

**Student Resource Page 2-1**  
**Original Document**  
**Loudoun vs. “The People of This Country”**

**Directions:** Read the quoted sections of Loudoun’s letters and then answer the questions.

**Background:** John Campbell, Earl of Loudoun, commander of the British North American forces, arrived in New York City on July 22, 1756. Upon his arrival he was met with an unfamiliar situation—provincial soldiers under his command were challenging his authority. They held to “their rights as Englishmen” and the “contractual agreement” on which they enlisted. Loudoun complained about the colonists in letters to the Duke of Cumberland:

The delays we meet with in carrying on the Service, from every parts of this country, are immense. They have assumed to themselves, what they call Rights and Priviledges, totally unknown in...[England]....

[O]pposition to royal authority seems to come not from the *lower* People, but from the *leading* People, who raise the dispute...by defending their Liberties, as they call them... I know it has been said in London, that this is not the time [to change how the colonies are governed]; [but] if You delay it ...You will not have a force to Exert any British Acts of Parliament here, for ...it is *not uncommon*, for the People of this Country to say, *they would be glad to see any Man, that dare exert a British Act of Parliament here.*”

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Source: Anderson, Fred. *The Crucible of War: The Seven Years’ War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000. p. 148.

1. What impression of *British* soldiers do you get from the selections from Loudoun’s letters about the American colonists?
2. Why do you think Loudoun was shocked that the “leading people” in the colonies defended their “Liberties” and opposed “royal authority”?

***Take It Further***

Lord Loudoun implies that a firmer hand is needed in the colonies. If Loudoun’s advice to crack down on colonial governments had been followed in 1756, how might events in the 1770s been different? Do you think such efforts to control the colonies could have been successful?