**Main Point Reading - Day 3**

**The First Continental Congress**

1. **What were the Intolerable Acts?**

The Intolerable Acts were the American Patriots' term for a series of punitive laws passed by the British Parliament in 1774 after the Boston Tea party. They were meant to punish the Massachusetts colonists for their defiance in throwing a large tea shipment into Boston harbor. In Great Britain, these laws were referred to as the Coercive Acts.

The acts took away Massachusetts' self-government and historic rights, triggering outrage and resistance in the Thirteen Colonies. They were key developments in the outbreak of the American Revolution in 1775.

1. **What was the name given to the convention to protest the Intolerable Acts?**

Britain responded to the Boston Tea Party in 1774 by passing several laws that became known in America as the Intolerable Acts. One law closed Boston Harbor until Bostonians paid for the destroyed tea. Another law restricted the activities of the Massachusetts legislature and gave added powers to the post of governor of Massachusetts. Those powers in effect made him a dictator. The American colonists were very angered by these forceful acts. In response to these actions and laws, the colonist banded together to fight back. Several committees of colonists called for a convention of delegates from the colonies to organize resistance to the Intolerable Acts. The convention was later to be called the First Continental Congress.

1. **What did the Congress vote to do?**

The First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia from Sept. 5 to Oct. 26, 1774, to protest the Intolerable Acts. Representatives attended from all the colonies except Georgia. The leaders included Samuel Adams and John Adams of Massachusetts and George Washington and Patrick Henry of Virginia. The Congress voted to cut off colonial trade with Great Britain unless Parliament abolished the Intolerable Acts. It approved resolutions advising the colonies to begin training their citizens for war. They also attempted to define America's rights, place limits on Parliament's power, and agree on tactics for resisting the aggressive acts of the English Government. lt also set up the Continental Association to enforce an embargo against England. By the time the first meeting of the Continental Congress ended, hostilities had begun between Britain and the colonies.

1. **What did Patrick Henry say to express his feelings about fighting for the colony’s liberty?**

In March 1775, at the third Virginia convention, held in St. John's Church in Richmond, to discuss relations with Great Britain, Patrick Henry made his timeless "Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death!" quote. King George had declared all 13 North American colonies to be in a state of open rebellion. Lord Dunsmore, the Royal Governor of Virginia, had ordered all the gunpowder in Williamsburg seized and stored aboard his ship anchored in the Virginia harbor, to keep it out of the hands local patriot forces.

Patrick Henry, then a Virginia militia Colonel, with his militia troops faced down Lord Dunmore, forcing the British Governor in the famous "Gunpowder Affair" to return the large quantity of gunpowder which had been set aside for the Virginia militia by the Colonial legislature. For this action, Patrick Henry became thereafter "Public Enemy No. 1" in the eyes of the British.

