**The Petition of Rights**

Petition; a request to a police official that seeks to correct a wrong or to influence public policy.

Right; to be able to do things freely.

‘When you put these two words together they mean freedom of speech, press, assembly, and it can also mean no man or woman can be taxed or convicted without the o.k. from the parliament. These words represent the Petition of Rights that were set forth in 1628 by King Charles I.

Sir Edward Coke sent a request for a Petition of Rights to King Charles I, stating :

“Some of your Majesty’s subjects have been put to death by some commissioners, because they were not following laws. Some grievous offenders have escaped punishments due to them. We ask, your Majesty, that no man hereafter have to make or give any gift, loan, tax, or any like charge. Your Majesty’s subjects should abide by these rules and be destroyed or put to death if they do not allow them. We humbly pray of your most excellent Majesty that these be the rights and liberties, according to the laws and statutes of this realm.”

The Petition of Rights was established1638. It stated four principles:

* no taxes would be given without Parliament consent;
* no imprisonment without a shown cause;
* soldiers cannot be put in private houses; and
* martial law cannot be used in times of peace.

The Petitions were supposed to be a safeguard, but they were violated by Charles I, the person that agreed to them. He continued collecting taxes without Parliament consent.

To gain back their rights’, a man named Eliot wrote the Resolutions of Eliot. In this he stated that anyone voluntarily paying taxes without consent of the Parliament were not following the Petition of Rights, and were enemies of the King. Eliot, along with eight other men, were arrested. Eliot died in a castle tower in November of 1632.

For eleven years after the death of Eliot, Charles I ruled England without a Parliament. He began to follow old laws, and collect old taxes. Many events, such as a war, took place thereafter. Because of the events, the Parliament had to be called on, and the Petition of Rights were reinforced.

The Petition of Rights is still used in some ways today. We cannot legally put a man in prison without a fair trial. We should not be judgmental of others. The Petition of Rights was intended to bring justice, peace, and fairness to England. Instead it led to a harder fight for justice and peace.

Please answer the following questions after you do the reading:

1. What were the 4 principles of the Petition of Right? (in your own words please.)

2. Why did King Charles agree to follow them?

3. What did the resolutions of Eliot attempt to do?

4. What happened to Eliot and others that plotted against the King?

5. Why did King Charles call Parliament together again?

6. Which of these rights still used today?