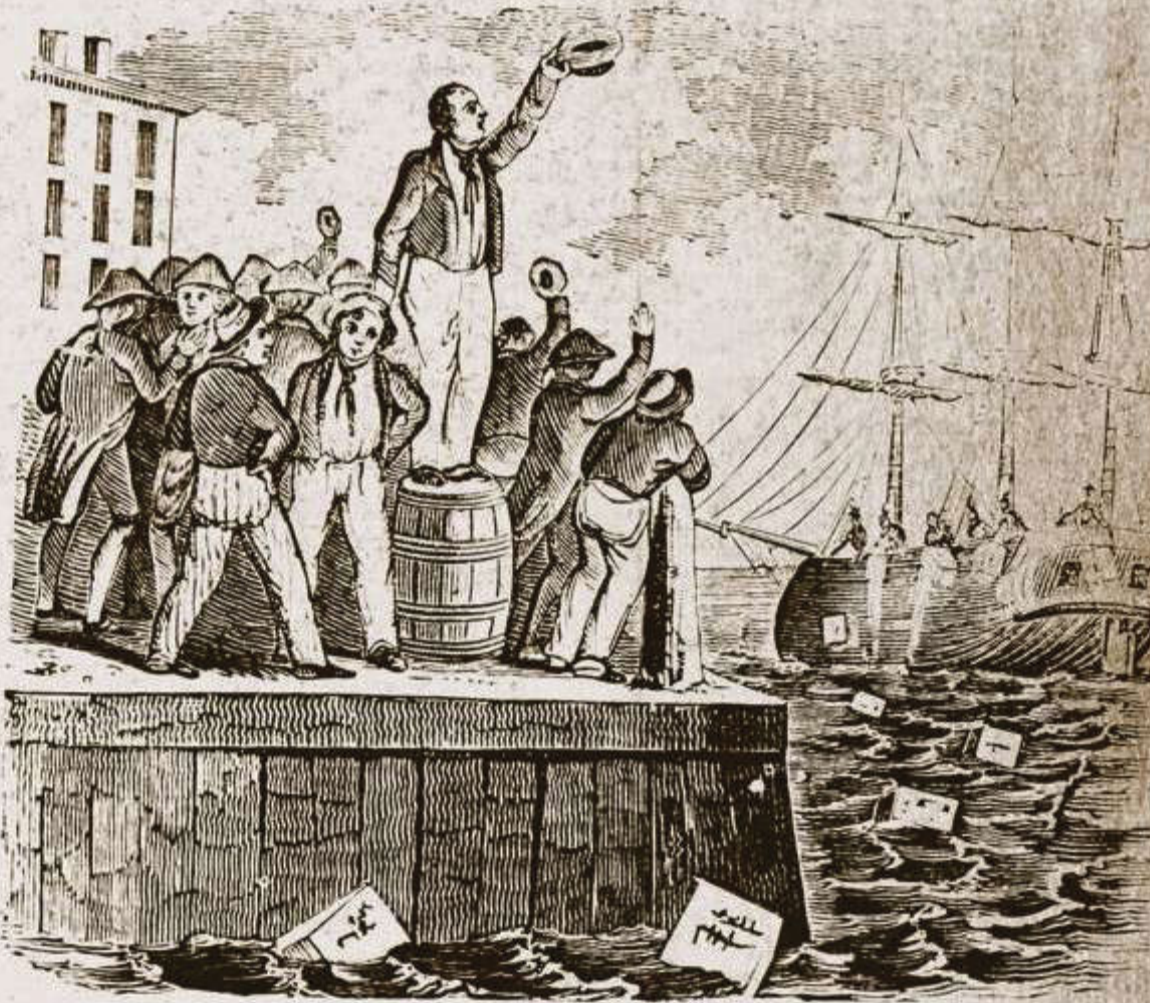


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A PROTEST FOR THE AGES



250 years ago, people angry with how they were being governed tossed crates of tea into Boston Harbor. Nothing would be the same.

By **Danny McDonald**
GLOBE STAFF

Nowadays, Fort Point Channel is a picture of modern Boston. Think bougie hotels, gleaming luxury condominiums, restaurants that serve \$30 swordfish kebabs and \$20 espresso martinis, young professionals in Canada Goose jackets bundled up against a light wind walking back to their biotech jobs from lunch.

Little of the current backdrop stirs feelings of political revolution, but it is here where one of the most famous acts of civil disobedience in American history took place.

Saturday will mark the 250th anniversary of a

mob of Bostonians, enraged by British legislation that granted a monopoly to the East India Co., storming three ships docked on what was then known as Griffin's Wharf, thought to be near the present-day Intercontinental Hotel. They dumped

► **Events commemorating the Boston Tea Party are planned around Boston. B3.**

more than 340 chests of East India Co. tea, about 92,000 pounds, which one estimate puts at about \$1.7 million in today's currency, into the harbor, forever altering the trajectory of Boston and, some argue, the world. In the immediate decades after, it was known as "the destruction of the tea." You likely know it as the Boston Tea Party.

For historians such as Robert J. Allison, the seminal event, effectively a middle finger to a pow-

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US official downplays talk of rift with Israel

3 hostages mistakenly killed by military in Gaza

By **Yara Bayoumy and Thomas Fuller**
NEW YORK TIMES

TEL AVIV, Israel — Days after President Biden said Israel was losing support for its military campaign in the Gaza Strip, his national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, on Friday played down differences between the two allies after meetings with Israel's top leaders.

"We're not here to tell anybody, 'You must do X, you must do Y,'" Sullivan told reporters in Tel Aviv, the latest emissary from the Biden administration to visit Israel to discuss the war.

His remarks came on the same day that the Israeli military said its soldiers had accidentally killed three Israeli hostages in what it described as an "active combat zone." During fighting in Shejaiya, a neighborhood in Gaza City, troops "mistakenly identified three Israeli hostages as a threat," the military said in a statement. "As a result, the troops fired toward them and they were killed."

The military said it realized the error during checks in the area and "suspicion arose over the identities of the deceased."

The military identified the three Israelis killed as Alon Shamriz, Yotam Haim, and Samer Talal-

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SAID KHATIB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Palestinians checked a half destroyed building following Israeli bombardment in Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, on Friday.

Harvard's Gay acknowledges 'formidable' work ahead

By **Hilary Burns and Mike Damiano**
GLOBE STAFF

The days ahead won't be much easier for Claudine Gay

Scholars say Tea Party was game-changer

►TEA PARTY
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erful government and corporation, remains relevant to “anyone who wants to govern themselves.”

“It really is the resistance to power, arbitrary power,” said Allison, a history professor at Suffolk University and member of Revolution 250, a collection of groups that commemorate events that led to the American Revolution.

The destruction of tons of dried tea leaves in 1773 would reverberate throughout American history: abolitionists and suffragists would cite and draw inspiration from it; Martin Luther King Jr. referenced it in his letter from a Birmingham jail.

Much more recently, there was the Tea Party movement, a populist conservative effort that some analysts say laid the groundwork for former president Donald Trump and his MAGA brand of Republicanism.

But for Jonathan Lane, executive director of Revolution 250, the Boston Tea Party’s legacy belongs to Americans of all political persuasions. Its greatest relevance, he said, is anchored in how people “respond when they feel their voice isn’t being heard.”

One of the hallmarks of the event, he said, is “how protest can bring real change.”

On Saturday, an extensive reenactment in the heart of Boston is slated to memorialize that famous act of defiance. Events are scheduled at Faneuil Hall and Old South Meeting House, as well as outside at Downtown Crossing. The reenactment will culminate with a fife-and-drummed march from the meeting house to the Harborwalk at Atlantic Wharf. There, 250 pounds of loose tea, some of which was donated from the same East India Co. that was at the heart of the controversy in the 18th century, will be dumped into the channel.

For some, it’s hard to overstate the Tea Party’s place in history. Shawn Quigley, lead ranger for the National Park Service’s social justice team stationed out of Faneuil Hall, called it an “identity-building foundation block.” Evan O’Brien, creative director of the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, which sits in Fort Point Channel, said the Tea Party still resonates because it’s grounded in “the idea that ordinary citizens can do extraordinary things.”

Some historians, including Eric Hanson Plass, point to the

aftermath of the Tea Party as being more significant than the event itself. The fallout was economically and politically brutal for Boston and would grease the path to rebellion. British authorities closed the port, meaning no commerce was coming in and out of the harbor, the economic lifeblood of the town at the time. In today’s terms, it would be comparable to “Silicon Valley no longer having access to the internet,” said Hanson Plass, a public historian with the National Park Service in Boston.

The Colonial government in Massachusetts was suspended. A new governor, a British general, was appointed and authorized to choose local officials. Previously, communities could call a town meeting, the chief form of local government at the time, whenever they wanted. After the Tea Party, they could call it only once a year, and even then the governor had to approve it. Allison said the clampdown “essentially takes away the power of self-government from the people of Massachusetts.”

In the words of Hanson Plass, “The fallout from this really brings the revolution closer and closer than ever towards being a war.”

Then, Boston was home to about 12,000 people. For years, local residents were enraged over “taxation without representation.” And with its monopoly on tea, the East India Co. had a stranglehold on that trade in the Colonies through their agents, two of whom were the sons of the governor of what was then-known as the Massachusetts Bay province, Thomas Hutchinson. To radicals who favored independence from the crown, he was a hated supporter of the royal government whose Boston home was ransacked years before by a mob angry over his support of unpopular taxation legislation.

Even in the 18th century, all politics was truly local. An English diarist cited by Allison summed up the mood at the time: “The king has Boston on the brink.”

The current day Seaport, an emblem of young wealth, was mostly covered by the waters of the harbor and mud flats at the time.

It was a warm enough day in December to have rained. The precipitation stopped at about 5 p.m. Groups gathered at three spots in Boston: at the Green Dragon Tavern, not far from the current pub of the same name near the New England Holo-



DAVID L. RYAN/GLOBE STAFF

From the top: Luis Cardona, assistant site manager with the Boston Tea Party Ships and Museum in Boston, worked on the rigging of The Beaver. Ash Wagner (right) practiced putting up the hair of Christine Strong, who was to portray Dorothy Quincy during the Boston Tea Party celebration. Jake Jordan poured tea into a wooden box that would be used in the reenactment. Tea samples from across the country were sent to the museum for use in the festivities.



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caust Memorial; a printing shop near where the New England Center for Homeless Veterans on Court Street now stands; and a carpentry shop near the present-day Shubert Theatre. They then all walked to the Old South Meeting House, where a discussion was underway about a recently arrived shipment of British tea. Groups of rabble-rousers already knew they wanted to destroy the product, according to Allison, who estimates the crowd swelled to 5,000.

Samuel Adams and John Hancock, both of whom would go on to be Founding Fathers of the nation, addressed the crowd, with the latter telling the masses: “Let every man do what is right in his own eyes.” Most historians have Adams and Hancock not boarding the ships with the mob in the evening.

From there, a mob proceeded to Griffin’s Wharf. All told, Alli-



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son thinks about 140 to 150 men hoisted the tea chests from the holds, broke them open with hatchets and axes, and dumped the contents and the chests into the chilly waters below. Some likely tried to hide their appearance with soot or cloaks over their heads. While the crowd is

often depicted as having dressed as Native Americans, Allison said it’s unlikely anyone was outfitted in feather headdresses. They were longshoremen, house painters, cobblers, tradesmen. Crowds of thousands likely looked on from the nearby docks. Dumping all the tea prob-

ably took a few hours.

The crates of tea, according to Allison, ranged from 50 pounds to 500. All of it originated in China, specifically from the Wuyi Mountains in the Fujian province, according to experts. There were British warships anchored in the harbor, but they didn’t want to inflame tensions further. No one was arrested.

Bostonians took the destruction of tea so seriously, said Allison, that when a man said to be “simple-minded” recovered some of it after it was dumped in the harbor, members of the group the Sons of Liberty marched to his house in Dorchester, confiscated it, and burned it on Boston Common.

Danny McDonald can be reached at daniel.mcdonald@globe.com. Follow him @Danny_McDonald.