glass and failing masonry and time consumed in one livid flame." James Joyce, Ulysses.

What is existentialism? Is there an orthodox approach to the problem of existence? Is existentialism relevant to the American experience? To answer these questions, the writer is going to present a brief survey of existential themes and of major existential writers. Then the writer is going to present Gabriel Marcel's orthodox approach to existentialism and contrast this approach with the approaches of Sartre,

Jaspers, and Buber. Finally, the writer is going to apply this whole framework to the philosophy of the American Revolution and to the American Revolution itself as a test case. This philosophy and this test case were chosen because they bracket the problem of America's existence.

Theses and Axioms.

One, historical truth is "unilateral."

Two, history can be viewed as a negation.

Three, Hegel said that the mind is the negative. To some extent this is a true statement be-

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cause electrons in electricity are negative, however, there is a positive pole. Therefore, the mind is negative and positive. This is the third thesis.

Four, the American Revolution was a "nongeneric" revolution. That is, it was really three

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million or more revolutions-an existential or artistic approach.

Five, the American Constitution should be "deconstructed." This is the idea that we can't really get at the meaning of words in a legal text; therefore, the text of a document like the constitution is somewhat absurd.

Six, the American Revolution is locked on Locke, Jefferson, and Madison; consequently, it is waning.

Seven, Americans should adopt a new approach, an existential approach, to our present time period.

Eight, existentialism is about relationships-hence an "interpersonalized" "I-Thou-We" is possible.

Nine, history is absurd-a Sartreian position.

Ten, history is spiritualistic Catholic approach.

Eleven, the American Revolution created a nation of prime numbers- (an O'Doughertyian approach).

doesn't have a fixed personality. Washington's personality was the product of his choices and a product of his expanding consciousness. Washington was solely responsible for his life.

Finally, there is not for Sartre a mind body dualism. Man and nature exist as a unity. Life is, according to Sartre, "a useless passion."

Kierkegaard

The philosophy of existentialism deals with the problem of existence specifically human existences. The modern idea of existentialism is to be found in the books of Soren Kierkegaard. He had the idea that his fellow Danes misunderstood what it means to be a Christian. Kierkegaard felt that his countrymen had a false idea of Christianity. They wrongly approached Christianity from the point of view of speculation and of the intellect. Kierkegaard contended that this approach flows wrongly from the idea of Hegel who taught that it was the discipline of philosophy to absorb all the mystery of religion even the Christian mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation.

Kierkegaard felt, in contrast, that Christianity was a path in life that one takes to assimilate the doctrines and message of Christ. Christ's message would be brought into one's own existence. The true path to understanding the message of the gospels is to exist within the message, not to just speculate on it. In his argument against Hegel and his countrymen Kierkegaard focused on a number of ideas such as existence, the individual, free will, passion, fear, and despair. His writings influenced many writers now called existentialists.

Partial Survey.

Although it is not possible in this work to give a detailed delineation of the writings of all the existentialists, it is perceived that this book focus on such basic ideas as existence and the particular person, consciousness and freedom of choice, anguish and the absurd, and being and nothingness. The writer is going to

focus on these ideas and then pay particular attention to the ideas of Marcel, Sartre, Jaspers, Buber, and Marx (for contrast).

Existence and Man.

First of all, there is in existentialist thought a focus on human existence. The focus is not on chemical or biological existence, but, on the problem of ethical existence. The existentialist is concerned with the realm of what it means to live as a man and what are the lines of authentic human enterprise. Heidegger says, for example, that "'other realities are, man alone exists.'" It is thus man's existence that sets him apart from all the other beings in the cosmos. The problem that the existentialist deals with is not the universal but the individual.

Why does this interest in the individual occur? Because the dislike of the abstract occurs, there is an interest in man's freedom. The act of freedom consists in a contingency, that is, the nature of the will is to be for or against something. The will and freedom become difficult

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themes to deal with in a speculative system of philosophy like Hegel's, which is largely deductive. This deterministic approach is seen as the enemy of man. Sartre and Camus, for example, make freedom the essence of man. The abstract denigrates man into a thing. Modern technology makes man a number and a group member. Jaspers and Marcel protest against this dehumanization. Great literature makes man unique and serves as his method of escape or transformation in the technological society we live in today.

Consciousness and Choice

Existentialists focus on man as an "'I... not an 'it.'"²³ Consciousness and choice are vivid themes in existentialist writings. Thus man should be conscious of their own reflections and thoughts. Heidegger argues

that many men are followers of the masses. The existentialist man, in contrast, thinks for himself. Man becomes free by having an individual interest in his choices. Because the existentialist man is deeply committed to life and freedom, he has great responsibility. Camus thinks, for example, that there are only responsible men. For Heidegger, the focus of the authentic man is concern.

"Anguish and Absurdity"

Along with the ideas of freedom and responsibility are the notions of abandonment, anguish, fear and dread. ¹⁴ Man is seen as being alone and solitary. He does not have objective moral guides to use in his choices. Responsibility yields anxiety and anguish. Man is alienated from nature because of his consciousness and reflection. Camus', The Stranger, finds meaning in his life only as he is about to lose it. ²⁵ Heidegger expresses this anguish as the movement man's life has as man moves towards the nothingness of death.

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Absurdity is another theme favored by the existentialist writers. Then on rational, for example, is that which man can't comprehend. Kierkegaard defines Christ as absurd because the mystery of the incarnation is incomprehensible. The Incarnation can only be understood by faith. Camus, also, says that there are different scientific reasons for various phenomena in the universe but he denies that there is a complete truth for the totality of the cosmos. There are only partial truths.

God, Being, and Nothingness

Many existentialists portray a universe which has no God. Man is the penultimate being through which all the other beings reveal themselves. Man is "transcendent for man. ¹¹²⁷ Camus says that he denies God because of the problem of suffering in man's existence. Life is absurd; man is doomed to death and failure. Death is not the only negation. Negativity and negation are recurring existential themes. Heidegger contends that Being is filled with nothingness. Sartre argues that consciousness is a negative because consciousness is ²¹ Freedom is

always focused on an object that is not the comprehending consciousness.

also a negation because it is a move towards an unsurpassed goal. The dark side of man's nature is often delineated in existential literature. Instead, of a call to knowledge and love, as the Christians have it; life is tragic and depraved.

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Gabriel Marcel's Orthodox Christian Approach to Existentialism

The Personal Nature of Truth

Marcel says that "Being is a Mystery"@ and that we are living 'in a broken world.'³⁰ He says that a distinction should be made between the true and the universally valid. For example, slavery was true for a few; and, in contrast, the law of gravitation is universally valid. Marcel contends that all minds have a bias. Many people think that truth is something extracted like gold. Furthermore, Marcel contends that we should make a distinction between genuine truth and extracted truth. Should truth be modeled after physical or scientific processes? Not necessarily says Marcel. History, for example, can't be reduced to certain formulas. Unity, also, is a profoundly ambiguous idea. What are some examples of 'The broken world?' Atomization and collectivization of the population are the opposite sides of the process of devitalization. "With" and 'Togetherness' seem to be losing their meaning. Bureaucracy tends towards dictatorship. He compares the state to God. Furthermore, he contends that the words liberty, person, and democracy are losing their meaning. The value of fatherhood is also being diminished.

Transcendence

Marcel contends that we have an urgent need for transcendence. Transcendence is a form of dissatisfaction. He contrasts transcendence with the immanent. Transcendence is not, Marcel argues, merely "going beyond."^{11,31} It is an extended conception of the pronoun ^{111.1132} The "I" or life is a spiritual adventure. Transcendence, then, does not transcend experience. "Experience has, Marcel contends, varying degrees of purity."³³ For example,

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experience can be "distilled" in a diary. A Minkowski space a space in mind travel is another form of transcendence.

Truth

According to Marcel, reality is everywhere. Truth is unilateral. Sensations and sentiments are not objective. Facts are not external. Life is centered internally. Is truth a substance? Is all truth objective? The answer is that there is personal and objective truth. He ends with a question. What about "the life of truth"?¹¹³⁵

Reflection

Primary reflection dissolves the fabric of experience. Secondary reflection recovers unity. "I" cannot be considered apart from "exist." The sense of "I" depends on sense experience. "I am manifest;"³⁶ not "I exist." Existence and awareness of existence can be disassociated. Primary reflection is detached. There is a distinction to be maintained between subject and predicate. The sense of self can never be reduced to a dematerialized ego. The body is an instrument. There is sympathetic mediation between body and soul.³⁷ "I am somebody;" other somebodies exist. Are the terms absolute and existent congruous terms? "Existence is not, according to Marcel, a predicates

Feelings

"What are feelings?" Can feelings be analyzed scientifically? 39 Is a sensation a feeling? Marcel contends that "there is an exclamatory awareness of existence. 1140 Are some feelings internal breedings of the mind? 41 Marcel would contend that some feelings are. He also says that 'a feeling is not passive.' Marcel says that "to feel is to receive. 1142

Being

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We understand feeling as a means of participation in life. But, participation includes more than feeling. We contemplate our own uniqueness. We ingather knowledge. There is a dualism between mind and body says Marcel. However, there is unity of external and internal. We should be true to ourselves. One becomes nearer to oneself "in ingathering". We have an abstract self. Awareness and life are different axioms. Existence precedes self-discovery. Relationships with people are internal-with things external. Feelings are unequal to a film of images. "Being" is a "mystery."

"My Life"

"Who am I?" It is a mystery. A complete narration of my life is not possible. A diary is not enough. The judgements of history fail. Fact and act are "ambiguous." What lies at the base of metaphysics? Disquietude. @ "Truth is a spirit." 47 The family bond is a mystery. We shouldn't separate the spiritual from the vital.

Jean Paul Sartre

Sartre is a phenomenologist and an existentialist. He uses the descriptive method of Husserl and focuses on the problem of existence. 48 His philosophy is an examination of life from the atheistic point of view. Sartre argues that there is no God and that life is absurd.

Transcendence

For Sarte, transcendence "refers to a process whereby the For-itself goes beyond the given in a further project of the itse lf."⁴⁹ What is the "Being-for-itself?"⁵⁰ It is "the nihilation of the Being-in-itself: consciousness conceived as a lack of Being, a desire for Being, a relation to Being."⁵¹ What is Being? "Being i s."⁵²

Transcendence and Being

'Being is in-itself;" and, "Being is what is is."⁵³ "Being includes both "Being-in-itself" and "Being-for-itself," "but the latter is the nihilation of the former."⁵⁴ "As contrasted with exis-

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tence, being is all-embracing and objective rather than individual and subjective. What is 'Being-in-itself'? It is "non-conscious Being." It is the Being of the phenomenon and overflows the knowledge which we have of it. "It is a plenitude, and strictly speaking we can

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say of it only that it is."⁵⁶ What is "Being-for others?"⁵⁷ "It is a new dimension of being in which my Self exists outside as an object for others."⁵⁸ "The For-others involves a perpetual conflict as each For-itself seeks to recover its own Being by directly or indirectly making an object out of the other."⁵⁹

Consciousness

Consciousness is 'The transcending For-itself.'@

Cause

"In the human sphere cause is empty of all deterministic quality and stands for an objective apprehension of a situation which in the light of a certain end may serve as a means for attaining that end."⁶¹

Existence

Existence is "concrete, individual being here and now. ¹¹⁶² Sartre argues "that for all existentialists existence precedes essence." ⁶³

Essence

^{IC,4} "essence, is what has been." ⁶⁵ "Since there is no pre-established pattern
"Man's past,

for human nature, each man makes his essence as he lives." ^N

Ekstases

¹¹¹⁶⁷ "The For-itself is
separated from its
Self

This word means in Greek ... to stand out from.
in three successive ekstases:

(1) Temporality. The For-itself nihilates the In-itself in the three dimensions of past, present, and future.

(2) Reflection. The For-itself discovers that it has a Self for-the-Other, a Self which it is, without ever being able to know or get hold of it.

(3) Being-for-others. The For-itself discovers that it has a Self for-the-Other, a Self which it is, without ever being able to get hold of it."

Nothingness

"Nothingness does not itself have Being, yet it is supported by Being."⁶⁹ "it comes into the world by the For-itself and is the recoil from fullness of self-contained Being which allows consciousness to exist as such. 1170

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Nihilate

"Consciousness exists as consciousness by making a nothingness adse between it and the object of which it is consciousness. 1171 "Thus nihilation is that by which consciousness exists. 1172 "To nihilate is to encase with a shell of non-being.@"

Negatite

This is "Sartre's word for types of human activity which while not obviously involving a negative judgment nevertheless contain negativity as an integral part of their structure; e.g., experiences involving absence, change, interrogation, destruction."74

Noesis

This is Husserl's word "for the intentional direction by consciousness toward an object external to it."⁷⁵

Objectness

"The state of being and object is abjectness."

Past

"Is what the For-itself has been."-n

Possible

"it is a noun almost equal to 'possibi 11ty.181" "The For-itself makes itself by choosing its possibles and projecting itself toward those preferred. "78

Present

"The present is not." "The For-itself is presence to 'Being-in-itself' by means of an internal negation."¹⁹ But this very presence is a flight toward the Future as a further project of the For-itself.⁸⁰

Future

It is the possibilities of the "For-itself."⁸¹

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Freedom

Freedom is the true "being of the For-itself" which must "choose itself."⁸¹

Historicize

"To become involved as a concrete existent in an actual world so as to have an 'history.'⁸³

The Body

"The body is thus the concrete facticity of our 'Being-for-itself' as affected by our 'Being-for-others.'"⁸⁴

We can never know another's freedom.⁸⁵

"Consciousness is the for-itself and the body is the precise way in which consciousness exists-its facticity." ⁸⁶

"The body is the context of our relations with others.

The body is Being-for-itself. Facticity is the bodies' past."⁸⁷

"Our body is also our alienated outwardness."⁸⁸
It is a being for others. "Knowledge is consciousness."⁸⁹

There is an existential relationship between my consciousness and my body.90

Others

During reflection a person becomes aware of one's awareness."

Pride is a form of bad faith. 92

Fear and shame are the awareness of the other person as a subject.

"Shame is the awareness of being before the other in such a way as to need the other to recapture the very consciousness he has stolen from us."0

"The other is first experienced as the alienation of our possibilities and as the objectification of ourselves.'@

"Although our 'Being-for-others' is factual it is still an internal relation to the other."95

Man has become "a transcendence-transcended," or "a freedom engulfed by another's freedom."96

Shame is our view of ourselves before the "other.

"The other is an immanence that is transcendent to me.09M

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Relationships

"The for-itself modifies the in-itself through action.'@
Desire is an awareness and a totality.

"Desire is a way in which the for-itself chooses itself before the other and in relation to the other."110

Sadism

Sadism is a failure of desire.101

Sadism reduces flesh to uselessness. 102

Masochism

Masochism is the realization that one cannot lose his subjectivity in the other person.¹⁰¹

Masochism is the result of realizing that seduction cannot succeed because both persons are using a similar mode of language on each other. ¹⁰⁴

Language

Language is the means I use "to cope with a self that is no longer the simple nihilation of the in-self; but, which is now the nihilation of the in-itself before the other-the arising of a self as a myself in the midst of the world.""

One power of language is the seduction of freedom."

Sex

Sexual desire should be analyzed "as an intentionality."^{1,17} It is both an awareness and an ob edification.

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The body is sexuality "desired not as a thing or machine but as the facticity of a consciousness."¹⁰⁸

Sex is an attempt to capture another's "subjectivity in his objectivity.""

Love

Love is "a project of good faith doomed to failure because of the nature of the for-itself as a nihilation and failure."¹¹⁰

Love is an attempt to make man's "existence necessary.""

"Class consciousness occurs when I assume my objectiveness as forming a synthetic totality with the other before the look of a 'third.'" ¹² This is the "'us.'" ¹³

Conflict

Sartre focuses on conflict because "each for-itself is freedom." ¹⁴

Martin Heidegger, briefly

Heidegger has a phenomenological analysis of Being. He deals with Being and speech. He also deals with God's absence and neglects the relation of God to the "lo be."
¹⁵

Karl Jaspers

For Jaspers, philosophy is more than a body of writings accessible to consciousness." It is also a personal struggle towards comprehending life. Jaspers wants us to grow above scientific knowledge to Being-for-oneself wherein one becomes aware of man's freedom and responsibility. Jaspers sees philosophy and theology as not being capable of producing bodies of knowledge.

According to Jaspers, authenticity is the acceptance of the individual and of his collective history. ¹¹⁷ This collective history would be a personalized "We." Jaspers contends that final situations like death and guilt lead man to the edge of transcendence and faith. Myths and religion do not lead one to a definitive idea about transcendence; but, they do lead one to a personal conviction about life and death.

Martin Buber

Buber predicates an "I-Thou" relationship between man and God." God is the eternal "Thou." He also emphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationships.

Morton White's Book

A Contrast/ The Ideology of the American Revolution

If existentialism is a philosophy of existence, how does it compare with the philosophy of the American Founding Fathers who were structuring America's existence. What

was the ideology of the Founding Fathers? How does their philosophy contrast with existentialism?

First, what was the ideology of the Founding Father? The Founding Fathers believed that truth was not only subjective, but, that many truths were self-evident and objective. The first writing to see about the claim of self-evident truth in the Declaration of Independence is this idea: if Jefferson and others signers were asked to say how they perceived that some

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of their propositions were correct, they would say "'I know it by intuition.'" When it became necessary for the colonists to proclaim a revolution, and say that "all men are created equal and they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," they claimed that these rights were like self-evident axioms. This idea was also propounded by Aquinas, Descartes, Leibniz and Spinoza. Locke contended that the rules of natural law are like axioms. He differentiated between "innate principles" and "self-evident" principles. Locke was opposed to the idea of "innate principles." Thus Americans have a "common nature" and a "common right." S

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Two plus two equal four. And red is not green.

Moral Sense and the Founding Fathers

Moral sense is according to White a modality that is different from reason.⁸ The moral sense is like the five senses in certain aspects. For example, we are supposed to be able to identify that a certain act like lying is false. Some writers argued that the moral sense was or is conscience. Other writers identified the "doctrine" of moral sense which had the last say in morals.⁹ A third group felt that reason was "the preferred" way to establish moral regulations."

Hutcheson had an early definition of moral sense as distinct from reason. He felt that this faculty was also distinct from the will. Furthermore, Hutcheson maintained reason did not intervene between

identification of an action, e.g., its being unheroic and the sensation, moral in nature, that it is right or wrong. Thus this sense enables us to set forth moral propositions almost like mathematical propositions that we claim to have knowledge of." It seems that the moral sense is, in part, cognitive developmental. Locke, in contrast,

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held that the idea of rational intuitionism immediately perceives the truth.

Jefferson regarded reason as preferable to an appeal of a moral sense. Is morality objective? Buriamaquì contends that reason supervises the moral sense." He was referring to both intuitive reason and judgment. It seems that moral sense is under intuitive reason.

During 1774 Jefferson's ' Summa[y View of the Riahts of British America appealed to a common sense thus reason, and to a moral sense as set forth in the "common feelings of human nature."" In his Declaration, Jefferson maintained that moral sense was under reason. Jefferson says that "'nature has constituted utility to man, the standard and test of virtue. Thus Jefferson was partially utilitarian. He also made some references to revelation. What about the moral sense and the people? Jefferson argued in 1774 that 'the great principles of right and wrong are legible to every reader. 1117

Natural Law and Natural Duty/ A Contrast

The rules of nature placed a duty on man. "How can a law of nature express a "duty" when, according to the first paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, laws of nature are said to "entitle" one people to a separate and equal station among the powers of the earth?" If the rules of nature are thought to proclaim duties, how can they be found to proclaim rights?

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In A Summa[y View of the Riahts of British Amica as "'a free people, claiming their rights as derived from the laws of nature."" How can a law of nature prescribe anything? Locke maintains in his "Essays on the

Law of Nature" that "'light is grounded in the fact that we have the free use of a thing, whereas law is what enjoins or forbids the doing of a thing.'" In contrast, Hobbes maintains a right is a freedom ²⁰ A right is a choice. Moreover, Hooker contrasts laws that

to do or not do something.

regulate planets with laws that rule men. Man like God has freedom of choice. Man has reason. Many colonists thought that the laws of Newton's mechanics and moral laws were similar to those in Mathematics.

Rights

"What did Jefferson mean by the term 'rights'?"²¹ He thought that rights are more than what is right. Our rights are, according to Jefferson, deducible from duties. Pufendorf, in contrast, says that a right is a moral power.²² He distinguishes between authority and right which indicates that an authority is properly acquired and held.

Morton White distinguishes between rights and physical powers. A power is only a

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physical property.

When physical strength is used immorally it is an arbitrary power used in "license." Power is not necessarily dominion over men. Moreover, men have some inalienable rights, for example, religious freedom. Is property a right? If so, why was it left out? Are negroes merely property? The right to property is ambiguous as it is presented in the Declaration of Independence. It is not on par "with liberty and safety" in the Declaration.

To Obey God We Must Oppose Tyrants²¹

The colonists felt that they had a duty to oppose tyranny. They felt that they were complying with natural law and "nature's God" when they rebelled against the British. They felt that they had a moral imperative.

Were the Revolutionaries Utilitarians

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Happiness is a result of carrying out duties which were the result of the nature of man. An intuitionist cannot be a utilitarian, and a utilitarian cannot be an intuitionist. A utilitarian denies the idea of natural law. The revolutionaries were not utilitarians because they thought that man had rights and duties by the nature of man's essence.

Rebellion and Unalienable Rights 26

The revolutionaries felt that if man's unalienable rights were infringed upon man has a right to rebel. They also argued that the government is the guardian of the specific rights of man. However, it seems that the revolutionaries were ambiguous on the relationship of the government to man's rights.

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(1774) Jefferson proclaimed Amer-

Existentialism/intuitionism, a Contrast

In contrast, it seems that the existentialists are quite different from the Founding Fathers approach of "intuitionism." Instead of inalienable rights the existentialists say that every mind has a "bias." Instead of a moral sense and an objective morality, the existentialists would argue that morality is subjective and many existentialists would argue that an objective morality doesn't exist. Instead of natural law and a division between mind and body, many existentialists would say that the ego is transcendent in nature and there isn't a mind-body dualism; and they would say that man and nature are one. Instead of being governed by reason, many existentialists would argue that man has an unnatural and irrational side. Instead of obeying God and opposing tyrants, Sartre, for example, would argue that man is like God. Instead of the pursuit of pleasure, the existentialists would say that there are a number of pursuits in life including pain, anguish, and perhaps suicide. Instead of God there is Sartre's "nothing." Sartre would, for example, argue that America and the American Constitution are permeated with "nothing." Was

the American Revolution permeated with fear, despair, rape, death, "absurdity"; and 'nothing.' It probably was for some.

Both of the above groups are for freedom of choice and liberty. Both of the above groups are for a revolution if it will further personal freedom. Both the existentialists and the Founding Fathers are or were fighting for transcendence of their outlooks, consciousnesses, and values. Both groups are or were struggling with the problem of existence.

Marxism and Existentialism

What is Marxism? R. Aron contends that first it is the ideas of Marx. Second, it is the ideas that Marx espoused and which are interpreted by different Marxists' schools of thought. Third, it is the parties and social movements that claim to be Marxist. What are some important intellectual contributions of these Marxists? First, is the idea that there is a movement from "capitalist exploitation to socialist revolution." Second, is the idea that economic determinism is the basis of Marx's "scientific" sociology. Third, is the idea that the state shall "wither away." Fourth, is the idea that social existence determines man's consciousness. Fifth, is the idea that private property should be abolished. Sixth, is the idea that the proletariat will arise. The seventh, idea is the labor theory of value. This is the idea that the amount of labor put into making an object determines the value of the object. Eighth, is the idea that the capitalist is forced to buy price-cutting machinery. Then he has to lower the workers' wages to buy more machinery. This act displaces consciousness followed by a dialectical revolution for justice and reason in history. Ninth, is the idea that the proletariat will be run by a dictatorship of the proletariat. Tenth, is the idea that there will be a worldwide proletariat revolution.

Some More on Marxism and Existentialism

First, Sartre became a Marxist. Like the other Marxists he was an atheist. Second, Marxists feel that our actions are determined by economics and class. In contrast, many existentialists contend that our actions are the result of

the actions of the will. Third, Kierkegaard thought up the idea of a "existential dialectic." For example, there are two sexes -in nature.

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In contrast, Marx invented the idea of dialectical materialism. There is some overlapping of ideas here. Fourth, is the idea of alienation. Both the existentialists and the Marxists use the idea of alienation as a spring board for their other ideas. Fifth, most existentialists are not for the abolition of private property like the Marxists are. Sixth, the existentialists look towards the "transcendence of the ego" in history. In contrast, the Marxists look towards scientific laws and reason in history. These laws govern the way we think. Seventh, in contrast to the Marxists, Marcel contends that life and history are the spirit. Existentialists contend that "life isn't determined." Finally, Marx contends that religion is the "opiate of the masses." In contrast, existentialists are split on the role of religion in life.

PARTICULARS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION'

Was the American Revolution simply the fight for independence from 1775 to 1783 a military, political, and constitutional fight? Or was the revolution as John Adams thought a transference of loyalty from England to the colonial war effort? What was the reason for this shift in loyalties?

The reason for this change in loyalties resides in the political and social events of the decades before the outbreak of the war. First, there was some friction in the relationship between the colonies and England. Yet none of the participants on both sides of the Atlantic were ready for the violent protests against parliamentary rule that began during the 1760's. The thing that may be said to have initiated the revolution was England's victory in the war that ended in 1763. That victory transformed the scales of power in the colonies and altered the character of the British Empire. The earlier victories of 1759 brought Canada and India under British rule.

In 1763, the Treaty of Paris brought about the possession of a large new empire to England. Ministers in Parliament took on a new

path or position with regard to Britain's colonies.⁵ It was a response to these new approaches that the North American colonists turned towards violent revolution.

1763-Beginning of the Intellectual Disease-Nausea

Chief Pontiac, the war leader of the Ottawa people near Detroit, was one of the first Americans to comprehend the changes brought about by the British victory. He reacted rapidly towards the British triumph. Using his influence he forged an alliance between the Ottawas and their allies. Following this alliance in May and June of 1763, these Indians started attacking colonists and forts near the frontier. Why did Pontiac and his warriors start such a move?

For many years Britain and France had warred with each other on the European front. After they had both colonized North America, their European wars engulfed their colonies as well. Inhabitants of these colonies of all races and colors came to be involved in wars that had started in Europe over events and issues that were not important to Americans. Were the colonists concerned about which European nation controlled their destinies? Yes, they were concerned and fought for the British in King William's War (1689-1697). Here fighting broke out in the Hudson Bay posts.⁷ Many of these posts fell to the French. The French spurred her Indian counterparts to assist in attacks near the northern frontier. Schenectady, New York was, for example, destroyed in 1690. The Treaty of Ryswick (1697) brought this

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war to an end and kept the balance of power. Five years later the battles resumed in Queen Anne's War. In this war the colonists drew up a force and attacked the Spanish town of St. Augustine in 1702. In New England the frontier was exposed from Maine to Massachusetts to repeated attacks. In 1704, for example, the cities of Wells, Maine and Deerfield, Massachusetts were destroyed by French and Indian troops. In the Peace of Utrecht (1713) Britain wrenched from Spain the fortress of Gibraltar and also the island called Minorca. In 1744 France entered King George's War. This war ended in a stalemate. In the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle (1748) the

English traded Louisberg for Madras which the French had captured in India.⁸ All three of these wars were not decisively won. Neither of the participants were able to dominant in Europe or America.⁹

Many of the Americans felt that these wars had no relevance to the colonists.¹⁰ Furthermore, these wars had less meaning to the American Indians. Yet these Indian tribes gullied many advantages from the whites wars. For example, the Indians on the frontier wanted to save their territories from white encroachment and they desired to stop the fate suffered by their coastal counterparts. Many of the Indians felt that their objectives could be best realized by playing off the Europeans against each other. This strategy was fruitful as long as the European's wars were inconclusive.

The situation that enabled the Indians to keep the balance of power interminably on the American frontier stopped with the war known as the French and Indian War." What made this war different from the other wars in the colonies was first that it had a conclusive end; and, second, the war moved from Europe to America. To the point, this war came about from a fight between Britain and France over which power would get the land to the west of the Appalachian mountains. This land was the homeland of the frontier tribes and out of necessity they became involved in the war.

In the year, 1753, the French started to move southward from Lake Erie into the Ohio Territory. This threat brought about an intercolonial meeting in June 1754. ¹¹ Promoted by leaders in England, delegates from seven colonies met with the Indian Iroquois leaders at Albany, New York, in an effort to try to talk the Indian confederated nation to align themselves with the British. However, this Albany Congress did not convince the Iroquois tribes to leave their position of neutrality.

The leaders at Albany made up a Plan of Union whose purpose it was to coordinate the military defenses of these colonies. They argued for the creation of an elected intercolonial legislature whose power it would be to tax. ¹² This legislature would be led by a president general who would be appointed by the leader of

England, the king. However, the home governments of the colonies did not approve this plan because they thought that it would jeopardize their autonomy. The Albany Congress is remembered largely for its plan of union

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written up by a committee under Benjamin Franklin. Only two concrete results came out of this congress. The first was its conception of a high commander for English troops in America. The second result was the appointment of William Johnson to be made the English superintendent of the northern Indians.

The leaders of the Congress did not realize that while they debated, the conflict they sought to get ready for was already starting. Is The governor of Virginia, which laid claim to the area of western Pennsylvania had dispatched a small military force to the west to counter French maneuvers. But these Virginia troops arrived late. The French military had already

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taken hold of the area around the present day city of Pittsburgh. The French were already building Fort Duquesne there. The young leader who led the Virginians let himself be trapped by the French in his fort, Fort Necessity, at Great Meadows, Pennsylvania. After his surrender, Washington and his soldiers were granted the right to return to Virginia.

Washington had erred greatly. 'r, He had started a conflict that eventually would almost become a world war. In 1775, General Edward Braddock got a great defeat near Fort Duquesne. For another three years, the French were completely victorious. The war was fought along the frontier area without becoming a European war. In 1756, the colonial war became the Seven Years War in Europe.

Further on in time, in 1757, under the command of William Pitt, the British put forth an effort that gave them victory in North America. 17 They won the forts at Louisberg in 1758, the fort in Quebec in 1759, and the fort in Montreal in 1760. These victories ended the war in America; however, it continued in other areas of the world until 1763. When the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763, France lost its major North American colonies to

Britain. Spain had allied itself with France toward the end of the conflict and was forced to give up Florida to the triumphant English. Because Britain feared France's presence in Louisiana, it brought about the cession of that area to Spain, a weaker force. From this time forward, the English colonies on the seacoast of North America would not have to worry about the French threat to the North American colonies.

Thus to bring about this victory, Pitt had to change many of the policies of his predecessors." At the beginning of the war, the English tried to rely heavily on American recruits. But after their defeats, enlistments fell behind and coercive techniques were adopted to fill their army ranks. In 1757, American crowds resisted this recruitment in New York City. Other fights developed over the militaries attempts to take wagons and supplies from American farmers and businessmen and to house troops in colonists homes.

In 1758, Pitt moved to ease the tensions that were developing to break up the AngloAmerican war movements. He consented to reimburse the colonies for their military expenses, and allowed the colonies to take care of the problem of troop recruitment. The result of this effort was an increase in the number of colonial volunteers. The colonial governments, with this financial aid from the British began to put more of their money towards the problem of winning the war. At this same moment, Pitt dispatched a number of British soldiers to the colonies. These redcoats did most of the fighting, while the colonists took on support roles.

Pitt's tactics won the war, but they also caused dissension within the Anglo-American troops.²⁰ British officers could not understand why the colonials seemed so hesitant to contribute to the British war effort. They were quite angry at the colonies' merchants who continued to trade with the French in the West Indies. British officers and enlisted men disparaged their American counterparts as poorly understanding military tactics and discipline. The Americans resented this. After 1760, memories of wartime dissent contributed to the tensions between colonies and the British.

²¹ This treaty
ended the
positior,

The Peace of Paris brought and end to the war in 1763.
of French power in North America. In North America Britain
took over almost all of the French North American colonies
east of the Mississippi River and all of the Spanish
colony, Florida.

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France lost Louisiana to the Spanish to make up for
Spain's loss of Florida. In the West Indies France lost
Tobago, Dominica, Grenada and also St. Vincent. In
effect, France was beaten in 1763.

Benjamin Franklin acting on behalf of the colony of
Pennsylvania, for the years 1764-1775, found the French
minister in London to still be angry about the loss of
her colonies. ²² Ironically, only fifteen years later,
Franklin would be in France devising an alliance for
Britain's rebelling colonies.

It was many years before the white settlers felt the
results of the English victory in the French and Indian
war.²³ However, some felt its effects right away. The
Ottawas, the Chippewas, and the Potawatomis became
pugnacious when the British raised the price of the
goods they sold them and stopped the French custom of
giving them ammunition for their hunting forays. Perhaps
more significantly the British stopped paying rent for
forts built within Indian territory. The British also
allowed white settlers to enter the Monongahela and
Susquehanna valleys which were controlled by the Iroquois
and Delawares. In so doing, the British indicated their
disregard for Indian rights to the control of the
interior.

Pontiac, the Ottawa chief who saw the significance of
the British victory, had been an ally of the French
since the 1740s.¹⁴ In May he attacked Fort Detroit while
his other warriors attacked the other British forts in
the Great Lakes region. The fort at Detroit fended off
the attack, but by the end of June the other forts west
of Niagara and North of Fort Pitt had capitulated to the
Indians.

These defeats were the highpoint of the Indians' raids.²¹ The Indians attacked the Virginia and Pennsylvania forts throughout the summer killing almost two thousand settlers. The Indians could not capture the forts at Niagara, Fort Pitt, or Detroit. In August, the Indians were defeated at Bushy Run, Pennsylvania by coastal troops. The war ended when Pontiac stopped the siege of Detroit in October. A treaty ending the war was formalized in 1766.

In the wake of the bloody summer of 1763, white settlers from Paxton Township, Pennsylvania, got revenge on a peaceful band of Indian Christian converts living at

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Conestoga.

During December the white settlers attacked the Indian village twice and killed twenty Indians. Two months later many of these frontier settlers known as the Paxton Boys marched on Philadelphia to try to get military protection against further Indian attacks. These protestors presented their petitions without violence and returned to their settlements.

Pontiac's revolt and the Paxton Boys protest showed that the English would find it difficult to govern the large area of land they had acquired from France. During October the English ministry issued the Proclamation of 1763. This Proclamation delineated a line through the top of the Appalachians beyond which colonists were denied the right to renew ²⁷

land grants.

This line did not remain in effect for a long time. Real estate speculators soon formed a corporation and sought to obtain control of a large domain covering most of West Virginia and some of Kentucky. Here they decided to set up the colony of Vandalia. The Board of Trade supported this venture; but, the proposed colony of Vandalia disappeared in the period of the revolutionary war.

At the end of the battles George Grenville, the Prime Minister, and George III, the new king, faced a problem: England's war debt. Britain's debt had gone from 973 to P-1 37 million ²⁸

since 1754. Because the Americans had been the winner of much of the wartime payments, Grenville decided that the Americans should have to pay the larger share of the burden of the empire. When Grenville sought to tax the colonies he did not consider whether or not the Parliament had the power to do this. Like most of his countrymen, he thought that the governments' rights were derived from the agreement of the people; but, he delineated consent far more loosely than the colonists did. American settlers had decided that they could be represented only by leaders that they and their property holding neighbors had voted for. In 1764, James Otis wrote a pamphlet called, The Rights of British Colonists Asserted and Proved, outlining the colonists position.³⁰ In response, Grenville had one of his supporters, Thomas Whately, answer this pamphlet. He developed the theory of "virtual representation." This was the idea that each member of Parliament represented the po-

representation.

political interests of the whole empire. Thus Charleston was as much represented as Manchester, England. Americans argued that "virtual representation" was nonsense.

In the period before 1763, the settlers had become used to a government that wielded limited power over the colonists.³² Consequently, the colonists believed that a good government was one that did little to interfere with their lives. This view was held by a group of British writers called the Real Whigs. These critics stressed the dangers implicit in a strong government, especially one headed by a king. They warned that kings would try to corrupt and keep the people down. Thus only the constant vigilance of the people and their elected leaders could keep freedom.

Britain's action to pull in the reins of colonial government during the 1760's and early 1770's led many Americans to think that the Real Whig's logic applied to them. ³³ These Americans saw evil designs behind the positions of Grenville and his followers. During the

middle 1760's, the settlers did not accuse Grenville right away of actions intended to keep them down. At first, the settlers wondered about the usefulness of these laws.

Initially, the Sugar and Currency Acts were passed by Parliament in 1764. ³¹ The Sugar Act changed the system of customs regulations; it laid down new duties on specific foreign imports brought into the colonies; it established a new court at Halifax, Nova Scotia; and, it contained provisions aimed at stopping the rampant smuggling of molasses, a major commodity of American trade. The Currency Act was adopted in England in 1764. ³¹ The reason for its passage was that the colonies had a shortage of hard money which was used to pay debts in Britain. To deal with this shortage they issued colonial papercurrency. British bankers thought that they would hurt themselves if they accepted depreciated money. To deal with this problem Parliament during 1751 forbid the New England colonists to have their currency as legal money. The Currency Act extended this restriction to all of the colonies. The impact of this Act was to cause currency deflation.

There was a postwar depression; thus it did not come as a surprise that both the individual colonists and the colonial government decided to protest these policies. ³⁶ For example, eight colonial legislatures sent requests to Parliament asking for the repeal of the Sugar Act. They contended that this act put restrictions on their commerce and they argued that they had not consented to its passage. They also told their representatives in London to work against the passage of another tax, the Stamp Tax.

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This Stamp Tax was modeled on a law that had been in effect in Britain for nearly one

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hundred years. It created tax stamps that varied in expense from three pence to £6, and they required that they be attached to all types of printed material and legal articles such as newspapers, bonds, deeds, and licenses etc. ³⁸ A tax measure of this scope had never been placed upon the colonies. These stamps had to be paid for with hard money and violators would be tried in

court without the benefit of a jury. ³¹ This law would stop the colonial tradition of self-imposed taxation.

In a pamphlet protesting the Sugar Act and the Stamp Act called "The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved by James Otis, Jr .,"⁴⁰ Otis opened the ideological dilemma that the colonist had to deal with for the next ten years. How could the colonists be opposed to different acts of Parliament without questioning Parliament's authority over the colonists. On the one hand, Otis claimed the Right of Britons such as 'the right not to be taxed without the colonists' consent. ¹¹⁴¹ On the other hand, Otis admitted that the colonists must obey the laws of Parliament. In an attempt to find a middle ground Otis proposed colonial representation in British Parliament. The idea failed on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Stamp Act Crises - A Psychological Debt

Does life have an "inherent meaning?" The colonists felt that it does-liberty. Americans

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first heard of the passage of the Stamp Act in 1765. They were perplexed about how to deal with the news. Most of the colonists opposed it. However, they were not able to stop its adoption. Maybe Otis was right. The only course open to the colonists was to pay the tax.

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Not all of the settlers were disposed to paying the new levy without a fight. Patrick Henry was willing to put up a fight. He wrote what have come to be called "The Virginia Stamp Act Resolves." He introduced his resolves in May at the end of the legislative session. He was accused of treason by the Speaker of the House. However, he denied the accusation. The remaining burgesses adopted five of Henry's seven proposals by a slight majority. Their actions had many effects.

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The colonists were British subjects and they had rights. One of these rights was the right to consent to taxation. Three other resolutions advanced their cause much

further. One proposal was repealed. It claimed for the burgesses "the only exclusive right to tax Virginians. The final two proposals asserted that the colonists did not have to obey tax laws enacted by other legislative bodies.

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Approval of these proposals did not reflect a desire for colonial independence. They only wanted a certain amount of self-rule. Over the next decade, Americans searched for a formula that would allow them to control taxation but still remain loyal British subjects. The British were unable to compromise on this issue. During the August of 1765, a Boston social club of printers, distillers, and artisans called the Loyal Nine demonstrated against the Stamp Act. They hoped to show that people of all social classes were opposed to this act. The nine made an overture to the city's rival laborers and artisans-called the North and South End mobs. The nine talked them into participating in the demonstrations.

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On August 14, the demonstrators hung in effigy, Andrew Oliver, the colonies' stamp dis-

11,17

tributor, "from a tree on Boston Common. At dusk the mob carried the effigy throughout the streets and burned down the office of the stamps. They then burned the effigy. Later they gutted the home of Lt. Governor Thomas Hutchinson. The colonies' stamp agents then resigned their commissions. This violence was not deemed appropriate.

Residents of the other colonies took heed to these mob actions.⁴⁹ In the first place, these other colonists saw that they could stop the implementation of this act by forcing its officials to quit. In the second place, they saw the explicit danger of using mob action to obtain their goals.

The Stamp Act brouhaha brought many disenfranchised colonies into the crucible of empire politics.⁵⁰ A variety of class and racial groups joined in

discussions and demonstrations. The aims of these new groups were often different from those of the Loyal Nine. Although Hutchinson was wrongly believed to be a proponent of the Stamp Act, his money helped motivate the crowds.

During June 8, 1765, the Massachusetts House of Representatives invited different assemblies to meet in New York on appeals of the Stamp Act to the king and parliament.⁵¹ Nine assemblies responded and during mid-October the Stamp Act Congress issued a "Declaration of the Rights and Grievances of the Colonies, a petition to the king for relief, and a petition to Parliament for repeal of the Stamp Act."¹² They argued that while Parliament had the power to regulate its empire it could not impose taxes on an unrepresented people.

The Loyal Nine's approach was replicated in different parts of the colonies. ¹³ For example, on November 1, when the Stamp Act law was to go into effect, not one stamp distributor carried out his job. To further work against this law, an intercolonial association was developed, called the Sons of Liberty. This group was firstly organized in New York City in November and its organization was composed mostly of merchants, lawyers, and trades people. Thus the Sons of liberty united resistance leaders in all of the colonies. In the fall and winter of 1765-66, the Stamp Act was opposed on three fronts.-, ' First, the colonial legislators wrote Parliament and asked it to repeal this law; and they organized an intercolonial congress to oppose this act. Second, the Stamp Act Congress met during October in New York to draw up a statement of protest; and the Sons of Liberty held meetings to win support for the resistance. Third, colonial merchants founded nonimportation associations to put pressure on British merchants.

The battle had scarcely started before Grenville and his ministers were forced out of office." They were dismissed because they had had a fight with the king over who should get offices. During July 1765 the king put in a new leader, the Lord of Rockingham. He was the leader of the Rockingham Whigs. These Whigs had aligned themselves with the colonists views. Rockingham ended the dispute by repealing the Stamp Act. However, he associated this repeal with the

enactment of the Declaratory Act. This act claimed that it was Parliament's right to legislate for Britain's American colonies in virtually all cases.⁵⁶ When Americans voiced support for the Stamp Act's repeal, they did not, for the most part see the implications of the Declaratory Act.

In the year 1767, Charles Townshend, Chancellor of the Exchequer, moved to use the Declaratory Act to coordinate moves to tax the colonists.⁵⁷ These new taxes that Townshend

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set forth were to be levied on goods like paper, tea, and glass. Then he started up a Board of Customs Commissioners at Boston Port. Finally, he reorganized the Courts at the major colonial ports. These taxes seemed to be only extensions of the Navigation Acts. However, these duties were different from other taxes in two ways. Firstly, they were placed on items imported from Britain to the colonies. Foreign manufactures were not included. In so doing, these taxes were passed in opposition to mercantilist theories. Secondly, they were developed to obtain money, not just to regulate commodity exchange in America. This move posed a threat to colonial representatives. The colonists threatened to keep the officials' salaries.

The Massachusetts assembly met these acts by drawing up a round robin letter to the other colonial assemblies calling for a united protest to the king. When Lord Hillsborough, secretary of State, heard of the letter he petitioned Governor Francis Bernard of the Massachusetts assembly to stop it. In 1768 the Massachusetts assembly convened and

rejected the recall by a large majority of the legislators. The other governors did the same thing.

Throughout the campaign against the Townshend duties, the Sons of Liberty and other American politicians made a concerted effort to widen the support of the resistance.⁵⁹ They asked merchants to decline to import British goods. The result of these actions was to unite many Americans in a common cause.

In villages across America, women called the Daughters of Liberty, met to make clothes in public in an effort to end domination of English cloth.⁶⁰ These women served as political teachers. They also took the lead in not drinking British tea. These tactics worked and imports from England dropped drastically.

In April of 1770, a new prime minister was able to convince parliament to charge the Townshend duties.⁶¹ He did this because he thought that inter-empire duties were a bad business policy. The tea tax was excluded. Business people began importing British goods again. The other sections of the Townshend Acts were not repealed.

The Boston Massacre: The Development of a Negation

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Colonial boycott had a big impact on English trade. This impact persuaded Lord North to change the Townshend Act in time to prevent a serious conflict. The British soldiers in Boston were a source of provocation. Crowds gathered on March 5, 1770, in a square before the customs house and began throwing snowballs at the guard on duty. He called in Captain Robert Preston for reinforcements. After one soldier was knocked down, he arose and fired into the snowballers. Five people were killed and eight people were wounded. Crispus Attucks, a runaway slave, was the first person to die. To avoid more violence Governor Thomas Hutchinson relocated the soldiers out of town. The soldiers involved in the shooting were charged with murder. All were acquitted except several soldiers who were punished for manslaughter.

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For a few years after this massacre little was done to rupture relations. The Stamp Act was over with as were all the other Townshend duties except the tax on tea. However, many of the Grenville-Townshend laws still remained such as the Sugar Act, the Currency Act,

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the Quartering Act, the Vice-Admiralty Courts, and the Boards of Customs officials. The soldiers had left

