

Encyclopedia of American Revolution Volume 3

Anthony Strickland



**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF
AMERICAN REVOLUTION
VOLUME 3**

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Chapter 21

Virginia Association, Sons of Liberty and Patriot (American Revolution)

Virginia Association

The Virginia Association was a series of non-importation agreements adopted by Virginians in 1769 as a way of speeding economic recovery and opposing the Townshend Acts. Drafted by George Mason and passed by the Virginia House of Burgesses in May 1769, the Virginia Association was a way for Virginians to stand united against continued British taxation and trade control. The Virginia Association served as the framework and precursor to the larger more powerful Continental Association.

Background

The adoption of the Virginia Association resolutions was preceded by a push from northern Virginians for expanded domestic industry. Starting in the mid-1760s, most Virginians were heavily impacted by a minor economic recession. The economic downturn was a result of the severe costs of the French and Indian War in addition to local climate difficulties, which had led to a series of poor crop yields. The economic struggles for many Virginians were exacerbated by the passage

of the Stamp Act. The colonist reaction in Virginia was to encourage domestic manufacturing growth and economic diversification. After the passage of the Townshend Acts in 1767, general sentiment in Virginia pushed eagerly for some action.

George Washington, at the time, a plantation owner in northern Virginia, promoted the implementation of some sort of non-importation scheme and conveyed his thoughts to his neighbor, George Mason. Washington contended that if the scheme was adopted on a large scale, the benefits would outweigh the costs of the loss of British imports. Mason, along with Washington and Richard Henry Lee, spent several weeks formulating the language of a non-importation association that would ultimately help strengthen the state's economy.

Gathered at the Raleigh Tavern (run by Anthony Hay) in Williamsburg, VA, the House of Burgesses, on May 17, began discussing the Mason draft. After amending some of the articles and the preamble, the House of Burgesses, which was made up two representatives from each of the counties, proceeded to pass the Virginia Association resolutions.

Content and Effects

In the preamble of the Virginia Association resolutions, it was declared that the "Townshend Acts were unconstitutional and destructive to the cause of liberty." The preamble also emphasized the hard times faced by Virginian plantation owners. As part of the agreement, colonists were prohibited from purchasing, after September 1, 1769, any article on a long list of enumerated goods. However, because there were

some goods that could not be replaced by Virginia manufacturers, the signers made exceptions for coarse and cheap goods.

The association was also given the power to call future meetings. A meeting of one hundred signers was necessary to revise the terms of the agreement unless the British Parliament met the specific demands that were detailed in the Association resolutions.

The Association was not as successful as initially intended because there were many merchants who did not follow the boycott. British exports to the colonies declined by 38% in 1769, but British producers remained profitable because certain merchants failed to adhere to the conditions. After Britain lifted the Townshend duties from all items except tea, the Association gradually weakened, and finally collapsed in 1771.

Sons of Liberty

The Sons of Liberty was a loosely organized clandestine political organization active in the Thirteen American Colonies founded to advance the rights of the colonists and to fight taxation by the British government. It played a major role in most colonies in battling the Stamp Act in 1765. The group disbanded after the Stamp Act was repealed. However, the name was applied to other local separatist groups during the years preceding the American Revolution.

In popular thought, the Sons of Liberty was a formal underground organization with recognized members and

leaders. More likely, the name was an underground term for any men resisting new Crown taxes and laws. The well-known label allowed organizers to make or create anonymous summons to a Liberty Tree, "Liberty Pole", or other public meeting-place. Furthermore, a unifying name helped to promote inter-Colonial efforts against Parliament and the Crown's actions. Their motto became "No taxation without representation."

History

In 1765, the British government needed money to afford the 10,000 officers and soldiers living in the colonies, and intended that the colonists living there should contribute. The British passed a series of taxes aimed at the colonists, and many of the colonists refused to pay certain taxes; they argued that they should not be held accountable for taxes which were decided upon without any form of their consent through a representative. This became commonly known as "No Taxation without Representation." Parliament insisted on its right to rule the colonies despite the fact that the colonists had no representative in Parliament. The most incendiary tax was the Stamp Act of 1765, which caused a firestorm of opposition through legislative resolutions (starting in the colony of Virginia), public demonstrations, threats, and occasional hurtful losses. To celebrate the repeal of the Stamp Act, the Sons of Liberty in Dedham, Massachusetts erected the Pillar of Liberty.

The organization spread hour by hour, after independent starts in several different colonies. In August 1765, the group was founded in Boston, Massachusetts. By November 6, a

committee was set up in New York to correspond with other colonies. In December, an alliance was formed between groups in New York and Connecticut. January bore witness to a correspondence link between Boston and New York City, and by March, Providence had initiated connections with New York, New Hampshire, and Newport, Rhode Island. March also marked the emergence of Sons of Liberty organizations in New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia.

In Boston, another example of violence could be found in their treatment of local stamp distributor Andrew Oliver. They burned his effigy in the streets. When he did not resign, they escalated to burning down his office building. Even after he resigned, they almost destroyed the whole house of his close associate Lieutenant Governor Thomas Hutchinson. It is believed that the Sons of Liberty did this to excite the lower classes and get them actively involved in rebelling against the authorities. Their actions made many of the stamp distributors resign in fear.

The Bostonian branch of the Sons of Liberty were responsible for organizing and executing the famous Boston Tea Party of 1773 in response to the Tea Act.

Early in the American Revolution, the former Sons of Liberty generally joined more formal groups, such as the Committee of Safety.

The Sons of Liberty popularized the use of tar and feathering to punish and humiliate offending government officials starting in 1767. This method was also used against British Loyalists during the American Revolution. This punishment had long been used by sailors to punish their mates.

New York

In December 1773, a new group calling itself the Sons of Liberty issued and distributed a declaration in New York City called the *Association of the Sons of Liberty in New York*, "which formally stated that they were opposed to the Tea Act and that anyone who assisted in the execution of the act was "an enemy to the liberties of America" and that "whoever shall transgress any of these resolutions, we will not deal with, or employ, or have any connection with him."

After the end of the American Revolutionary War, Isaac Sears, Marinus Willet, and John Lamb in New York City revived the Sons of Liberty.

In March 1784, they rallied an enormous crowd that called for the expulsion of any remaining Loyalists from the state starting May 1. The Sons of Liberty were able to gain enough seats in the New York assembly elections of December 1784 to have passed a set of punitive laws against Loyalists. In violation of the Treaty of Paris (1783), they called for the confiscation of the property of Loyalists. Alexander Hamilton defended the Loyalists, citing the supremacy of the treaty.

Flags

In 1767, the Sons of Liberty adopted a flag called the *rebellious stripes flag* with nine vertical stripes, four white and five red. A flag having 13 horizontal red and white stripes was used by Commodore Esek Hopkins (Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Navy) and by American merchant ships during the war. This flag was also associated with the Sons of Liberty. Red

and white were common colors of the flags, although other color combinations were used, such as green and white or yellow and white.

Notable Sons of Liberty

Boston

- Samuel Adams – political writer, tax collector, cousin of John Adams, fire warden. Founded the Sons Of Liberty
- Benjamin Church (physician) - first Surgeon-General of the United States Army and known traitor. Banished from Massachusetts in 1778.
- Benjamin Edes – journalist/publisher *Boston Gazette*
- Benjamin Kent - Attorney General
- John Hancock – merchant, smuggler, fire warden
- James Otis – lawyer, Massachusetts
- Paul Revere – silversmith, fire warden
- James Swan – financier
- Isaiah Thomas – printer, Boston then Worcester, first to read Declaration of Independence in Massachusetts
- Joseph Warren – doctor, soldier
- Thomas Young – doctor

New York

- Joseph Allicocke – One of the leaders of the Sons, and possibly of African ancestry.
- John Lamb – trader

- Alexander McDougall – captain of privateers
- Hercules Mulligan – haberdasher, spy under George Washington for the Continental Army, friend of Alexander Hamilton
- Isaac Sears – captain of privateers
- Haym Salomon – financial broker, New York and Philadelphia
- Marinus Willett – militia officer, cabinet maker, student

Other

- Benedict Arnold – businessman, later General in the Continental Army and then the British Army
- Timothy Bigelow – blacksmith, Worcester, Massachusetts
- John Brown – business leader of Providence, Rhode Island
- Samuel Chase – signer of the Declaration of Independence
- John Crane – carpenter, colonel in command of the 3rd Continental Artillery Regiment, Braintree, Massachusetts
- William Ellery – signer of the Declaration of Independence
- Christopher Gadsden – merchant, Charleston, South Carolina
- Patrick Henry – lawyer, Virginia
- Jedediah Huntington – General in the Continental Army
- William Paca – signer of the Declaration of Independence

- Charles Willson Peale – portrait painter and saddle maker, Annapolis, Maryland
- Matthew Phripp – merchant, chairman of the Norfolk committee of safety, prominent Freemason, and colonel of the militia. Norfolk, Virginia
- Benjamin Rush – physician, Philadelphia
- Charles Thomson – tutor, secretary, Philadelphia
- William Williams – signer of the Declaration of Independence

Later societies

At various times, small secret organizations took the name "Sons of Liberty." They generally left very few records. Bennington, Vermont had an organization named the Sons of Liberty in the early 1800s that included local notables such as military officer Martin Scott and Hiram Harwood.

The Improved Order of Red Men (estab. 1834) claimed to be descendants of the original Sons of Liberty, noting that the Sons participated in the Boston Tea Party dressed as their idea of "Indians".

The name was also used during the American Civil War. By 1864, the Copperhead group the Knights of the Golden Circle set up an offshoot called *Order of the Sons of Liberty*. They both came under federal prosecution in 1864 for treason, especially in Indiana.

A radical wing of the Zionist movement launched a boycott in the U.S. against British films in 1948, in response to British policies in Palestine. It called itself the "Sons of Liberty".

Patriot (American Revolution)

Patriots (also known as Revolutionaries, Continentals, Rebels, or American Whigs) were the colonists of the Thirteen Colonies. They rejected British rule during the American Revolution, and declared the United States of America an independent nation in July 1776. Their decision was based on the political philosophy of republicanism—as expressed by such spokesmen as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, and Thomas Paine. They were opposed by the Loyalists, who supported continued British rule.

Patriots represented the spectrum of social, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. They included lawyers such as John Adams, students such as Alexander Hamilton, planters such as Thomas Jefferson and George Mason, merchants such as Alexander McDougall and John Hancock, and farmers such as Daniel Shays and Joseph Plumb Martin. They also included slaves and freemen such as Crispus Attucks, the first casualty of the American Revolution; James Armistead Lafayette, who served as a double agent for the Continental Army; and Jack Sisson, leader of the first successful black operation mission in American history under the command of Colonel William Barton, resulting in the capture of British General Richard Prescott.

Terminology

"Whigs" or "Patriots"

The critics of British policy towards the colonies called themselves "Whigs" after 1768, identifying with members of the

British Whig party who favored similar colonial policies. Samuel Johnson writes that at the time, the word "patriot" had a negative connotation and was used as a negative epithet for "a factious disturber of the government".

"Tories" or "Royalists"

Prior to the Revolution, colonists who supported British authority called themselves *Tories* or *royalists*, identifying with the political philosophy of traditionalist conservatism dominant in Great Britain.

During the Revolution, these persons became known primarily as *Loyalists*. Afterward, some 15% of Loyalists emigrated north to the remaining British territories in Canada. There they called themselves the United Empire Loyalists. 85% of the Loyalists decided to stay in the new United States and were granted American citizenship.

Influence

Many Patriots were active before 1775 in groups such as the Sons of Liberty, and the most prominent leaders are referred to today by Americans as the Founding Fathers. They represented a cross-section of the population of the Thirteen Colonies and came from many different backgrounds. According to Robert Calhoon, between 40 and 45 percent of the white population in the Thirteen Colonies supported the Patriots' cause, between 15 and 20 percent supported the Loyalists, and the remainder were neutral or kept a low profile. The great majority of the Loyalists remained in America, while the minority went to Canada, Britain, Florida, or the West Indies.

Motivations

Patriot and Loyalist differences

Historians have explored the motivations that pulled men to one side or the other. Yale historian Leonard Woods Labaree used the published and unpublished writings and letters of leading men on each side, searching for how personality shaped their choice. He finds eight characteristics that differentiated the two groups. Loyalists were older, better established, and more likely to resist innovation than the Patriots. Loyalists felt that the Crown was the legitimate government and resistance to it was morally wrong, while the Patriots felt that morality was on their side because the British government had violated the constitutional rights of Englishmen. Men who were alienated by physical attacks on Royal officials took the Loyalist position, while those who were offended by heavy-handed British response to actions such as the Boston Tea Party became Patriots. Merchants in the port cities with long-standing financial attachments to Britain were likely to remain loyal to the system, while few Patriots were so deeply enmeshed in the system. Some Loyalists, according to Labaree, were "procrastinators" who believed that independence was bound to come some day, but wanted to "postpone the moment", while the Patriots wanted to "seize the moment". Loyalists were cautious and afraid of anarchy or tyranny that might come from mob rule; Patriots made a systematic effort to take a stand against the British government. Finally, Labaree argues that Loyalists were pessimists who lacked the Patriots' confidence that independence lay ahead.

Patriots and taxes

The Patriots rejected taxes imposed by legislatures in which the taxpayer was not represented. "No taxation without representation" was their slogan, referring to the lack of representation in the British Parliament. The British countered that there was "virtual representation" in the sense that all members of Parliament represented the interests of all the citizens of the British Empire. Some Patriots declared that they were loyal to the king, but they insisted that they should be free to run their own affairs. In fact, they had been running their own affairs since the period of "salutary neglect" before the French and Indian War. Some radical Patriots tarred and feathered tax collectors and customs officers, making those positions dangerous; according to Benjamin Irvin, the practice was especially prevalent in Boston where many Patriots lived.

Chapter 22

Black Patriot, Committees of Correspondence and Committee of Safety (American Revolution)

Black Patriot

A Black Patriot was an African American who sided with the colonists who opposed British rule during the American Revolutionary War. The term Black Patriots includes, but is not limited to, the 5000 or more African Americans who fought in the Continental Army during the war.

This was in contrast to Black Loyalists, African Americans who sided with the British forces. Many families escaped indentured servitude to take up the British offer of freedom for service, making their way to British lines and territory for safety.

First Patriot martyr

Crispus Attucks is considered to be the first Black Patriot because he was killed in the Boston Massacre. Attucks was commemorated by his fellow Bostonians as a martyr for freedom. Of mixed Native American and African ancestry, he was a fugitive slave who had escaped in 1750 from a farm in Framingham, Massachusetts. His death in the Boston Massacre is considered to be the first Patriot fatality of the war.

Black Patriots who served in the State Militias

The Bucks of America were an all-Black, Massachusetts Militia company organized in 1775 in Boston. This was the name given to one of two all-black units fighting for independence. There is little known of the campaign history of the Bucks company, or if they ever saw combat. It appears that they operated mainly around Boston. The Bucks of America may have acted primarily as an auxiliary police or security service, in the city, during the war. They most likely did not see action against regular British soldiers.

Black Patriots who served in the Continental Army

After the British started recruiting African Americans to start serving or assisting the British cause on the promise of freedom,

Americans began to recruit free blacks in New England and the East Coast to serve in the army. They were promised a life of luxury and mobility if they joined the war. The northerners were trying to escape the harsh treatment of blacks during the slavery era. By joining the war, they believed they were bettering the lives of African Americans all over.

Most of the time, Black Patriot soldiers served as individuals in a variety of predominantly white units of the Continental Army.

The 1st Rhode Island Regiment, also known as "Varnum's Continentals", was a Continental Army regiment from Rhode Island. It became well known as the "Black Regiment" because, for a time, it had several companies of African-American soldiers. It is regarded as the first African-American military regiment, although its ranks were not exclusively African American.

Captain David Humphreys' All Black, 2nd Company, of the Connecticut Continental Line, served from October 1780-November 1782. On November 27, 1780,

Humphrey's Black Company was assigned to the 3rd Connecticut Regiment. On January 1, 1781, the Regiment was merged with the 4th Connecticut Regiment, re-organized into nine companies, and re-designated as the 1st Connecticut Regiment.

William "Billy" Lee was an enslaved valet of George Washington who served in the Continental Army and fought with the general's forces. Lee was considered to be Washington's favorite slave, and was often featured in the background of the general's portraits.

Descendants

Famed African American, Harvard scholar and professor Henry Louis Gates is descended from John Redman, a Free Negro who served in the Continental Army. Gates is currently working on a project to find all descendants of Black Patriots, who served in the American Revolutionary Continental Army.

Proposed national memorial

The National Liberty Monument is a proposed national memorial to be located in the capital to honor the more than 5000 enslaved and free persons of African descent who served as soldiers or sailors, or provided civilian assistance during the American Revolutionary War. The memorial is an outgrowth of a failed effort to erect a Black Revolutionary War Patriots Memorial. This was authorized in 1986, but fundraising faltered and the memorial foundation dissolved in 2005.

Congress authorized the National Liberty Monument in January 2013. On September 8, 2014, the United States House of Representatives passed the joint resolution approving the location in the capital of a memorial to commemorate the more than 5,000 slaves and free Black people who fought for independence in the American Revolution. The joint resolution would approve the location of a commemorative work to honor the more than 5000 slaves and free black persons who fought in the American Revolution.

Notable Black Patriots

- Prince Hall
- Toby Gilmore
- Alexander Ames
- Crispus Attucks
- Charles Bowles
- Jeffrey Brace
- Joseph Brown
- Seymour Burr

- Wentworth Cheswell
- Titus Coburn
- Grant Cooper
- Paul Cuffee
- Austin Dabney
- James Armistead Lafayette
- Caesar Dickenson
- Charlestown Eaads
- James Easton
- Prince Estabrook
- William Flora
- Asaba Grosvenor
- Blaney Grusha
- Jude Hall
- Primus Hall
- Cuff Haynes
- Lemuel Haynes
- Henry Hill
- Cato
- Cato Howe
- Agrippa Hull
- Jeremy Jonah
- Lambert Latham
- Cato Mead
- Jack Little
- Barzillai Lew
- Salem Poor
- James Robinson
- Silas Royal
- Peter Salem
- Prince Simbo
- Phillis Wheatley

- Prince Whipple
- Bosson Wright

Committees of correspondence

The committees of correspondence was the brainchild of Boston patriot Samuel Adams, intended to establish an underground network of communication among patriot leaders in the Thirteen Colonies via letter writing. The purpose of the Committees of Correspondence was to inform, unite, and coordinate colonial efforts to counter onerous laws enacted by British Parliament and gain public support for independence. The Maryland Committee of Correspondence was instrumental in setting up the First Continental Congress, which met in Philadelphia.

These served an important role in the American Revolution, by disseminating the colonial interpretation of British actions between the colonies and to foreign governments.

The committees of correspondence rallied opposition on common causes and established plans for collective action, and so the group of committees was the beginning of what later became a formal political union among the colonies.

A total of about 7,000 to 8,000 Patriots served on these committees at the colonial and local levels, comprising most of the leadership in their communities—the Loyalists were excluded. The committees became the leaders of the American resistance to British actions, and largely determined the war effort at the state and local level. When Congress decided to boycott British products, the colonial and local committees

took charge, examining merchant records and publishing the names of merchants who attempted to defy the boycott by importing British goods. The committees promoted patriotism and home manufacturing, advising Americans to avoid luxuries, and lead a more simple life. The committees gradually extended their power over many aspects of American public life. They set up espionage networks to identify disloyal elements, displaced the royal officials, and helped topple the entire Imperial system in each colony. In late 1774 and early 1775, they supervised the elections of provincial conventions, which took over the actual operation of colonial government.

Function

The function of the committees in each colony was to inform the voters of the common threat faced by all the colonies and to disseminate information from the main cities to the rural hinterlands where most of the colonists lived. As the news was typically spread in hand-written letters or printed pamphlets to be carried by couriers on horseback or aboard ships, the committees were responsible for ensuring that this news accurately reflected the views of their parent governmental body on a particular issue and was dispatched to the proper groups. Many correspondents were also members of the colonial legislative assemblies and were active in the secret Sons of Liberty or even the Stamp Act Congress of the 1760s.

History

The earliest committees of correspondence were formed temporarily to address a particular problem. Once a resolution

was achieved, they were disbanded. The first formal committee was established in Boston in 1764 to rally opposition to the Currency Act and unpopular reforms imposed on the customs service.

During the Stamp Act Crisis the following year, New York formed a committee to urge common resistance among its neighbors to the new taxes. The Province of Massachusetts Bay correspondents responded by urging other colonies to send delegates to the Stamp Act Congress that fall. The resulting committees disbanded after the crisis was over.

Boston, whose radical leaders thought it was under increasingly hostile threats by the royal government, set up the first long-standing committee with the approval of a town meeting in late 1772.

By spring 1773, Patriots decided to follow the Massachusetts system and began to set up their own committees in each colony. Virginia appointed an eleven-member committee in March, quickly followed by Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and South Carolina. By February 1774, eleven colonies had set up their own committees; of the thirteen colonies that eventually rebelled, only North Carolina and Pennsylvania had not.

Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, in November 1772, Samuel Adams and Dr. Joseph Warren and Mercy Otis Warren formed a committee in response to the Gaspée Affair and in relation to the recent British decision to have the salaries of the royal governor and judges be paid by the Crown rather than the colonial assembly,

which removed the colony of its means of holding public officials accountable to their constituents. In the following months, more than one hundred other committees were formed in the towns and villages of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts committee had its headquarters in Boston and under the leadership of Adams became a model for other Patriot groups. The meeting when establishing the committee gave it the task of stating "the rights of the colonists, and of this province in particular, as men, as Christians, and as subjects; to communicate and publish the same to the several towns in this province and to the world as the sense of this town."

Virginia

In March 1773, Dabney Carr proposed the formation of a permanent Committee of Correspondence before the Virginia House of Burgesses. Virginia's own committee was formed on March 12, 1773. Its members were Peyton Randolph, Robert Carter Nicholas, Richard Bland, Richard Henry Lee, Benjamin Harrison, Edmund Pendleton, Patrick Henry, Dudley Digges, Dabney Carr, Archibald Cary, and Thomas Jefferson.

Pennsylvania

Among the last to form a committee of correspondence, Pennsylvania did so at a meeting in Philadelphia on May 20, 1774. In a compromise between the more radical and more conservative factions of political activists the committee was formed by combining the lists each proposed. That committee of 19 diversified and grew to 43, then to 66 and finally to two different groups of 100 between May 1774 and its dissolution in September 1776. One hundred sixty men participated in one

or more of the committees, but only four were regularly elected to all of them: Thomas Barclay, John Cox Jr., John Dickinson, and Joseph Reed.

Delaware

According to Hancock (1973), a committee of correspondence was established by Thomas McKean after ten years of agitation centered in New Castle County. In neighboring Kent County Caesar Rodney set up a second committee, followed by Sussex County. Following the recommendation of Congress in 1774, the committees were replaced by elected "committees of inspection" with a subcommittee of correspondence. The new committees specialize in intelligence work, especially the identification of men opposed to the Patriot cause. The committees were in the lead in demanding independence. The correspondence committees exchanged information with others in Boston and Philadelphia, and elsewhere. Their leadership often was drawn upon to provide Delaware with executive leaders. The committees of inspection used publicity as weapons to suppress disaffection and encourage patriotism. With imports from Britain cut off, the committees sought to make America self-sufficient, so they encouraged the raising of flax and sheep for wool. The committees helped organize local militia in the hundreds and later in the counties and all of Delaware. With their encouragement, the Delaware Assembly elected delegates to Congress favorable to independence.

North Carolina

By 1773, the political situation had deteriorated. There was concern about the courts. Massachusetts' young and ardent

Boston patriot, Josiah Quincy Jr. visited North Carolina staying five days. He spent the night of March 26, 1773 at Cornelius Harnett's home near Wilmington, North Carolina. The two discussed and drew up plans for a Committee of Correspondence. The committee's purpose: communicate circumstances and revolutionary sentiment among the colonies. It was after this meeting that Quincy dubbed Harnett the "Samuel Adams of North Carolina."

Perhaps characteristic of Committees of Correspondence members, Harnett was celebrated, distinguished, scholarly and possessed of unflinching integrity. Harnett's father (also named Cornelius Harnett) was Sheriff of Albemarle, an area covering about 11 modern counties in northeastern North Carolina.

The North Carolina Committee of Correspondence formed in December 1773 in Wilmington. Although Harnett was absent, he was made chairman of the committee. Other members included John Harvey, Robert Howe, Richard Caswell, Edward Vail, John Ashe, Joseph Hewes, Samuel Johnston, and William Hooper.

New York

- In response to the news that the port of Boston would be closed under the Boston Port Act, an advertisement was posted at the Coffee-house on Wall-street in New York City, a noted place of resort for shipmasters and merchants, inviting merchants to meet on May 16, 1774 at the Fraunces Tavern "in order to consult on measures proper to be pursued

on the present critical and important situation." At that meeting, with Isaac Low as chair, they resolved to nominated a fifty-member committee of correspondence to be submitted to the public, and on May 17 they published a notice calling on the public to meet at the Coffee-house on May 19 at 1:00PM to approve the committee and appoint others as they may see fit. At the meeting on May 19, Francis Lewis was also nominated and the entire Committee of Fifty-one was confirmed.

On May 23, the committee met at the coffee-house and appointed Isaac Low as permanent chairman and John Alsop as deputy chairman.

The committee then formed a subcommittee which reported a letter in response to the letters from Boston, calling for a "Congress of Deputies from the Colonies" to be assembled (which became known as the First Continental Congress), which was approved by the committee. On May 30, the Committee formed a subcommittee to write a letter to the supervisors of the counties of New York to exhort them to also form similar committees of correspondence, which letter was adopted on a meeting of the Committee on May 31.

On July 4, 1774, a resolution was approved to appoint five delegates contingent upon their confirmation by the freeholders of the City and County of New York, and request that the other counties also send delegates. Isaac Low, John Alsop, James Duane, Philip Livingston, and John Jay were then appointed, and the public of the City and County was invited to attend City Hall and concur in the appointments on

July 7. This caused friction with the more radical Sons of Liberty (*Committee of Mechanics*) faction, who held the Meeting in the Fields on July 6. Three counties (Westchester, Dutchess, and Albany) acquiesced to the five delegates, while three counties (Kings, Suffolk, and Orange) sent delegates of their own.

Other colonies

By July 1773, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and South Carolina had also formed committees.

With Pennsylvania's action in May 1774 all of the colonies that eventually rebelled had such committees.

The colonial committees successfully organized common resistance to the Tea Act and even recruited physicians who wrote drinking tea would make Americans "weak, effeminate, and valetudinarian for life."

These permanent committees performed the important planning necessary for the First Continental Congress, which convened in September 1774. The Second Congress created its own committee of correspondence to communicate the American interpretation of events to foreign nations.

These committees were replaced during the revolution with Provincial Congresses.

By 1780, committees of correspondence had also been formed in Great Britain and Ireland.

Committee of safety (American Revolution)

In the American Revolution, **committees of correspondence**, **committees of inspection** (also known as **committees of observation**), and **committees of safety** were different local committees of Patriots that became a shadow government; they took control of the Thirteen Colonies away from royal officials, who became increasingly helpless.

In Massachusetts, as affairs drew toward a crisis, it became usual for towns to appoint three committees: of correspondence, of inspection, and of safety. The first was to keep the community informed of dangers either legislative or executive, and concert measures of public good; the second to watch for violations of non-importation agreements, or attempts of loyalists to evade them; the third to act as general executive while the legal authority was in abeyance. In February 1776 these were regularly legalized by the Massachusetts General Court but consolidated into one called the "Committee of Correspondence, Inspection, and Safety" to be elected annually by the towns.

Committees of correspondence

Committees of correspondence were public functionaries of a type first appearing in England, created by the parliamentary party of the 17th century in their struggles with the Stuarts. In 1763, when the English government attempted to enforce the trade and navigation acts on the American colonies after the

Peace of Paris, the colonial leaders advised the merchants to hold meetings and appoint committees to memorialize the legislature and correspond with each other to forward a union of interests. This was done in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and New York 1763–4.

On 21 November 1772 a town meeting at Faneuil Hall, Boston, appointed a correspondence committee of 21 to communicate with other Massachusetts towns concerning infringements of popular rights. Until late in 1774 (see Committees of Safety) it remained the real executive of the town and largely of the province. The Boston committee, by legal town-meeting, was made the executive of Boston. Under its direction the tea was thrown into the harbor, and the Tea Act of 1773 roused the remaining colonies: Georgia in September, Maryland and Delaware in October, North Carolina in December, New York and New Jersey in February, chose legislative committees of correspondence; and new municipalities joined the movement — several in New Hampshire and Rhode Island and the city of New York. After the Boston Port Bill came into effect the Boston committee invited those of eight other towns to meet in Faneuil Hall, and the meeting sent circulars to the other colonies recommending suspension of trade with Great Britain, while the legislative committee was directed by the House to send copies of the Port Bill to other colonies, and call attention to it as an attempt to suppress American liberty. The organization of the committees was at once enormously extended; almost every town, city, or county had one. In the middle and southern colonies the committees were empowered, by the terms of their appointment, to elect deputies to meet with those of other committees, to consult on measures for the public good.

Committees of inspection (committees of observation)

Pursuant to First Continental Congress resolution 11, committees of inspection were to be formed in every county, city and town to enforce the Continental Association. Hundreds of committees of inspection were formed following the First Continental Congress's declaration of the Continental Association, a boycott of British goods, in October 1774. In New York City, it was called the Committee of Observation or Committee of Sixty.

Initially, the focus of the committees was on enforcing the Non-Importation Agreements, which aimed to hinder the import of British manufactured goods. However, as the revolutionary crisis continued, the committees rapidly took on greater powers, filling the vacuum left by the colonial governments; the committees began to collect taxes and recruit soldiers. Kathleen Burk writes: "It is significant that the Committees believed that they derived their authority from the Continental Congress, not from the provincial assemblies or congresses."

Committees of safety

Committees of Safety were a later outcome of the committees of correspondence. Committees of safety were executive bodies that governed during adjournments of, were created by, and derived their authority from, provincial assemblies or congresses, like those of the New York Provincial Congress. The Committees of safety were an emergency "panel" of leading

citizens, who pass laws, hand down regulations, enact statutes, and did other fundamental business prior to the declaration of independence in July 1776 and the passage of individual state constitutions. As they assumed power to govern, however, they generally chose to observe rough legal procedures, warning and shaming enemies rather than killing them. Two examples of the rough legal proceedings were forced public confessions and apologies for slander or more violently, roughing up an individual for voting against giving the poor Bostonian's supplies. Many of the men that served on their individual states Committees of safety were later delegates for the continental congress.

Importance

T. H. Breen writes that "proliferation of local committees represented a development of paramount importance in the achievement of independence," because the committees were the first step in the creation of "a formal structure capable not only of policing the revolution on the ground but also of solidifying ties with other communities." The network of committees were also vital for reinforcing "a shared sense of purpose," speaking to "an imagined collectivity—a country of the mind" of Americans.

For ordinary people, they were community forums where personal loyalties were revealed, tested, and occasionally punished. ... Serving on committees of safety ... was certainly not an activity for the faint of heart. The members of these groups exposed ideological dissenters, usually people well-known in the communities in which they lived. Although the committees attempted as best they could to avoid physical

violence, they administered revolutionary justice as they alone defined it. They worked out their own investigative procedures, interrogated people suspected of undermining the American cause, and meted out punishments they deemed appropriate to the crimes. By mid-1775 the committees increasingly busied themselves with identifying, denouncing, and shunning political offenders. By demanding that enemies receive "civil excommunication" – the chilling words of a North Carolina committee – these groups silenced critics without sparking the kind of bloodbath that has characterized so many other insurgencies throughout the world.

The strengthening of the committees of correspondence in the 1770s also marked the creation of what Gordon S. Wood terms "a new kind of popular politics in America." Wood writes that "the rhetoric of liberty now brought to the surface long-latent political tendencies. Ordinary people were no longer willing to trust only wealthy and learned gentlemen to represent them ... various artisan, religious, and ethnic groups now felt that their particular interests were so distinct that only people of their kind could speak for them. In 1774 radicals in Philadelphia demanded that seven artisans and six Germans be added to the revolutionary committee of the city."

The development of coalition and interest-group politics greatly alarmed both royal officials and more conservative Patriots. For example, William Henry Drayton, the prominent South Carolina planter who had studied at Oxford University, complained about the participation of cobblers and butchers, stating that "Nature never intended that such men should be profound politicians, or able statesmen. In 1775, the royal governor of Georgia "noted in astonishment that the committee

in control of Savannah consisted of 'a Parcel of the Lowest People, chiefly carpenters, shoemakers, Blacksmiths etc with a Jew at their head.'

Very few records of committees of safety survive. Committee activities are attested primarily through newspapers and published material.

By 1775, the committees had become counter-governments that gradually replaced royal authority and took control of local governments. They regulated the economy, politics, morality, and militia of their individual communities. In North Carolina in December 1776, they came under the control of a more powerful central authority, the Council of Safety.

Eighteen years later, at the height of the French Revolution, France was ruled by its own Committee of Public Safety. The French revolutionaries were familiar with the American struggle - for them, the most recent and significant precedent of a Republican revolution.

Chapter 23

Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania

Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania is a series of essays written by the Pennsylvania lawyer and legislator John Dickinson (1732–1808) and published under the pseudonym "A Farmer" from 1767 to 1768. The twelve letters were widely read and reprinted throughout the Thirteen Colonies, and were important in uniting the colonists against the Townshend Acts in the run-up to the American Revolution. According to many historians, the impact of the *Letters* on the colonies was unmatched until the publication of Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* in 1776. The success of the letters earned Dickinson considerable fame.

The twelve letters are written in the voice of a fictional farmer, who is described as modest but learned, an American Cincinnatus, and the text is laid out in a highly organized pattern "along the lines of ancient rhetoric". The letters laid out a clear constitutional argument, that the British Parliament had the authority to regulate colonial trade but not to raise revenue from the colonies. This view became the basis for subsequent colonial opposition to the Townshend Acts, and was influential in the development of colonial thinking about the relationship with Britain. The letters are noted for their mild tone, and urged the colonists to seek redress within the British constitutional system. The character of "the farmer", a persona built on English pastoral writings whose style American writers before Dickinson also adopted, gained a

reputation independent of Dickinson, and became a symbol of moral virtue, employed in many subsequent American political writings.

Background

In the 1760s, the constitutional framework binding Britain and its colonies was poorly defined. Many in Britain believed that all sovereignty in the British Empire was concentrated in the British Parliament. This view was captured by Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, which stated that "there is and must be in all [forms of government] a supreme, irresistible, absolute, uncontrolled authority, in which the *jura summi imperii*, or the rights of sovereignty, reside". In practice, however, the colonies and their individual legislatures had historically enjoyed significant autonomy, particularly in taxation. In the aftermath of the British victory over France in the Seven Years' War, in 1763, Britain decided to permanently station troops in North America and the West Indies. Facing a large national debt and opposition to additional taxes in England, British officials looked to their North American colonies to help finance the upkeep of these troops.

The passage of the Stamp Act of 1765, a tax on various printed materials in the colonies, ignited a dispute over the authority of the British Parliament to levy internal taxes on its colonies. The Stamp Act faced opposition from American colonists, who initiated a movement to boycott British goods, from British merchants affected by the boycott, and from some Whig politicians in Parliament—notably William Pitt. In 1766, under the leadership of a new ministry, Parliament repealed the Stamp Act. However, Parliament at the same time passed the

Declaratory Act, which affirmed its authority to tax the colonies. In 1767, Parliament imposed import duties—remembered as the Townshend Acts—on a range of goods imported by the colonies. These duties reignited the debate over parliamentary authority.

John Dickinson, a wealthy Philadelphia lawyer and member of the Pennsylvania assembly, took part in the Stamp Act Congress in 1765, and drafted the Declaration of Rights and Grievances. In 1767, following the passage of the Townshend Acts, Dickinson set out in his pseudonymous *Letters* to clarify the constitutional question of Parliament's authority to tax the colonies, and to urge the colonists to take moderate action in order to oppose the Townshend Acts. The *Letters* were first published in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*, and then reprinted in most newspapers throughout the colonies. The *Letters* were also reprinted in London, with a preface written by Benjamin Franklin, and in Paris and Dublin.

The Letters

Though in reality, Dickinson had little to do with farming by 1767, the first letter introduces the author as "a farmer settled after a variety of fortunes, near the banks of the river Delaware, in the province of Pennsylvania." In order to explain to the reader how he has acquired "a greater share of knowledge in history, and the laws and constitution of my country, than is generally attained by men of my class," the author informs the reader that he spends most of his time in the library of his small estate. The author then turns to a discussion of the brewing crisis between the British Parliament and the colonies.

While acknowledging the power of British Parliament in matters concerning the whole British Empire, Dickinson argued that the colonies retained the sovereign right to tax themselves.

British officials, partially on the advice of Benjamin Franklin, believed that while American colonists would not accept "internal" taxes levied by Parliament, such as those in the Stamp Act, they would accept "external" taxes, such as import duties. However, Dickinson argued that any taxes—whether "internal" or "external"—laid upon the colonies by Parliament for the purpose of raising revenue, rather than regulating trade, were unconstitutional. Dickinson argued that the Townshend Acts, though nominally import duties and therefore "external" taxes, were nevertheless intended to raise revenue, rather than to regulate trade.

This argument implied that sovereignty in the British Empire was divided, with Parliament's power limited in certain spheres (such as taxation of the colonies), and with lesser bodies (such as colonial assemblies) exercising sovereign powers in other spheres. Dickinson further differentiated between the powers of Parliament and the Crown, with the Crown—but not Parliament—having the power to repeal colonial legislation and to wield executive authority in the colonies. These views were a significant departure from prevailing British views on sovereignty as a central, indivisible power, and they implied that the British Empire did not function as a unitary nation. After the publication of Dickinson's *Letters*, American colonists' views on the constitutional order in the British Empire rapidly changed, and were marked by an increasing rejection of Parliamentary power over the colonies.

Though the tax burden imposed by the Townshend Acts on the colonies was small, Dickinson argued that the duties were meant to establish the principle that Parliament could tax the colonies. Dickinson argued that in the aftermath of the Stamp Act crisis, Parliament was again testing the colonists' disposition. Dickinson warned that once Parliament's right to levy taxes on the colonies was established and accepted by the colonists, much larger impositions would follow:

Nothing is wanted at home but a PRECEDENT, the force of which shall be established by the tacit submission of the colonies [...] If the parliament succeeds in this attempt, other statutes will impose other duties [...] and thus the Parliament will levy upon us such sums of money as they choose to take, *without any other LIMITATION than their PLEASURE.*

- — *Letter X*

More broadly, Dickinson argued that the expense required to comply with any act of Parliament was effectively a tax. Dickinson thus considered the Quartering Act of 1765, which required the colonies to host and supply British troops, to be a tax, to the extent that it placed a financial burden on the colonies. Although he disagreed with the New York assembly's decision not to comply with the act, Dickinson viewed non-compliance as a legitimate right of the assembly, and decried Parliament's punitive order that the assembly dissolve.

Though he disputed Parliament's right to raise revenue from the colonies, Dickinson acknowledged Parliament's authority over trade in the Empire, and saw the colonies' interests as being aligned with those of Great Britain:

[T]here is no privilege the colonies claim, which they ought, in duty and prudence, more earnestly to maintain and defend, than the authority of the British parliament to regulate the trade of all her dominions. Without this authority, the benefits she enjoys from our commerce, must be lost to her: The blessings we enjoy from our dependance on her, must be lost to us; her strength must decay; her glory vanish; and she cannot suffer, without our partaking in her misfortune.

- — *Letter VI*

Beyond the questions of taxation and regulation of trade, Dickinson did not elaborate a detailed theory of the broader constitutional relationship between Britain and the colonies. However, the letters warned against separation from Great Britain, and predicted tragedy for the colonies, should they become independent:

Torn from the body, to which we are united by religion, liberty, laws, affections, relations, language, and commerce, we must bleed at every vein.

- — *Letter III*

In his letters, Dickinson foresaw the possibility of future conflict between the colonies and Great Britain, but cautioned against the use of violence, except as a last resort:

If at length it becomes undoubted that an inveterate resolution is formed to annihilate the liberties of the governed, the English history affords frequent examples of resistance by force. What particular circumstances will in any future case justify such resistance can never be ascertained till they

happen. Perhaps it may be allowable to say generally, that it never can be justifiable until the people are fully convinced that any further submission will be destructive to their happiness.

- — *Letter III*

Instead, Dickinson urged the colonists to seek redress within the British constitutional system. In order to secure the repeal of the Townshend duties, Dickinson recommended further petitions, and proposed putting pressure on Britain by reducing imports, both through frugality and the purchase of local manufactures.

The political philosophy underlying the *Letters* is often placed in the Whig tradition. The letters emphasize several important themes of Whig politics, including the threat that executive power poses to liberty, wariness of standing armies, the inevitability of increasing overreach should a precedent be set, and a belief in the existence of a conspiracy against liberty.

Dickinson made use of the common Whig metaphor of "slavery," which to mid-18th century Americans symbolized a condition of subjection to "the arbitrary will and pleasure of another." The *Letters* cited speeches given in Parliament by Whig politicians William Pitt and Charles Pratt in opposition to the Stamp Act and the Declaratory Act, respectively, describing taxation without representation as slavery. Building on Pitt and Pratt, Letter VII concluded, "We are taxed without our own consent given by ourselves, or our representatives. We are therefore—I speak it with grief—I speak it with indignation—we are slaves." Such comparisons led the English Tory writer Samuel Johnson to ask in his 1775 pamphlet, *Taxation no*

Tyranny, "How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?" The contradiction between the use of the slavery metaphor in Whig rhetoric and the existence of chattel slavery in America eventually contributed to the latter coming under increasing challenge during and after the revolution.

Literary style

In contrast to much of the rhetoric of the time, the letters were written in a mild tone. Dickinson urged his fellow colonists, "Let us behave like dutiful children who have received unmerited blows from a beloved parent." In the judgment of historian Robert Middlekauff, Dickinson "informed men's minds as to the constitutional issues but left their passions unmoved."

The style of Dickinson's *Letters* is often contrasted with that of Paine's *Common Sense*. In the view of historian Pierre Marambaud [fr], the contrast between "Dickinson's restrained argumentation with Paine's impassioned polemics" reflects the deepening of the conflict between Britain and the colonies—as well as the divergence of political views within the colonies—in the years separating the writing of the two works.

A. Owen Aldridge compares Dickinson's style to that of the English essayist Joseph Addison, and Paine's style to that of Jonathan Swift. Aldridge also notes the more pragmatic and less philosophical emphasis of Dickinson's *Letters*, which are less concerned with basic principles of government and society than Paine's *Common Sense*, and instead focus more on immediate political concerns. Aldridge compares the character

of "the farmer," who contemplates politics, law and history in his countryside library, to the political philosopher Montesquieu.

The classical themes in the *Letters*—common in political writings of the time—are often commented on. Dickinson quotes liberally from classical writers, such as Plutarch, Tacitus and Sallust, and draws frequent parallels between the situation facing the colonies and classical history. The second letter, for example, compares Carthage's use of import duties on grains in order to extract revenues from Sardinia to Britain's use of duties to raise revenues in its colonies. Each of the twelve letters ends with a Latin epigram intended to capture the central message to the reader, much as in Addison's essays in *The Spectator*. The final letter concludes with an excerpt from Memmius' speech in Sallust's *Jugurthine War*:

Certe ego libertatem, quae mihi a parente meo tradita est, experiar; verum id frustra an ob rem faciam, in vestra manusitum est, quirites.

"For my part, I am resolved strenuously to contend for the liberty delivered down to me from my ancestors; but whether I shall do this effectually or not, depends on you, my countrymen."

- — *Letter XII*

The farmer—described as a man of genteel poverty, indifferent to riches—would have evoked classical allusions familiar to many English and colonial readers of the time: Cincinnatus,

the husbandman of Virgil's *Georgics* and the Horatian maxim, *aurea mediocritas* (the golden mean).

Reception

Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania had a large impact on thinking in the colonies. Between 2 December 1767 and 27 January 1768, the letters began to be published in 19 of the 23 English-language newspapers in the colonies, with the last of the letters appearing in February through April 1768. The letters were subsequently published in seven American pamphlet editions.

The letters were also republished in Europe – in London, Dublin and Paris. The letters likely reached a larger audience than any previous political writings in the colonies, and were unsurpassed in circulation until the publication of Paine's *Common Sense* in 1776.

Prior to the publication of the letters, there had been little discussion of the Townshend Acts in most of the colonies. Dickinson's central constitutional theory was that Parliament had the right to regulate trade, but not to raise revenue from the colonies. Dickinson was not the first to raise the regulation–revenue distinction; he drew on arguments that Daniel Dulany had made during the Stamp Act Crisis in his popular pamphlet, *Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes in the British Colonies*. However, Dickinson expressed the theory more clearly than his predecessors, and this constitutional interpretation quickly became widespread throughout the colonies, forming the basis for many protests against the Townshend Acts. Nevertheless, Dickinson's

interpretation was not universally accepted. Benjamin Franklin, then living in London, wrote of the practical difficulty of distinguishing between regulation and revenue-raising, and criticized what he called the "middle doctrine" of sovereignty. Writing to his son William, then Royal Governor of New Jersey, Franklin expressed his belief that "Parliament has a power to make *all laws* for us, or [...] it has a power to make *no laws* for us; and I think the arguments for the latter more numerous and weighty than those for the former". Thomas Jefferson later described the doctrine of partial parliamentary sovereignty over the colonies as "the half-way house of Dickinson". Franklin nevertheless arranged for the letters to be published in London on 1 June 1768, and informed the English public that Dickinson's views were generally held by Americans.

The wide circulation of the *Letters* was, in part, due to the efforts of Whig printers and political figures in the colonies. Dickinson sent the letters to James Otis Jr., who had them published in the *Boston Gazette*, which was affiliated with the Sons of Liberty. Dickinson's connections with political leaders throughout the colonies, including Richard Henry Lee in Virginia and Christopher Gadsden of South Carolina, helped ensure the wide publication of his letters. Popular pressure was also brought to bear on printers in Boston, Philadelphia and elsewhere to print the letters, and to refrain from printing rebuttals.

As the letters were published anonymously, Dickinson's identity as the author was not generally known until May 1768. Governor Bernard of Massachusetts speculated privately that the letters might originate from New York. Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, might have

suspected Benjamin Franklin of authoring the letters, as Franklin related to his son in a letter: "My Lord H. mentioned the Farmer's letters to me, said he had read them, that they were well written, and he believed he could guess who was the author, looking in my face at the same time as if he thought it was me. He censured the doctrines as extremely wild, &c." Franklin in turn speculated that a "Mr. Delancey", possibly a reference to Daniel Dulany, might be the author. Due to the initial anonymity of the author, the character of "the farmer" attained a lasting reputation independent of Dickinson. "The farmer" was the subject of numerous official tributes throughout the colonies, such as a paean written by the town of Boston on the suggestion of Samuel Adams, and was sometimes compared to Whig heroes such as William Pitt and John Wilkes. The letters sparked limited critical reactions in the colonies, such as a series of satirical articles organized by the speaker of the Pennsylvania assembly, Joseph Galloway, which like the original *Letters* appeared in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle*. The response to the letters was substantially critical in England with only a few favorable views, such as from Granville Sharp and James Burgh. Tory papers in England rebutted Dickinson's constitutional argument by arguing that the colonists were virtually represented in Parliament, and by emphasizing the indivisibility of Parliament's sovereignty in the Empire; these rebuttals were not widely circulated in the colonies. Praise for the letters in English Whig newspapers were more widely reprinted in the colonies, producing a skewed impression in the colonies of the English reaction.

Several colonial governors acknowledged the deep impact of the letters on political opinion in their colonies. Governor James Wright of Georgia wrote to Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of

State for the Colonies, that "Mr. Farmer I conceive has most plentifully sown his seeds of faction and Sedition to say no worse, and I am sorry my Lord I have so much reason to say they are scattered in a very fertile soil, and the well known author is adored in America." Dickinson's central constitutional argument about the distinction between regulation and revenue-raising was adopted by Whigs throughout the colonies, and was influential in the formulation of subsequent protests against the Townshend Acts, such as the Massachusetts Circular Letter, written by James Otis and Samuel Adams in 1768. The development of colonial views was rapid enough that by the mid-1770s, Dickinson's views on the relation between Parliament and the colonies were viewed as conservative, and were even expounded by some Tory leaders in the colonies. Dickinson's views on sovereignty were adopted by the First Continental Congress in 1774. In 1778, after serious British setbacks in the War of Independence, the British government's Carlisle Commission attempted to reach a reconciliation with the Americans on the basis of a division of sovereignty similar to the one advanced by Dickinson's *Letters*. However, by this point, after the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the drawing up of the Articles of Confederation, this compromise position of divided sovereignty within the British Empire was no longer viable.

The character of "the farmer" had an enduring legacy, as a symbol of "American moral virtues." Subsequent works such as the anti-Federalist pamphlet, the *Federal Farmer*, Crèvecoeur's *Letters from an American Farmer* and Joseph Galloway's *A Chester County Farmer* were written in the voice of similar characters.

Chapter 24

Massachusetts Circular Letter and First Continental Congress

Massachusetts Circular Letter

The Massachusetts Circular Letter was a statement written by Samuel Adams and James Otis Jr., and passed by the Massachusetts House of Representatives (as constituted in the government of the Province of Massachusetts Bay, not the current constitution) in February 1768 in response to the Townshend Acts. Reactions to the letter brought heightened tensions between the British Parliament and Massachusetts, and resulted in the military occupation of Boston by the British Army, which contributed to the coming of the American Revolution.

Background

After the Stamp Act was repealed in 1766, the British Parliament imposed the Townshend Acts in 1767 as another way of generating revenue.

The acts placed an import duty on glass, paint, paper, lead, and tea as well as establishing an American Board of Customs. In response, the Massachusetts General Court issued a circular letter. (A circular letter, also known as a circular, is a letter meant to be widely distributed, or "circulated".) The Massachusetts Circular Letter was sent to the representative

bodies of the other colonies. Massachusetts received positive responses from New Jersey, Connecticut, and the Virginia House of Burgesses.

The letter

In the Circular Letter, Samuel Adams argued that the Townshend Acts were unconstitutional because the colony of Massachusetts was not represented in Parliament. Adams maintained that Parliament's status as the supreme legislative body of the British Empire did not permit it to violate the British Constitution and the natural rights of the colonists. Adams made it clear that he was not advocating colonial representation in Parliament: because the American Colonies were "separated by an ocean of a thousand leagues" from Great Britain, he thought it was impractical for them to be properly represented in Parliament. Instead, Adams argued in favor of the previous arrangement, where the colonies were taxed only by their own provincial assemblies in which they were already represented.

Consequences

After the Circular Letter had been passed and issued to other colonies, Lord Hillsborough, Secretary of State for the Colonies, ordered the Massachusetts General Court to revoke it. The body voted 92-17 not to do so. In response to the General Court's defiance, Governor Francis Bernard dissolved the assembly. This led to an outbreak of mob violence from colonists who no longer had any legal way to deal with their grievances. They attacked customs officials, making it

impossible for them to perform their duties. In response to the deteriorating situation, Lord Hillsborough sent four regiments of British soldiers to Boston. Arriving in October 1768, the soldiers only increased the tensions, as recorded in the anonymously penned "Journal of Occurrences", which chronicled the occupation. These tensions culminated on March 5, 1770 with the Boston Massacre.

First Continental Congress

The **First Continental Congress** was a meeting of delegates from 12 of the 13 British colonies that became the United States.

It met from September 5 to October 26, 1774, at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, after the British Navy instituted a blockade of Boston Harbor and Parliament passed the punitive Intolerable Acts in response to the December 1773 Boston Tea Party.

During the opening weeks of the Congress, the delegates conducted a spirited discussion about how the colonies could collectively respond to the British government's coercive actions, and they worked to make a common cause.

A plan was proposed to create a Union of Great Britain and the Colonies, but the delegates rejected it. They ultimately agreed in the Continental Association to impose an economic boycott on British trade, and they drew up a Petition to the King pleading for redress of their grievances and repeal of the Intolerable Acts. That appeal had no effect, so the colonies convened the Second Continental Congress the following May,

shortly after the battles of Lexington and Concord, to organize the defense of the colonies at the outset of the Revolutionary War. The delegates also urged each colony to set up and train its own militia.

Convention

The Congress met from September 5 to October 26, 1774, in Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia; delegates from 12 British colonies participated. They were elected by the people of the various colonies, the colonial legislature, or by the Committee of Correspondence of a colony. Loyalist sentiments outweighed Patriot views in Georgia, and that colony did not join the cause until the following year.

Peyton Randolph was elected as president of the Congress on the opening day, and he served through October 22 when ill health forced him to retire, and Henry Middleton was elected in his place for the balance of the session.

Charles Thomson, leader of the Philadelphia Committee of Correspondence, was selected as the congressional secretary. The rules adopted by the delegates were designed to guard the equality of participants and to promote free-flowing debate.

As the deliberations progressed, it became clear that those in attendance were not of one mind concerning why they were there. Conservatives such as Joseph Galloway, John Dickinson, John Jay, and Edward Rutledge believed their task to be forging policies to pressure Parliament to rescind its unreasonable acts. Their ultimate goal was to develop a reasonable solution to the difficulties and bring about

reconciliation between the Colonies and Great Britain. Others such as Patrick Henry, Roger Sherman, Samuel Adams, and John Adams believed their task to be developing a decisive statement of the rights and liberties of the Colonies. Their ultimate goal was to end what they felt to be the abuses of parliamentary authority and to retain their rights, which had been guaranteed under Colonial charters and the English constitution.

Roger Sherman denied the legislative authority of Parliament, and Patrick Henry believed that the Congress needed to develop a completely new system of government, independent from Great Britain, for the existing Colonial governments were already dissolved.

In contrast to these ideas, Joseph Galloway put forward a "Plan of Union" which suggested that an American legislative body should be formed with some authority, whose consent would be required for imperial measures.

Declaration and Resolves

In the end, the voices of compromise carried the day. Rather than calling for independence, the First Continental Congress passed and signed the Continental Association in its Declaration and Resolves, which called for a boycott of British goods to take effect in December 1774. After Congress signed on October 20, 1774 embracing non exportation they also planned nonimportation of slaves in beginning December 1, which would have abolished the slave trade in the United States of America 33 years before it actually ended.

Accomplishments

The primary accomplishment of the First Continental Congress was a compact among the colonies to boycott British goods beginning on December 1, 1774, unless parliament should rescind the Intolerable Acts. While delegates convened in the First Continental Congress, fifty-one women in Edenton, North Carolina formed their own association in response to the Intolerable Acts that focused on producing goods for the colonies. Additionally, Great Britain's colonies in the West Indies were threatened with a boycott unless they agreed to non-importation of British goods. Imports from Britain dropped by 97 percent in 1775, compared with the previous year. Committees of observation and inspection were to be formed in each Colony to ensure compliance with the boycott. It was further agreed that if the Intolerable Acts were not repealed, the colonies would also cease exports to Britain after September 10, 1775. The Houses of Assembly of each participating colony approved the proceedings of the Congress, with the exception of New York. The boycott was successfully implemented, but its potential for altering British colonial policy was cut off by the outbreak of hostilities in April 1775.

Congress also voted to meet again the following year if their grievances were not addressed satisfactorily. Anticipating that there would be cause to convene a second congress, delegates resolved to send letters of invitation to those colonies that had not joined them in Philadelphia, including: Quebec, Saint John's Island, Nova Scotia, Georgia, East Florida, and West Florida. Of these, only Georgia would ultimately send delegates to the next Congress.

Chapter 25

Continental Association, Minutemen, Provincial Congress and Second Continental Congress

Continental Association

The **Continental Association**, often known simply as the "**Association**", was a system created by the First Continental Congress in 1774 for implementing a trade boycott with Great Britain. Congress hoped that, by imposing economic sanctions, they would pressure Britain into addressing the grievances of the colonies, in particular repealing the Intolerable Acts passed by Parliament. The Association aimed to alter Britain's policies toward the colonies without severing allegiance.

The boycott began on December 1, 1774. The Association was fairly successful while it lasted. Trade with Britain fell sharply, and the British responded with the New England Restraining Act of 1775. The outbreak of the American Revolutionary War effectively superseded the need to boycott British goods.

Background

Parliament passed the Coercive Acts in 1774 to restructure the colonial administration of the Thirteen Colonies and to punish the Province of Massachusetts for the Gaspee Affair and the Boston Tea Party. Many Americans saw the Coercive Acts as a

violation of the British Constitution and a threat to the liberties of all Thirteen Colonies, not just Massachusetts, and they turned to economic boycotts to protest the oppressive legislation. The word *boycott* had not yet been coined, and the Americans referred to their economic protests as "non-importation", "non-exportation", or "non-consumption".

On May 13, 1774, the Boston Town Meeting passed a resolution, with Samuel Adams acting as moderator, which called for an economic boycott in response to the Boston Port Act, one of the Coercive Acts. The resolution said:

That it is the opinion of this town, that if the other, Colonies come, into a *joint* resolution to stop all importation from *Great Britain*, and exportations to *Great Britain*, and every part of the *West Indies*, till the Act for blocking up this harbour be repealed, the same will prove the salvation of *North America* and her liberties. On the other hand, if they continue their exports and imports, there is high reason to fear that fraud, power, and the most odious oppression, will rise triumphant over right, justice, social happiness, and freedom.

Paul Revere often served as messenger, and he carried the Boston resolutions to New York and Philadelphia. Adams also promoted the boycott through the colonial committees of correspondence, through which leaders of each colony kept in touch. The First Continental Congress was convened at Carpenters' Hall in Philadelphia on September 5, 1774, to coordinate a response to the Coercive Acts. Twelve colonies were represented at the Congress.

On October 20, 1774, Congress created the Association, based on the earlier Virginia Association, which signified the

increasing cooperation among the colonies. The Association opened with a profession of allegiance to the king, and they blamed Parliament and lower British officials for "a ruinous system of colony administration" rather than blaming the king directly. The Association alleged that this system was "evidently calculated for enslaving these colonies, and, with them, the British Empire."

Provisions

The articles of the Continental Association imposed an immediate ban on British tea, and a ban beginning on December 1, 1774 on importing or consuming any goods from Britain, Ireland, and the British West Indies. It also threatened an export ban on any products from the Thirteen Colonies to Britain, Ireland, or the West Indies, to be enacted only if the Intolerable Acts were not repealed by September 10, 1775. The Articles stated that the export ban was being suspended until this date because of the "earnest desire we have not to injure our fellow-subjects in Great-Britain, Ireland, or the West-Indies." All American merchants were to direct their agents abroad to also comply with these restrictions, as would all ship owners. Additionally, article 2 placed a ban on all ships engaged in the slave trade.

The Association set forth policies by which the colonists would endure the scarcity of goods. Merchants were restricted from price gouging. Local committees of inspection were to be established in the Thirteen Colonies which would monitor compliance. Any individual observed to violate the pledges in the Articles would be condemned in print and ostracised in society "as the enemies of American liberty." Colonies would

also cease all trade and dealings with any other colony that failed to comply with the bans.

The colonies also pledged that they would "encourage frugality, economy, and industry, and promote agriculture, arts and the manufactures of this country, especially that of wool; and will discountenance and discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation", such as gambling, stage plays, and other frivolous entertainment. It set forth specific instructions on frugal funeral observations, pledging that no one "will go into any further mourning-dress, than a black crepe or ribbon on the arm or hat, for gentlemen, and a black ribbon and necklace for ladies, and we will discontinue the giving of gloves and scarves at funerals."

Enforcement

The Continental Association went into effect on December 1, 1774. Compliance with (and support for) the established boycott was largely enforced through local enforcement committees. By mid-1775, a large majority of Virginia's 61 counties had set up their own enforcement committees. Nearly all other colonies saw similar levels of success in upholding the boycott, with the notable exception of Georgia, where Governor James Wright emphasized the need for British protection from Native Americans.

The use of public pressure was an overwhelmingly effective tactic in enforcing support for the boycott. Those who went against the boycott or even simply criticized the Association would often find their names slandered in newspapers and town gossip, often forcing those targeted to cave to pressure

and publicly apologize. The threat of more direct action also played a role in forcing merchants to comply, with one merchant even choosing to burn his own ship full of imported tea rather than attempt to sell it. When enforcement could not be guaranteed, some counties enacted price ceilings to discourage smuggling.

Effects

Only one of the Thirteen Colonies failed to establish local enforcement committees; the restrictions were dutifully enforced in the others, and trade with Britain plummeted.

Parliament responded by passing the New England Restraining Act which prohibited the northeastern colonies from trading with anyone but Britain and the British West Indies, and they barred colonial ships from the North Atlantic fishing areas. These punitive measures were later extended to most of the other colonies, as well.

The outbreak of open fighting between the Americans and British soldiers in April 1775 rendered moot any attempt to indirectly change British policies. In this regard, the Association failed to determine events in the way that it was designed.

Britain did not yield to American demands but instead tried to tighten its grip, and the conflict escalated to war. However, the long-term success of the Association was in its effective direction of collective action among the colonies and expression of their common interests.

Legacy

President Abraham Lincoln traced the origin of the United States back to the Continental Association of 1774 in his first inaugural address in 1861:

The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured... by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And finally, in 1787, one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was *"to form a more perfect Union."*

Minutemen

Minutemen were civilian colonists who independently formed militia companies self-trained in weaponry, tactics, and military strategies, comprising the American colonial partisan militia during the American Revolutionary War. They were known for being ready at a minute's notice, hence the name. Minutemen provided a highly mobile, rapidly deployed force that enabled the colonies to respond immediately to war threats. The minutemen were among the first to fight in the American Revolution. Their teams constituted about a quarter of the entire militia. They were generally younger and more mobile.

The term has also been applied to various later United States civilian paramilitary forces to recall the success and patriotism of the originals.

History

In the colony of Massachusetts Bay, all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 were required to participate in their local militia. As early as 1645 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony, some men were selected from the general ranks of town-based "training bands" to be ready for rapid deployment. Men so selected were designated as minutemen. They were usually drawn from settlers of each town, and so it was very common for them to be fighting alongside relatives and friends.

Some towns in Massachusetts had a long history of designating a portion of their militia as minutemen, with "minute companies" constituting special units within the militia system whose members underwent additional training and held themselves ready to turn out rapidly for emergencies, "at a minute's notice" and hence their name. Other towns, such as Lexington, preferred to keep their entire militia in a single unit.

Members of the minutemen, by contrast, were no more than 30 years old, and were chosen for their enthusiasm, political reliability, and strength. They were the first armed militia to arrive at or await a battle. Officers were elected by popular vote, as in the rest of the militia, and each unit drafted a formal written covenant to be signed upon enlistment.

The militia typically assembled as an entire unit in each town two to four times a year for training during peacetime but, as the inevitability of war became apparent, the militia trained three to four times a week.

In this organization, it was common for officers to make decisions through consultation and consensus with their men, as opposed to giving orders to be followed without question.

The Massachusetts Provincial Congress found that the colony's militia resources were short just before the American Revolutionary War, on October 26, 1774, after observing the British military buildup. They found that, "including the sick and absent, it amounted to about 17,000 men, far short of the number wanted, that the council recommended an immediate application to the New England governments to make up the deficiency," resolving to organize the militia better:

The Massachusetts Provincial Congress recommended to the militia to form themselves into companies of minute-men, who should be equipped and prepared to march at the shortest notice. These minute-men were to comprise one-quarter of the whole militia, to be enlisted under the direction of the field-officers, and divide into companies, consisting of at least 50 men each. The privates were to choose their captains and subalterns, and these officers were to form the companies into battalions, and chose the field-officers to command the same. Hence the minute-men became a body distinct from the rest of the militia, and, by being more devoted to military exercises, they acquired skill in the use of arms. More attention than formerly was likewise bestowed on the training and drilling of militia.

The need for efficient minuteman companies was illustrated by the Powder Alarm of 1774. Militia companies were called out to engage British troops, who were sent to capture ammunition stores. By the time the militia was ready, the British regulars

had already captured the arms at Cambridge and Charlestown and had returned to Boston.

Pequot War

In August 1636, the first offensive military attack by militias failed when Massachusetts dispatched John Endecott with four companies on an unsuccessful campaign against the Pequot Indians. According to one man's account, the expedition succeeded only in killing one Indian and burning some wigwams.

Weeks elapsed between the incidents that caused the march and the arrival of Endecott's men in the area. Once they got there, they did not know which Indians to fight or why. This feeble response served to encourage the Indians, and attacks increased on the settlers in the Connecticut Valley.

In the following year, Massachusetts again put a force on the field in collaboration with Plymouth and Connecticut.

By the time that Plymouth had gotten their force packed and ready to march, the campaign had ended. Massachusetts Bay sent 150 militiamen, Plymouth sent 50, and Connecticut sent 90.

New England confederation

In May 1643, a joint council was formed. They published the articles of the New England confederation. The real power of the confederation was that all four of the colonies promised to contribute soldiers to an alert force that would fight anywhere in the colonies.

On September 7, 1643 the towns were given more tactical control. A new rule allowed any general to call up his militia at any time. On August 12, 1645, 30% of all militia were made into short-notice groups (minutemen). Command and control were decentralized to the extent that individual company commanders could put their troops into a defensive battle if necessary. A portion of the militia was well trained and well equipped, and set aside as a ready force.

In May 1653, the Council of Massachusetts said that an eighth of the militia should be ready to march within one day to anywhere in the colony. Eighty militiamen marched on the Narragansett tribe in Massachusetts, though no fighting took place. Since the colonies were expanding, the Narragansetts got desperate and began raiding the colonists again. The militia chased the Indians, caught their chief, and got him to sign an agreement to end fighting.

In 1672, the Massachusetts Council formed a military committee to control the militia in each town. In 1675, the military committee raised an expedition to fight the raiding Wampanoag tribe. A muster call was sent out and four days later, after harsh skirmishes with the Wampanoags, three companies arrived to help the locals. The expedition took heavy losses: two towns were raided, and one 80-man company was killed entirely, including their commander. That winter, a thousand militiamen pushed out the Wampanoags.

In response to the success of the Wampanoags, in the Spring of 1676 an alarm system of riders and signals was formed in which each town was required to participate.

Queen Anne's War broke out in 1689, and militiamen throughout the Thirteen Colonies began to muster in preparation for the fighting. In 1690, Colonel William Phips led 600 men to push back the French. Two years later he became governor of Massachusetts.

When the French and Indians raided Massachusetts in 1702, Governor Phips created a bounty which paid 10 shillings each for the scalps of Indians. In 1703, snowshoes were issued to militiamen and bounty hunters to make winter raids on the Indians more effective. The minuteman concept was advanced by the snow shoe men.

The Minutemen always kept in touch with the political situation in Boston and their own towns. From 1629 to 1683, the towns had controlled themselves but in 1689, the King appointed governors. By 1772, James Otis and Samuel Adams used the Town Meetings to start a Committee of Correspondence. This instigated a boycott in 1774 of British goods. The Minutemen were aware of this as well.

With a rising number of Minutemen they faced another problem: a lack of gunpowder to support an army for long enough to fight a prolonged campaign against the British.

The people of an island controlled by the Dutch, Sint Eustatius, were supportive of the American revolutionaries.

As a token of support, they traded gunpowder to the Colonials for other goods needed in Europe. Not only did the Minutemen have political awareness of events in New England, but also of those occurring in Europe, such as Britain's lack of allies.

American Revolutionary War period

In 1774, General Thomas Gage, the new Governor of Massachusetts, tried to enforce the Intolerable Acts, which were designed to remove power from the towns. Samuel Adams pressed for County Conventions to strengthen the revolutionary resistance. Gage tried to seat his own court in Worcester, but the townspeople blocked the court from sitting. Two thousand militiamen marched to intimidate the judges and get them to leave. This was the first time that the militia was used by the people to block the king's representatives from acting on royal orders and against popular opinion. Gage responded by preparing to march to collect munitions from the provincials. For 50 miles around Boston, militiamen were marching in response. By noon the next day, almost 4,000 people were on the common in Cambridge. The provincials got the judges to resign and leave. Gage backed off from trying to seat a court in Worcester.

The colonials in Worcester met and came up with a new militia mobilization plan in their County Convention. The Convention required that all militia officers resign. Officers were then elected by their regiments. In turn, the officers then appointed 1/3 of their militia regiment as Minutemen. Other counties followed Worcester's lead, electing new militia officers and appointing Minutemen.

The British practiced formations with their weapons, focusing on marching formations on the battlefield. It is a myth that the British and other professional armies of the 1700s did not practice marksmanship with their muskets; the military ammunition of the time was made for fast reloading and more

than a dozen consecutive shots without cleaning. Accuracy of the musket was sacrificed for speed and repetitive loading.

The militia prepared with elaborate plans to alarm and respond to movements by the king's forces out of Boston. The frequent mustering of the minute companies also built unit cohesion and familiarity with live firing, which increased the minute companies' effectiveness. The royal authorities inadvertently gave the new Minuteman mobilization plans validation by several "show the flag" demonstrations by General Gage through 1774.

The royal authorities in Boston had seen these increasing numbers of militia appearing and thought that the militia would not interfere if they sent a sizable force to Concord to seize munitions and stores there (which they considered the King's property, since it was paid for to defend the colonies from the American Indian threat).

The British officers were proven wrong. Shooting erupted at Lexington. There is still a debate as to whether it was a colonist or a British soldier who fired the first shot. The militia left the area, and the British moved on. The British then moved to Concord and faced a larger number of militia. The British were rapidly outnumbered at Concord, with the arrival of the slower moving militia; they had not counted on a long fight, and so had not brought additional ammunition beyond the standard issue in the soldiers' cartridge boxes. This then forced a strategic defeat on Colonel Smith, forcing him back to Boston.

A "running fight" began during the retreat. Militiamen knew the local countryside and were familiar with "skulking" or

"Indian Warfare." They used trees and other obstacles to cover themselves from British gunfire and pursuit by British soldiers, while the militia were firing and moving. This kept the British under sporadic fire, and caused them to exhaust their limited ammunition. Only the timely arrival of a relief column under Lord Percy prevented the annihilation or surrender of the original road column.

Equipment, training, and tactics

Most Colonial militia units were provided neither arms nor uniforms and were required to equip themselves. Many simply wore their own farmers' or workmen's clothes and, in some cases, they wore cloth hunting frocks. Most used fowling pieces, though rifles were sometimes used where available. Neither fowling pieces nor rifles had bayonets. Some colonies purchased muskets, cartridge boxes, and bayonets from England, and maintained armories within the colony.

The Continental Army regulars received European-style military training later in the American Revolutionary War, but the militias did not get much of this. They were better when used as irregulars rather than fighting formal battles in the traditional dense lines and columns, functioning primarily as skirmishers and sharpshooters. When used in conjunction with continental regulars, the militia would frequently fire ragged irregular volleys from a forward skirmish line or from the flanks of the Continental Army, while Continental soldiers held the center.

Their experience suited irregular warfare. Many were familiar with frontier hunting. The Indian Wars, and especially the

recent French and Indian War, had taught the colonials the value of irregular warfare, while many British troops fresh from Europe were less familiar with this. The long rifle was also well suited to this role. The rifling (grooves inside the barrel) gave it a much greater range than the smoothbore musket, although it took much longer to load.

Because of the lower rate of fire, rifles were not used by regular infantry, but were preferred for hunting. When performing as skirmishers, the militia could fire and fall back behind cover or behind other troops, before the British could get into range.

The wilderness terrain that lay just beyond many colonial towns favored this style of combat and was very familiar to the local minuteman. In time, however, loyalists such as John Butler and Robert Rogers mustered equally capable irregular forces (Butler's Rangers and the Queen's Rangers, led by Englishman John Graves Simcoe). In addition, many British commanders learned from experience and effectively modified their light infantry tactics and battle dress to suit conditions in North America.

Through the remainder of the Revolution, militias moved to adopting the minuteman model for rapid mobilization. With this rapid mustering of forces, the militia proved its value by augmenting the Continental Army on a temporary basis, occasionally leading to instances of numerical superiority. This was seen at the Battles of Hubbardton and Bennington in the north and at Camden and Cowpens in the south. Cowpens is notable in that Daniel Morgan used the militia's strengths and weaknesses skillfully to attain the double-envelopment of

Tarleton's forces. Historian M. L. Brown states that some of these men mastered the difficult handling of a rifle, though few became expert. Brown quotes Continental Army soldier Benjamin Thompson, who expressed the "common sentiment" at the time, which was that minutemen were notoriously poor marksmen with rifles: "Instead of being the best marksmen in the world and picking off every Regular that was to be seen, the continual firing which they kept up by the week and the month has had no other effect than to waste their ammunition and convince the King's troops that they are really not really so formidable."

There was a shortage of ammunition and supplies, and what they had were constantly being seized by British patrols. As a precaution, these items were often hidden or left behind by minutemen in fields or wooded areas. Other popular concealment methods were to hide items underneath floorboards in houses and barns.

Legacy

The Minuteman model for militia mobilization married with a very professional, small standing army was the primary model for the United States' land forces up until 1916 with the establishment of the National Guard.

In commemoration of the centenary of the first engagement of the American Revolution, Daniel Chester French, in his first major commission, produced one of his best-known statues (along with the Lincoln Memorial), *The Minute Man*. Inscribed on the pedestal is the opening stanza of Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1837 *Concord Hymn* with the words, "Shot heard

'round the world." The statue's likeness is not based on Isaac Davis as is widely claimed, the captain of the Acton militia and first to be killed in Concord during the Battles of Lexington and Concord on April 19, 1775, but rather French used live models in the study of the anatomy and facial expression. *The Minute Man* statue is still the symbol of the National Guard, featured prominently on its seals.

Minutemen are portrayed in "Paul Revere's Ride", a poem by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Although historians criticize the work as being historically inaccurate, Longfellow understood the history and manipulated it for poetic effect.

The 1925 Lexington-Concord Sesquicentennial half dollar features a sculptural portrayal.

The athletic teams of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst are nicknamed the Minutemen and Minutewomen. Until the 2003 rebranding featuring a modernized Sam the Minuteman, the logo featured the *Concord Minute Man* statue prominently.

The US Air Force named the LGM-30 Intercontinental Ballistic Missile the "Minuteman", which was designed for rapid deployment in the event of a nuclear attack. The "Minuteman III" LGM-30G remains in service.

The US Navy VR-55 Fleet Logistic Support Squadron is named "Minutemen" to highlight the rapid deployment and mobility nature of their mission.

One of the factions in Bethesda's 2015 video game *Fallout 4*, which is set in Massachusetts, is called the "Commonwealth Minutemen". The inspiration for their namesake comes from

the requirement to be ready "at a minute's notice" to defend any settlement in danger. Sinclair Lewis portrays Minute Men as paramilitary forces of Buzz Windrip's despotic government in his 1935 book *It Can't Happen Here*. In the book the fascist-like militia is called "Minnie Mouses" by the populace.

Provincial Congress

The Provincial Congresses were extra-legal legislative bodies established in ten of the Thirteen Colonies early in the American Revolution. Some were referred to as congresses while others used different terms for a similar type body. These bodies were generally renamed or replaced with other bodies when the provinces declared themselves states.

Colonial government in America was a system of governance modeled after the British government of the time, with the king corresponding to the governor, the House of Commons to the colonial assembly, and the House of Lords to the governor's council. Colonial assemblies did not believe that the British Parliament had authority over them to impose taxes (or certain other laws), that it was the colonial assembly's duty to decide what should be imposed on their fellow colonists (the Massachusetts Circular Letter was an example of that argument). Legally, the crown governor's authority was unassailable, but assemblies began to resist efforts by some governors and royal officials to enforce acts of Parliament or to raise local taxes that governors demanded. In resisting that authority, assemblies resorted to arguments based upon natural rights and the common welfare, giving life to the notion that governments derived, or ought to derive, their authority from the consent of the governed.

Committees of correspondence were formed as shadow governments in the Thirteen colonies prior to the American Revolution. During the First Continental Congress (in 1774), committees of inspection were formed to enforce the Continental Association trade boycott with Britain in response to the British Parliament's Intolerable Acts. By 1775, the committees had become counter-governments that gradually replaced royal authority and took control of local governments. Known as the Committees of Safety, they regulated the economy, politics, morality, and militia of their individual communities. After the British Proclamation of Rebellion and the King's speech before Parliament (27 October 1775) the colonies moved towards independence.

Provisional governments began to create new state constitutions and governments. Committees of safety were a later outcome of the committees of correspondence. Committees of safety were executive bodies that governed during adjournments of, were created by, and derived their authority from provincial assemblies or congresses.

In some colonies there were little or no changes to their assemblies until statehood. They had no need of a provisional legislative body since their governors did not dissolve or prevent the legislative assemblies from meeting.

This was the case in the Charter colonies with more autonomy, such as Connecticut and Rhode Island, which elected colonial governors who were aligned with their assemblies. (Connecticut Governor Jonathan Trumbull and Rhode Island Governor Nicholas Cooke served as both the last colonial governors and first state governors). The Delaware Colony was a proprietary

colony under Governor John Penn of the Province of Pennsylvania, which included the "Lower Counties of the Delaware", but it maintained a separate Delaware assembly. It was generally allowed more independence of action in their colonial assembly than in other colonies.

List of Provincial Congresses and Bodies

- New Hampshire Provincial Congress
- Massachusetts Provincial Congress
- New York Provincial Congress
- Provincial Congress of New Jersey
- Pennsylvania Provincial Conference
- Maryland's Assembly of Freeman (Annapolis Convention)
- Virginia Conventions
- North Carolina Provincial Congress
- South Carolina Provincial Congress
- Georgia Provincial Congress

Second Continental Congress

The Second Continental Congress was a meeting of delegates from the Thirteen Colonies in America that united in the American Revolutionary War.

It convened on May 10, 1775, with representatives from 12 of the colonies in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania shortly after the Battles of Lexington and Concord, succeeding the First

Continental Congress which met in Philadelphia from September 5 to October 26, 1774. The Second Congress functioned as a *de facto* national government at the outset of the Revolutionary War by raising armies, directing strategy, appointing diplomats, and writing petitions such as the Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms and the Olive Branch Petition. All thirteen colonies were represented by the time the Congress adopted the Lee Resolution which declared independence from Britain on July 2, 1776, and the congress agreed to the Declaration of Independence two days later.

Afterward, Congress functioned as the provisional government of the United States of America through March 1, 1781. During this period, its achievements included: Successfully managing the war effort; drafting the Articles of Confederation, the first U.S. constitution; securing diplomatic recognition and support from foreign nations; and resolving state land claims west of the Appalachian Mountains.

Many of the delegates who attended the Second Congress had also attended the First. They again elected Peyton Randolph to serve as President of the Congress and Charles Thomson to serve as secretary. Notable new arrivals included Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania and John Hancock of Massachusetts. Within two weeks, Randolph was summoned back to Virginia to preside over the House of Burgesses; Hancock succeeded him as president, and Thomas Jefferson replaced him in the Virginia delegation. The number of participating colonies also grew, as Georgia endorsed the Congress in July 1775 and adopted the continental ban on trade with Britain.

History

De facto government

The First Continental Congress had sent entreaties to King George III to stop the Coercive Acts; they had also created the Continental Association to establish a coordinated protest of those acts, putting a boycott on British goods. The Second Continental Congress met on May 10, 1775, to plan further responses if the British government had not repealed or modified the acts; however, the American Revolutionary War had already started by that time with the Battles of Lexington and Concord, and the Congress was called upon to take charge of the war effort.

For the first few months of the war, the patriots carried on their struggle in an ad-hoc and uncoordinated manner. Even so, they had seized numerous arsenals, driven out royal officials in various colonies, and besieged Boston in order to prevent the movement by land of British troops garrisoned there. On June 14, 1775, Congress voted to create the Continental Army out of the militia units around Boston and appointed George Washington of Virginia as commanding general. On July 6, 1775, Congress approved a Declaration of Causes outlining the rationale and necessity for taking up arms in the Thirteen Colonies. Two days later delegates signed the Olive Branch Petition to the king affirming the colonies' loyalty to the crown and imploring the king to prevent further conflict. However, by the time British Colonial Secretary Lord Dartmouth received the petition, King George III had already issued a proclamation on August 23, 1775, in response to the

news of the Battle of Bunker Hill, declaring elements of Britain's continental American possessions to be in a state of "open and avowed rebellion". As a result, the king refused to receive the petition.

Georgia had not participated in the First Continental Congress and did not initially send delegates to the Second. Even so, the people of St. John's Parish (present-day Liberty County) sent Lyman Hall to the gathering on their behalf. He participated in debates but did not vote, as he did not represent the entire colony. That changed after July 1775, when a provincial Congress decided to send delegates to the Continental Congress and to adopt a ban on trade with Britain.

The Continental Congress had no explicit legal authority to govern, but it assumed all the functions of a national government, such as appointing ambassadors, signing treaties, raising armies, appointing generals, obtaining loans from Europe, issuing paper money (called "Continental"), and disbursing funds. Congress had no authority to levy taxes and was required to request money, supplies, and troops from the states to support the war effort. Individual states frequently ignored these requests.

Congress was moving towards declaring independence from the British Empire in 1776, but many delegates lacked the authority from their home governments to take such drastic action. Advocates of independence moved to have reluctant colonial governments revise instructions to their delegations, or even replace those governments which would not authorize independence. On May 10, 1776, Congress passed a resolution recommending that any colony with a government that was not

inclined toward independence should form one that was. On May 15, they adopted a more radical preamble to this resolution, drafted by John Adams, which advised throwing off oaths of allegiance and suppressing the authority of the Crown in any colonial government that still derived its authority from the Crown. That same day, the Virginia Convention instructed its delegation in Philadelphia to propose a resolution that called for a declaration of independence, the formation of foreign alliances, and a confederation of the states. The resolution of independence was delayed for several weeks, as advocates of independence consolidated support in their home governments.

On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee offered a resolution before the Congress declaring the colonies independent. He also urged Congress to resolve "to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances" and to prepare a plan of confederation for the newly independent states. Lee argued that independence was the only way to ensure a foreign alliance since no European monarchs would deal with America if they remained Britain's colonies. American leaders had rejected the divine right of kings in the New World, but recognized the necessity of proving their credibility in the Old World.

Congress formally adopted the resolution of independence, but only after creating three overlapping committees to draft the Declaration, a Model Treaty, and the Articles of Confederation. The Declaration announced the states' entry into the international system; the model treaty was designed to establish amity and commerce with other states, and the Articles of Confederation established "a firm league" among the

thirteen free and independent states. These three things together constituted an international agreement to set up central institutions for conducting vital domestic and foreign affairs. Congress finally approved the resolution of independence on July 2, 1776. They next turned their attention to a formal explanation of this decision, the United States Declaration of Independence which was approved on July 4 and published soon thereafter.

Provisional government

The Congress moved from Philadelphia to Baltimore in the winter of 1776 to avoid capture by British forces who were advancing on Philadelphia. Henry Fite's tavern was the largest building in Baltimore Town at the time and provided a comfortable location of sufficient size for Congress to meet. Its site at the western edge of town was beyond easy reach of the British Royal Navy's ships should they try to sail up the harbor and the Patapsco River to shell the town. Congress was again forced to flee Philadelphia at the end of September 1777, as British troops occupied the city; they moved to York, Pennsylvania and continued their work.

Congress passed the Articles of Confederation on November 15, 1777, after more than a year of debate, and sent it to the states for ratification. Approval by all 13 states was required for the establishment of the constitution. Jefferson's proposal for a Senate to represent the states and a House to represent the people was rejected, but a similar proposal was adopted later in the United States Constitution. One issue of debate was large states wanting a larger say, nullified by small states who feared tyranny. The small states won and each state had

one vote. Another revolved around the issue of western land claims; states without such claims wanted those with claims to yield them to Congress. As written, western land claims remained in the hands of the individual states. Congress urged the states to give their assent quickly, and most did. The first to ratify was Virginia on December 16, 1777; 12 states had ratified the Articles by February 1779, 14 months into the process. The lone holdout, Maryland, finally ratified the Articles on February 2, 1781, doing so only after Virginia relinquished its claims on land north of the Ohio River to Congress.

Chapter 26

Olive Branch Petition and Committee of Secret Correspondence

Olive Branch Petition

The Olive Branch Petition was adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 5, 1775, and signed on July 8 in a final attempt to avoid war between Great Britain and the Thirteen Colonies in America. The Congress had already authorized the invasion of Canada more than a week earlier, but the petition affirmed American loyalty to Great Britain and beseeched King George III to prevent further conflict. It was followed by the July 6 Declaration of the Causes and Necessity of Taking Up Arms, however, which made its success unlikely in London. In August 1775, the colonies were formally declared to be in rebellion by the Proclamation of Rebellion, and the petition was rejected by the British government; King George had refused to read it before declaring the colonists traitors.

Drafting

The Second Continental Congress convened in May 1775, and most delegates followed John Dickinson in his quest to reconcile with King George. However, a rather small group of delegates led by John Adams believed that war was inevitable,

and they decided that the wisest course of action was to remain quiet and wait for the opportune time to rally the people. This allowed Dickinson and his followers to pursue their own course for reconciliation.

Dickinson was the primary author of the petition, though Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, John Rutledge, and Thomas Johnson also served on the drafting committee. Dickinson claimed that the colonies did not want independence but wanted more equitable trade and tax regulations. He asked that the King establish a lasting settlement between the Mother Country and the colonies "upon so firm a basis as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations in both countries", beginning with the repeal of the Intolerable Acts. The introductory paragraph of the letter named twelve of the thirteen colonies, all except Georgia. The letter was approved on July 5 and signed by John Hancock, President of the Second Congress, and by representatives of the named twelve colonies. It was sent to London on July 8, 1775, in the care of Richard Penn and Arthur Lee. Dickinson hoped that news of the Battles of Lexington and Concord combined with the "humble petition" would persuade the King to respond with a counter-proposal or open negotiations.

Reception and rejection

Adams wrote to a friend that the petition served no purpose, that war was inevitable, and that the colonies should have already raised a navy and taken British officials prisoner. The letter was intercepted by British officials and news of its contents reached Great Britain at about the same time as the

petition itself. British advocates of a military response used Adams' letter to claim that the petition itself was insincere.

Penn and Lee provided a copy of the petition to colonial secretary Lord Dartmouth on August 21, followed with the original on September 1.

They reported back on September 2: "we were told that as his Majesty did not receive it on the throne, no answer would be given."

The King had already issued the Proclamation of Rebellion on August 23 in response to news of the Battle of Bunker Hill, declaring the American colonies to be in a state of rebellion and ordering "all Our officers... and all Our obedient and loyal subjects, to use their utmost endeavours to withstand and suppress such rebellion". The hostilities which Adams had foreseen undercut the petition, and the King had answered it before it even reached him.

Consequences

The King's refusal to consider the petition gave Adams and others the opportunity to push for independence, viewing the King as intransigent and uninterested in addressing the colonists' grievances. It polarized the issue in the minds of many colonists, who realized that the choice from that point forward was between complete independence and complete submission to British rule, a realization crystallized a few months later in Thomas Paine's widely read pamphlet *Common Sense*.

Committee of Secret Correspondence

The Committee of Secret Correspondence was a committee formed by the Second Continental Congress and active from 1775 to 1776. The Committee played a large role in attracting French aid and alliance during the American Revolution. In 1777, the Committee of Secret Correspondence was renamed the Committee of Foreign Affairs.

Creation

With the American Revolutionary War approaching, the Second Continental Congress, which took place in Philadelphia in 1775, recognized the need for international allies to help the Thirteen Colonies in their fight for independence from Great Britain.

To satisfy this need, the Congress created the Committee of Secret Correspondence.

RESOLVED, That a committee...would be appointed for the sole purpose of corresponding with our friends in Great Britain, and other parts of the world, and that they lay their correspondence before Congress when directed.

RESOLVED, That this Congress will make provision to defray all such expenses as they may arise by carrying on such correspondence, and for the payment of such agents as the said Committee may send on this service.

Duties

The Committee of Secret Correspondence was created for "the sole purpose of corresponding with our friends in Great Britain and other parts of the world". However, most of the efforts of the committee went not to making friends in Great Britain, but towards forging alliances with other foreign countries that would sympathize with the patriot cause during the American Revolution.

While forming foreign alliances, the committee also employed secret agents abroad to gain foreign intelligence, conducted undercover operations, started American propaganda campaigns to gain patriot support, analyzed foreign publications to gain additional foreign intelligence, and developed a maritime unit separate from the Navy. It also served as the "clearinghouse" for foreign communications with foreign countries.

Original Members

The original members of the Committee of Secret Correspondence were Benjamin Franklin, Benjamin Harrison V, Thomas Johnson, John Jay, Robert Morris, and John Dickinson.

The most active member of the Committee of Secret Correspondence was Benjamin Franklin. Franklin, a successful scientist, journalist, and politician was an expert when it came to foreign affairs. He sent letters to Don Gabriel de Bourbon, a Spanish Prince, and Americanophiles in France to try to rally

support for the American cause. He also travelled to France to convince the French to forge an alliance with the United States and was a prominent figure in the signing of the Treaty of Paris in 1783, which ended the revolution.

Significance of the "Secrecy"

Since the Committee of Secret Correspondence put much of its efforts into gaining patriot sympathy abroad to be used during the American Revolution, they requested of the Continental Congress that the members and actions of the committee be kept confidential, so that Great Britain would not hear about the United States forging foreign alliances for the looming revolution. Another reason the Committee wanted its members and actions kept quiet was because the committee had many undercover agents on missions overseas gaining information about the political and economic situation in other countries, and if other countries heard about these undercover agents they would be exposed and their missions ruined. For example, in 1776, the Committee was instructing Silas Deane, an undercover agent in France, on how to interact with the French government and encourage them to provide munitions and ships to the United States.

In response to this request for secrecy, Congress did several things. First of all, Congress agreed to the "withholding the names of the persons they [the Committee of Secret Correspondence] has employed, or with whom they have corresponded." In addition, Congress recorded all of the decisions regarding the Committee of Secret Correspondence in "Secret Journals", separate from the public journals used to record its decisions concerning other matters. Finally, it

allowed the committee to establish its own oath of secrecy, which was put in place on November 29, 1775 as well as a secrecy agreement for government employees. The oath and agreement are below.

"RESOLVED, That every member of this Congress considers himself under the ties of virtue, honour and love of his country, not to divulge, directly or indirectly, any matter or thing agitated or debated in Congress, before the same shaft have been determined, without the leave of the Congress: nor any matter or thing determined in Congress, which a majority of the Congress shall order to be kept secret, And that if any member shall violate this agreement, he shall be expelled this Congress, and deemed an enemy to the liberties of America, and liable to be treated as such, and that every member signify his consent to this agreement by signing the same."

"I do solemnly swear, that I will not directly or indirectly divulge any manner or thing which shall come to my knowledge as (clerk, secretary) of the Board of War and Ordnance for the United Colonies. . . So help me God."

Julien Alexandre Achard de Bonvouloir and the Committee of Secret Correspondence

In 1775, the French cabinet was faced with a conflict in trying to decide whether or not to support the Patriots in the American Revolution. Supporting the Patriots would be an ideal opportunity for France to try and regain lost land in

North America as well as dampen Great Britain's economic and political strength by winning the revolution. On the other hand, the French were hesitant to support the Patriots, in case their success inspired other French colonies to attempt the same type of rebellion.

Before making a decision, the French cabinet decided it was necessary to acquire more information about the social, economic, and political situation in the United States. To do this, the cabinet chose Julien Alexandre Achard de Bonvouloir, a 26-year-old former French officer, to travel to the United States as an undercover agent, and make contact with the Continental Congress.

While in the United States, Bonvouloir had three meetings with the Committee of Secret Correspondence from December 18 and 27. During the meeting, Benjamin Franklin and John Jay were continuously debating how much information about the state of their country they should tell the Frenchman, as they knew there was a chance that he was a spy. The Committee told Bonvouloir that the United States was serious in its plan to separate from Great Britain. They then asked Bonvouloir about France's opinion of the North American colonies and about obtaining arms, munitions, and engineer officers from France.

As a result of these discussions, when Bonvouloir returned to France and shared his discoveries with the French government, they agreed to "give you [United States] secretly a million livres" as well as "convince the Court of Spain to unite in giving you another." Although the aid the French gave the Americans during the revolutionary war was confidential, the

alliance became formal with the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce on February 6, 1778. The main reason that France wanted this secrecy was to avoid fighting with Britain, who would be angry and threatened if they discovered France was providing aid to their rebelling colonies.

France's desire to keep their aid to the United States secret was evident during the 1777 incident involving Arthur Lee and Silas Deane. Lee, who frequently aided the Committee of Secret Correspondence, suspected Silas Deane, a colonial agent in France, of financial wrongdoing. In order to prove Deane's wrongdoings, information about the French aid to the United States would need to be released. However, French minister Gerard insisted that the information be kept confidential, and on January 12, 1779 Congress passed a resolution that denied any French aid to the United States.

Silas Deane and the Committee of Secret Correspondence

At the same time as the Committee was undergoing negotiations with Bonvouloir in the United States, they were also instructing Silas Deane, a Connecticut delegate for the Continental Congress. Deane was on an undercover assignment in France, trying to convince the French that the United States really were ready to fight for independence, and convince them to aid the United States in their fight. This information was very similar to the information the Committee of Secret Correspondence was telling Bonvouloir back in the United States. Deane was able to achieve unofficial financial and military support from the French in the forms of arms and

ships. Then, Benjamin Franklin, who arrived in France in December 1776, was able to make the alliance official with the signing of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce in 1778.

Effect of the Committee of Secret Correspondence on the American Revolution

The Committee of Secret Correspondence was replaced by the Committee of Foreign Affairs on April 17, 1777. But, the Committee of Secret Correspondence is remembered for its influence on the success of the American Revolution. The Committee initiated contact with France and helped convince its officials to forge an alliance and aid the United States; this aid was critical to the Patriots' gaining independence from Britain. Once convinced to aid the Patriots, France made major contributions to the war effort. For example, French fleets under General Degraze and Rochambeau blockaded the Chesapeake Bay at the Siege of Yorktown, preventing British escape, and assisting Washington's patriot army's attack. This successful military effort led to the surrender of British General Cornwallis and a few days later the resignation of the British Prime Minister, Lord Frederick North.

After the surrender, the British signed the Treaty of Paris, on September 3, 1783. It was negotiated by John Jay and Benjamin Franklin, former members of the Committee of Secret Correspondence. George Woodbridge recognized the French contributions, especially of Rochambeau in relation to Yorktown:

The strategy of the campaign was Rochambeau's; the French fleet was there as a result of his arrangements; the tactics of the battle were his; the American army was present because he had lent money to Washington; in total naval and military participants the French outnumbered the Americans between three and four to one. Yorktown was Rochambeau's victory.

Chapter 27

Lee Resolution

The Lee Resolution (also known as "The Resolution for Independence") was the formal assertion passed by the Second Continental Congress on July 2, 1776 which resolved that the Thirteen Colonies in America were "free and independent States", separated from the British Empire and creating what became the United States of America. News of this act was published that evening in the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* and the next day in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. The Declaration of Independence is the formal document which officially announced and explained the resolution, approved two days later on July 4, 1776.

The resolution is named for Richard Henry Lee of Virginia who proposed it to Congress after receiving instructions and wording from the Fifth Virginia Convention and its President Edmund Pendleton. Lee's full resolution had three parts which were considered by Congress on June 7, 1776. Along with the independence issue, it also proposed to establish a plan for ensuing American foreign relations, and to prepare a plan of a confederation for the states to consider. Congress decided to address each of these three parts separately.

Some sources indicate that Lee used the language from the Virginia Convention's instructions almost verbatim. Voting was delayed for several weeks on the first part of the resolution while state support and legislative instruction for independence were consolidated, but the press of events forced the other less-discussed parts to proceed immediately. On

June 10, Congress decided to form a committee to draft a declaration of independence in case the resolution should pass. On June 11, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert R. Livingston were appointed as the Committee of Five to accomplish this. That same day, Congress decided to establish two other committees to develop the resolution's last two parts. The following day, another committee of five (John Dickinson, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Benjamin Harrison V, and Robert Morris) was established to prepare a plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign powers; a third committee was created, consisting of one member from each colony, to prepare a draft of a constitution for confederation of the states.

The committee appointed to prepare a plan of treaties made its first report on July 18, largely in the writing of John Adams. A limited printing of the document was authorized, and it was reviewed and amended by Congress over the next five weeks. On August 27, the amended plan of treaties was referred back to the committee to develop instructions concerning the amendments, and Richard Henry Lee and James Wilson were added to the committee. Two days later, the committee was empowered to prepare further instructions and report back to Congress. The formal version of the plan of treaties was adopted on September 17. On September 24, Congress approved negotiating instructions for commissioners to obtain a treaty with France, based on the template provided in the plan of treaties; the next day, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson were elected commissioners to the court of France. Alliance with France was considered vital if the war with Britain was to be won and the newly declared country was to survive.

The committee drafting a plan of confederation was chaired by John Dickinson; they presented their initial results to Congress on July 12, 1776. Long debates followed on such issues as sovereignty, the exact powers to be given the confederate government, whether to have a judiciary, and voting procedures. The final draft of the Articles of Confederation was prepared during the summer of 1777 and approved by Congress for ratification by the individual states on November 15, 1777, after a year of debate. It continued in use from that time onward, although it was not ratified by all states until four years later on March 1, 1781.

Toward independence

When the American Revolutionary War began in 1775, few colonists in British North America openly advocated independence from Great Britain. Support for independence grew steadily in 1776, especially after the publication of Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* in January of that year. In the Second Continental Congress, the movement towards independence was guided principally by an informal alliance of delegates eventually known as the "Adams-Lee Junto", after Samuel Adams and John Adams of Massachusetts and Richard Henry Lee of Virginia.

On May 15, 1776, the revolutionary Virginia Convention, then meeting in Williamsburg, passed a resolution instructing Virginia's delegates in the Continental Congress "to propose to that respectable body to declare the United Colonies free and independent States, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the Crown or Parliament of Great Britain". In accordance with those instructions, on June 7, Richard

Henry Lee proposed the resolution to Congress and it was seconded by John Adams.

Resolved, That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.

That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances.

That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective Colonies for their consideration and approbation.

Congress as a whole was not yet ready to declare independence at that moment, because the delegates from some of the colonies, including Maryland, Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, and New York, had not yet been authorized to vote for independence.

Voting on the first clause of Lee's resolution was therefore postponed for three weeks while advocates of independence worked to build support in the colonial governments for the resolution.

Meanwhile, a Committee of Five was appointed to prepare a formal declaration so that it would be ready when independence, which almost everyone recognized was now inevitable, was approved. The committee prepared a declaration of independence, written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, and presented it to Congress on June 28, 1776.

Approval and declaration

The declaration was set aside while the resolution of independence was debated for several days. The vote on the independence section of the Lee resolution had been postponed until Monday, July 1, when it was taken up by the Committee of the Whole. At the request of South Carolina, the resolution was not acted upon until the following day in the hope of securing unanimity. A trial vote had been tested where it was found that South Carolina and Pennsylvania were in the negative, with Delaware split in a tie between its two delegates. The vote was held on July 2, with critical changes happening between Monday and Tuesday. Edward Rutledge was able to persuade South Carolina delegates to vote yes, two Pennsylvania delegates were persuaded to be absent, and Caesar Rodney had been sent for through the night to break Delaware's tie, so Lee's resolution of independence was approved by 12 of the 13 colonies. Delegates from the Colony of New York still lacked instructions to vote for independence, so they abstained on this vote, although the New York Provincial Congress voted on July 9 to "join with the other colonies in supporting" independence.

The Lee Resolution's passage was reported at the time as the colonies' definitive declaration of independence from Great Britain. The *Pennsylvania Evening Post* reported on July 2:

This day the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS declared the UNITED COLONIES FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES.

The *Pennsylvania Gazette* followed suit the next day with its own brief report:

Yesterday, the CONTINENTAL CONGRESS declared the UNITED COLONIES FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES.

After passing the resolution of independence on July 2, Congress turned its attention to the text of the declaration. Over several days of debate, Congress made a number of alterations to the text, including adding the wording of Lee's resolution of independence to the conclusion. The final text of the declaration was approved by Congress on July 4 and sent off to be printed.

John Adams wrote his wife Abigail on July 3 about the resolution of independence:

The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epoch in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary festival. It ought to be commemorated as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward forever more.

Adams's prediction was off by two days. From the outset, Americans celebrated Independence Day on July 4, the date when the Declaration of Independence was approved, rather than on July 2, the date when the resolution of independence was adopted.

The two latter parts of the Lee Resolution were not passed until months later. The second part regarding the formation of foreign alliances was approved in September 1776, and the

third part regarding a plan of confederation was approved in November 1777 and finally ratified in 1781.

Congressional journal entries

The following are entries relating to the resolution of independence and the Declaration of Independence in the *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789*, from American Memory, published by the Library of Congress:

- Friday, June 7, "certain resolutions respecting independency" are moved and seconded; discussion set for Saturday
- Saturday, June 8, Congress considers the resolutions but postpones a decision
- Monday, June 10, Congress postpones the first part of Lee's resolution for three weeks, and also decides to appoint "a committee to prepare a declaration to the effect of the said first resolution".
- Tuesday, June 11, Congress establishes three committees to pursue the three part resolution, and names five members of the first "to prepare the declaration".
- Wednesday, June 12, Congress appointments members of the other two committees. One of 13 members to "prepare and digest the form of a confederation", and the other of five members to "prepare a plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign powers".
- Friday, June 28, the committee reports its draft of the declaration, which is ordered "To lie on the table."

- Monday, July 1, Congress begins "to take into consideration the resolution respecting independency"
- Tuesday, July 2, Congress agrees to the resolution, begins to consider the declaration
- Wednesday, July 3, further consideration of the declaration
- Thursday, July 4, the Declaration of Independence is approved. The text of the Declaration on this day's entry of the published *Journal*, as well as the list of signatures, is copied from the engrossed version of the Declaration.
- Friday, July 12, The committee appointed to prepare articles of confederation delivered their draft, which was read.
- Monday, July 15, Congress learns that New York now supports independence
- Thursday, July 18, The committee appointed to prepare a plan of treaties to be entered into with foreign states or kingdoms delivered their draft, which was read.
- Friday, July 19, Congress orders that the Declaration "be fairly engrossed on parchment"
- Friday, August 2, the Declaration of Independence is signed by members of Congress
- Tuesday, August 27, The amended plan of treaties was referred back to the committee to develop instructions regarding the amendments made by Congress. The committee size was increased by two members.
- Thursday, August 29, the committee for the plan of treaties was empowered to prepare further

appropriate instructions, and report back to Congress.

- Tuesday, September 17, Congress discussed the amended plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign nations, and [secretly] passed the plan of a treaty be proposed to His Most Christian Majesty.
- Tuesday, September 24, Congress resumed consideration of the instructions to the agent [commissioner] regarding the pursuit of the plan of treaty with France, debated it by paragraph, amended it, and approved it.
- Thursday, September 26, 1776 Congress elects three commissioners to the court of France, Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson. They also resolve "That secrecy shall be observed until the farther Order of Congress; and that until permission be obtained from Congress to disclose the particulars of this business, no member be permitted to say any thing more upon this subject, than that Congress have taken such steps as they judged necessary for the purpose of obtaining foreign Alliance."
- Saturday, November 15, 1777, Congress approves the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union for ratification by the individual States.

Chapter 28

United States Declaration of Independence

The United States Declaration of Independence is the pronouncement adopted by the Second Continental Congress meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on July 4, 1776. The Declaration explained why the Thirteen Colonies at war with the Kingdom of Great Britain regarded themselves as thirteen independent sovereign states, no longer under British rule. With the Declaration, these new states took a collective first step toward forming the United States of America. The declaration was signed by representatives from New Hampshire, Massachusetts Bay, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

The Lee Resolution for independence was passed by the Second Continental Congress on July 2 with no opposing votes. The Committee of Five had drafted the Declaration to be ready when Congress voted on independence. John Adams, a leader in pushing for independence, had persuaded the committee to select Thomas Jefferson to compose the original draft of the document, which Congress edited to produce the final version. The Declaration was a formal explanation of why Congress had voted to declare independence from Great Britain, more than a year after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War. Adams wrote to his wife Abigail, "The Second Day of July 1776, will be the most memorable Epocha, in the History of America" – although Independence Day is actually celebrated

on July 4, the date that the wording of the Declaration of Independence was approved.

After ratifying the text on July 4, Congress issued the Declaration of Independence in several forms. It was initially published as the printed Dunlap broadside that was widely distributed and read to the public. The source copy used for this printing has been lost and may have been a copy in Thomas Jefferson's hand. Jefferson's original draft is preserved at the Library of Congress, complete with changes made by John Adams and Benjamin Franklin, as well as Jefferson's notes of changes made by Congress. The best-known version of the Declaration is a signed copy that is displayed at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., and which is popularly regarded as the official document. This engrossed copy (finalized, calligraphic copy) was ordered by Congress on July 19 and signed primarily on August 2.

The sources and interpretation of the Declaration have been the subject of much scholarly inquiry. The Declaration justified the independence of the United States by listing 27 colonial grievances against King George III and by asserting certain natural and legal rights, including a right of revolution. Its original purpose was to announce independence, and references to the text of the Declaration were few in the following years. Abraham Lincoln made it the centerpiece of his policies and his rhetoric, as in the Gettysburg Address of 1863. Since then, it has become a well-known statement on human rights, particularly its second sentence:

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with

certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. The declaration was made to create equal rights for every person and if it was intended for only a certain section of people, they would have left it as "rights of Englishmen". This has been called "one of the best-known sentences in the English language", containing "the most potent and consequential words in American history". The passage came to represent a moral standard to which the United States should strive. This view was notably promoted by Lincoln, who considered the Declaration to be the foundation of his political philosophy and argued that it is a statement of principles through which the United States Constitution should be interpreted.

The Declaration of Independence inspired many similar documents in other countries, the first being the 1789 *Declaration of United Belgian States* issued during the Brabant Revolution in the Austrian Netherlands. It also served as the primary model for numerous declarations of independence in Europe and Latin America, as well as Africa (Liberia) and Oceania (New Zealand) during the first half of the 19th century.

Background

Believe me, dear Sir: there is not in the British empire a man who more cordially loves a union with Great Britain than I do. But, by the God that made me, I will cease to exist before I yield to a connection on such terms as the British Parliament propose; and in this, I think I speak the sentiments of America.

- — *Thomas Jefferson, November 29, 1775*

By the time that the Declaration of Independence was adopted in July 1776, the Thirteen Colonies and Great Britain had been at war for more than a year. Relations had been deteriorating between the colonies and the mother country since 1763. Parliament enacted a series of measures to increase revenue from the colonies, such as the Stamp Act of 1765 and the Townshend Acts of 1767. Parliament believed that these acts were a legitimate means of having the colonies pay their fair share of the costs to keep them in the British Empire.

Many colonists, however, had developed a different conception of the empire. The colonies were not directly represented in Parliament, and colonists argued that Parliament had no right to levy taxes upon them. This tax dispute was part of a larger divergence between British and American interpretations of the British Constitution and the extent of Parliament's authority in the colonies. The orthodox British view, dating from the Glorious Revolution of 1688, was that Parliament was the supreme authority throughout the empire, and so, by definition, anything that Parliament did was constitutional. In the colonies, however, the idea had developed that the British Constitution recognized certain fundamental rights that no government could violate, not even Parliament. After the Townshend Acts, some essayists even began to question whether Parliament had any legitimate jurisdiction in the colonies at all. Anticipating the arrangement of the British Commonwealth, by 1774, American writers such as Samuel Adams, James Wilson, and Thomas Jefferson were arguing that Parliament was the legislature of Great Britain only, and that the colonies, which had their own legislatures, were connected to the rest of the empire only through their allegiance to the Crown.

Congress convenes

The issue of Parliament's authority in the colonies became a crisis after Parliament passed the Coercive Acts (known as the Intolerable Acts in the colonies) in 1774 to punish the colonists for the Gaspee Affair of 1772 and the Boston Tea Party of 1773.

Many colonists saw the Coercive Acts as a violation of the British Constitution and thus a threat to the liberties of all of British America, so the First Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia in September 1774 to coordinate a response. Congress organized a boycott of British goods and petitioned the king for repeal of the acts. These measures were unsuccessful because King George and the ministry of Prime Minister Lord North were determined to enforce parliamentary supremacy in America. As the king wrote to North in November 1774, "blows must decide whether they are to be subject to this country or independent".

Most colonists still hoped for reconciliation with Great Britain, even after fighting began in the American Revolutionary War at Lexington and Concord in April 1775. The Second Continental Congress convened at the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia in May 1775, and some delegates hoped for eventual independence, but no one yet advocated declaring it. Many colonists no longer believed that Parliament had any sovereignty over them, yet they still professed loyalty to King George, who they hoped would intercede on their behalf. They were disappointed in late 1775 when the king rejected Congress's second petition, issued a Proclamation of Rebellion, and announced before Parliament on October 26 that he was

considering "friendly offers of foreign assistance" to suppress the rebellion. A pro-American minority in Parliament warned that the government was driving the colonists toward independence.

Toward independence

Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense* was published in January 1776, just as it became clear in the colonies that the king was not inclined to act as a conciliator. Paine had only recently arrived in the colonies from England, and he argued in favor of colonial independence, advocating republicanism as an alternative to monarchy and hereditary rule. *Common Sense* made a persuasive and impassioned case for independence, which had not yet been given serious intellectual consideration in the American colonies. Paine connected independence with Protestant beliefs as a means to present a distinctly American political identity, thereby stimulating public debate on a topic that few had previously dared to openly discuss, and public support for separation from Great Britain steadily increased after its publication.

Some colonists still held out hope for reconciliation, but developments in early 1776 further strengthened public support for independence. In February 1776, colonists learned of Parliament's passage of the Prohibitory Act, which established a blockade of American ports and declared American ships to be enemy vessels. John Adams, a strong supporter of independence, believed that Parliament had effectively declared American independence before Congress had been able to. Adams labeled the Prohibitory Act the "Act of Independency", calling it "a compleat Dismemberment of the

British Empire". Support for declaring independence grew even more when it was confirmed that King George had hired German mercenaries to use against his American subjects.

Despite this growing popular support for independence, Congress lacked the clear authority to declare it. Delegates had been elected to Congress by 13 different governments, which included extralegal conventions, ad hoc committees, and elected assemblies, and they were bound by the instructions given to them. Regardless of their personal opinions, delegates could not vote to declare independence unless their instructions permitted such an action. Several colonies, in fact, expressly prohibited their delegates from taking any steps toward separation from Great Britain, while other delegations had instructions that were ambiguous on the issue; consequently, advocates of independence sought to have the Congressional instructions revised. For Congress to declare independence, a majority of delegations would need authorization to vote for it, and at least one colonial government would need to specifically instruct its delegation to propose a declaration of independence in Congress. Between April and July 1776, a "complex political war" was waged to bring this about.

Revising instructions

In the campaign to revise Congressional instructions, many Americans formally expressed their support for separation from Great Britain in what were effectively state and local declarations of independence. Historian Pauline Maier identifies more than ninety such declarations that were issued throughout the Thirteen Colonies from April to July 1776.

These "declarations" took a variety of forms. Some were formal written instructions for Congressional delegations, such as the Halifax Resolves of April 12, with which North Carolina became the first colony to explicitly authorize its delegates to vote for independence. Others were legislative acts that officially ended British rule in individual colonies, such as the Rhode Island legislature renouncing its allegiance to Great Britain on May 4—the first colony to do so. Many "declarations" were resolutions adopted at town or county meetings that offered support for independence. A few came in the form of jury instructions, such as the statement issued on April 23, 1776, by Chief Justice William Henry Drayton of South Carolina: "the law of the land authorizes me to declare ... that *George* the Third, King of *Great Britain* ... has no authority over us, and we owe no obedience to him." Most of these declarations are now obscure, having been overshadowed by the resolution for independence, approved by Congress on July 2, and the declaration of independence, approved and printed on July 4 and signed in August.

Some colonies held back from endorsing independence. Resistance was centered in the middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Advocates of independence saw Pennsylvania as the key; if that colony could be converted to the pro-independence cause, it was believed that the others would follow. On May 1, however, opponents of independence retained control of the Pennsylvania Assembly in a special election that had focused on the question of independence. In response, Congress passed a resolution on May 10 which had been promoted by John Adams and Richard Henry Lee, calling on colonies without a "government sufficient to the exigencies of their affairs" to

adopt new governments. The resolution passed unanimously, and was even supported by Pennsylvania's John Dickinson, the leader of the anti-independence faction in Congress, who believed that it did not apply to his colony.

May 15 preamble

As was the custom, Congress appointed a committee to draft a preamble to explain the purpose of the resolution. John Adams wrote the preamble, which stated that because King George had rejected reconciliation and was hiring foreign mercenaries to use against the colonies, "it is necessary that the exercise of every kind of authority under the said crown should be totally suppressed". Adams's preamble was meant to encourage the overthrow of the governments of Pennsylvania and Maryland, which were still under proprietary governance. Congress passed the preamble on May 15 after several days of debate, but four of the middle colonies voted against it, and the Maryland delegation walked out in protest. Adams regarded his May 15 preamble effectively as an American declaration of independence, although a formal declaration would still have to be made.

Lee's resolution

On the same day that Congress passed Adams's radical preamble, the Virginia Convention set the stage for a formal Congressional declaration of independence. On May 15, the Convention instructed Virginia's congressional delegation "to propose to that respectable body to declare the United Colonies free and independent States, absolved from all allegiance to, or dependence upon, the Crown or Parliament of Great Britain".

In accordance with those instructions, Richard Henry Lee of Virginia presented a three-part resolution to Congress on June 7. The motion was seconded by John Adams, calling on Congress to declare independence, form foreign alliances, and prepare a plan of colonial confederation. The part of the resolution relating to declaring independence read:

Resolved, that these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States, that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.

Lee's resolution met with resistance in the ensuing debate. Opponents of the resolution conceded that reconciliation was unlikely with Great Britain, while arguing that declaring independence was premature, and that securing foreign aid should take priority. Advocates of the resolution countered that foreign governments would not intervene in an internal British struggle, and so a formal declaration of independence was needed before foreign aid was possible. All Congress needed to do, they insisted, was to "declare a fact which already exists". Delegates from Pennsylvania, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, and New York were still not yet authorized to vote for independence, however, and some of them threatened to leave Congress if the resolution were adopted. Congress, therefore, voted on June 10 to postpone further discussion of Lee's resolution for three weeks. Until then, Congress decided that a committee should prepare a document announcing and explaining independence in the event that Lee's resolution was approved when it was brought up again in July.

The final push

Support for a Congressional declaration of independence was consolidated in the final weeks of June 1776. On June 14, the Connecticut Assembly instructed its delegates to propose independence and, the following day, the legislatures of New Hampshire and Delaware authorized their delegates to declare independence. In Pennsylvania, political struggles ended with the dissolution of the colonial assembly, and a new Conference of Committees under Thomas McKean authorized Pennsylvania's delegates to declare independence on June 18.

The Provincial Congress of New Jersey had been governing the province since January 1776; they resolved on June 15 that Royal Governor William Franklin was "an enemy to the liberties of this country" and had him arrested. On June 21, they chose new delegates to Congress and empowered them to join in a declaration of independence.

Only Maryland and New York had yet to authorize independence toward the end of June. Previously, Maryland's delegates had walked out when the Continental Congress adopted Adams's radical May 15 preamble, and had sent to the Annapolis Convention for instructions. On May 20, the Annapolis Convention rejected Adams's preamble, instructing its delegates to remain against independence. But Samuel Chase went to Maryland and, thanks to local resolutions in favor of independence, was able to get the Annapolis Convention to change its mind on June 28. Only the New York delegates were unable to get revised instructions. When Congress had been considering the resolution of independence on June 8, the New York Provincial Congress told the delegates

to wait. But on June 30, the Provincial Congress evacuated New York as British forces approached, and would not convene again until July 10. This meant that New York's delegates would not be authorized to declare independence until after Congress had made its decision.

Draft and adoption

- Political maneuvering was setting the stage for an official declaration of independence even while a document was being written to explain the decision. On June 11, 1776, Congress appointed a "Committee of Five" to draft a declaration, consisting of John Adams of Massachusetts, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania, Thomas Jefferson of Virginia, Robert R. Livingston of New York, and Roger Sherman of Connecticut. The committee took no minutes, so there is some uncertainty about how the drafting process proceeded; contradictory accounts were written many years later by Jefferson and Adams, too many years to be regarded as entirely reliable—although their accounts are frequently cited. What is certain is that the committee discussed the general outline which the document should follow and decided that Jefferson would write the first draft. The committee in general, and Jefferson in particular, thought that Adams should write the document, but Adams persuaded them to choose Jefferson and promised to consult with him personally. Adams also convinced Jefferson by giving him some drinks. Jefferson was a little nervous

about writing it, so Adams calmed him down with the drinks. Considering Congress's busy schedule, Jefferson probably had limited time for writing over the next 17 days, and he likely wrote the draft quickly. He then consulted the others and made some changes, and then produced another copy incorporating these alterations. The committee presented this copy to the Congress on June 28, 1776. The title of the document was "A Declaration by the Representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress assembled."

Congress ordered that the draft "lie on the table" and then methodically edited Jefferson's primary document for the next two days, shortening it by a fourth, removing unnecessary wording, and improving sentence structure. They removed Jefferson's assertion that King George III had forced slavery onto the colonies, in order to moderate the document and appease those in South Carolina and Georgia, both states which had significant involvement in the slave trade. Jefferson later wrote in his autobiography that Northern states were also supportive towards the clauses removal, "for though their people had very few slaves themselves, yet they had been pretty considerable carriers of them to others." Jefferson wrote that Congress had "mangled" his draft version, but the Declaration that was finally produced was "the majestic document that inspired both contemporaries and posterity", in the words of his biographer John Ferling.

Congress tabled the draft of the declaration on Monday, July 1 and resolved itself into a committee of the whole, with Benjamin Harrison of Virginia presiding, and they resumed

debate on Lee's resolution of independence. John Dickinson made one last effort to delay the decision, arguing that Congress should not declare independence without first securing a foreign alliance and finalizing the Articles of Confederation. John Adams gave a speech in reply to Dickinson, restating the case for an immediate declaration.

A vote was taken after a long day of speeches, each colony casting a single vote, as always. The delegation for each colony numbered from two to seven members, and each delegation voted among themselves to determine the colony's vote. Pennsylvania and South Carolina voted against declaring independence. The New York delegation abstained, lacking permission to vote for independence. Delaware cast no vote because the delegation was split between Thomas McKean, who voted yes, and George Read, who voted no. The remaining nine delegations voted in favor of independence, which meant that the resolution had been approved by the committee of the whole. The next step was for the resolution to be voted upon by Congress itself. Edward Rutledge of South Carolina was opposed to Lee's resolution but desirous of unanimity, and he moved that the vote be postponed until the following day.

On July 2, South Carolina reversed its position and voted for independence. In the Pennsylvania delegation, Dickinson and Robert Morris abstained, allowing the delegation to vote three-to-two in favor of independence. The tie in the Delaware delegation was broken by the timely arrival of Caesar Rodney, who voted for independence. The New York delegation abstained once again since they were still not authorized to vote for independence, although they were allowed to do so a week later by the New York Provincial Congress. The resolution

of independence was adopted with twelve affirmative votes and one abstention, and the colonies formally severed political ties with Great Britain. John Adams wrote to his wife on the following day and predicted that July 2 would become a great American holiday. He thought that the vote for independence would be commemorated; he did not foresee that Americans would instead celebrate Independence Day on the date when the announcement of that act was finalized.

I am apt to believe that [Independence Day] will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the Day of Deliverance by solemn Acts of Devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with Pomp and Parade, with shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more.

Congress next turned its attention to the committee's draft of the declaration. They made a few changes in wording during several days of debate and deleted nearly a fourth of the text. The wording of the Declaration of Independence was approved on July 4, 1776 and sent to the printer for publication.

There is a distinct change in wording from this original broadside printing of the Declaration and the final official engrossed copy. The word "unanimous" was inserted as a result of a Congressional resolution passed on July 19, 1776:

- Resolved, That the Declaration passed on the 4th, be fairly engrossed on parchment, with the title and stile of "The unanimous declaration of the thirteen United States of America," and that the same, when engrossed, be signed by every member of Congress.

Historian George Billias says:

- Independence amounted to a new status of interdependence: the United States was now a sovereign nation entitled to the privileges and responsibilities that came with that status. America thus became a member of the international community, which meant becoming a maker of treaties and alliances, a military ally in diplomacy, and a partner in foreign trade on a more equal basis.

Influences and legal status

Historians have often sought to identify the sources that most influenced the words and political philosophy of the Declaration of Independence. By Jefferson's own admission, the Declaration contained no original ideas, but was instead a statement of sentiments widely shared by supporters of the American Revolution. As he explained in 1825:

- Neither aiming at originality of principle or sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion.

Jefferson's most immediate sources were two documents written in June 1776: his own draft of the preamble of the Constitution of Virginia, and George Mason's draft of the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Ideas and phrases from both of these documents appear in the Declaration of Independence. Mason's opening was:

- Section 1. That all men are by nature equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.

Mason was, in turn, directly influenced by the 1689 English Declaration of Rights, which formally ended the reign of King James II. During the American Revolution, Jefferson and other Americans looked to the English Declaration of Rights as a model of how to end the reign of an unjust king. The Scottish Declaration of Arbroath (1320) and the Dutch Act of Abjuration (1581) have also been offered as models for Jefferson's Declaration, but these models are now accepted by few scholars.

Jefferson wrote that a number of authors exerted a general influence on the words of the Declaration. English political theorist John Locke is usually cited as one of the primary influences, a man whom Jefferson called one of "the three greatest men that have ever lived". In 1922, historian Carl L. Becker wrote, "Most Americans had absorbed Locke's works as a kind of political gospel; and the Declaration, in its form, in its phraseology, follows closely certain sentences in Locke's second treatise on government." The extent of Locke's influence on the American Revolution has been questioned by some subsequent scholars, however. Historian Ray Forrest Harvey argued in 1937 for the dominant influence of Swiss jurist Jean Jacques Burlamaqui, declaring that Jefferson and Locke were

at "two opposite poles" in their political philosophy, as evidenced by Jefferson's use in the Declaration of Independence of the phrase "pursuit of happiness" instead of "property". Other scholars emphasized the influence of republicanism rather than Locke's classical liberalism. Historian Garry Wills argued that Jefferson was influenced by the Scottish Enlightenment, particularly Francis Hutcheson, rather than Locke, an interpretation that has been strongly criticized.

Legal historian John Phillip Reid has written that the emphasis on the political philosophy of the Declaration has been misplaced. The Declaration is not a philosophical tract about natural rights, argues Reid, but is instead a legal document—an indictment against King George for violating the constitutional rights of the colonists. As such, it follows the process of the 1550 *Magdeburg Confession*, which legitimized resistance against Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in a multi-step legal formula now known as the doctrine of the Lesser magistrate. Historian David Armitage has argued that the Declaration was strongly influenced by de Vattel's *The Law of Nations*, the dominant international law treatise of the period, and a book that Benjamin Franklin said was "continually in the hands of the members of our Congress". Armitage writes, "Vattel made independence fundamental to his definition of statehood"; therefore, the primary purpose of the Declaration was "to express the international legal sovereignty of the United States". If the United States were to have any hope of being recognized by the European powers, the American revolutionaries first had to make it clear that they were no longer dependent on Great Britain. The Declaration of Independence does not have the force of law domestically, but

nevertheless it may help to provide historical and legal clarity about the Constitution and other laws.

Signing

The Declaration became official when Congress voted for it on July 4; signatures of the delegates were not needed to make it official. The handwritten copy of the Declaration of Independence that was signed by Congress is dated July 4, 1776. The signatures of fifty-six delegates are affixed; however, the exact date when each person signed it has long been the subject of debate. Jefferson,

Franklin, and Adams all wrote that the Declaration had been signed by Congress on July 4. But in 1796, signer Thomas McKean disputed that the Declaration had been signed on July 4, pointing out that some signers were not then present, including several who were not even elected to Congress until after that date.

The Declaration was transposed on paper, adopted by the Continental Congress, and signed by John Hancock, President of the Congress, on July 4, 1776, according to the 1911 record of events by the U.S. State Department under Secretary Philander C. Knox. On August 2, 1776, a parchment paper copy of the Declaration was signed by 56 persons. Many of these signers were not present when the original Declaration was adopted on July 4. Signer Matthew Thornton from New Hampshire was seated in the Continental Congress in November; he asked for and received the privilege of adding his signature at that time, and signed on November 4, 1776.

Historians have generally accepted McKean's version of events, arguing that the famous signed version of the Declaration was created after July 19, and was not signed by Congress until August 2, 1776. In 1986, legal historian Wilfred Ritz argued that historians had misunderstood the primary documents and given too much credence to McKean, who had not been present in Congress on July 4. According to Ritz, about thirty-four delegates signed the Declaration on July 4, and the others signed on or after August 2. Historians who reject a July 4 signing maintain that most delegates signed on August 2, and that those eventual signers who were not present added their names later.

Two future U.S. presidents were among the signatories: Thomas Jefferson and John Adams. The most famous signature on the engrossed copy is that of John Hancock, who presumably signed first as President of Congress. Hancock's large, flamboyant signature became iconic, and the term *John Hancock* emerged in the United States as an informal synonym for "signature". A commonly circulated but apocryphal account claims that, after Hancock signed, the delegate from Massachusetts commented, "The British ministry can read that name without spectacles." Another apocryphal report indicates that Hancock proudly declared, "There! I guess King George will be able to read that!"

Various legends emerged years later about the signing of the Declaration, when the document had become an important national symbol. In one famous story, John Hancock supposedly said that Congress, having signed the Declaration, must now "all hang together", and Benjamin Franklin replied: "Yes, we must indeed all hang together, or most assuredly we

shall all hang separately." The earliest known version of that quotation in print appeared in a London humor magazine in 1837.

The Syng inkstand used at the signing was also used at the signing of the United States Constitution in 1787.

Publication and reaction

After Congress approved the final wording of the Declaration on July 4, a handwritten copy was sent a few blocks away to the printing shop of John Dunlap. Through the night, Dunlap printed about 200 broadsides for distribution. Soon, it was being read to audiences and reprinted in newspapers throughout the 13 states. The first formal public readings of the document took place on July 8, in Philadelphia (by John Nixon in the yard of Independence Hall), Trenton, New Jersey, and Easton, Pennsylvania; the first newspaper to publish it was the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* on July 6. A German translation of the Declaration was published in Philadelphia by July 9.

President of Congress John Hancock sent a broadside to General George Washington, instructing him to have it proclaimed "at the Head of the Army in the way you shall think it most proper". Washington had the Declaration read to his troops in New York City on July 9, with thousands of British troops on ships in the harbor. Washington and Congress hoped that the Declaration would inspire the soldiers, and encourage others to join the army. After hearing the Declaration, crowds in many cities tore down and destroyed signs or statues representing royal authority. An equestrian statue of King

George in New York City was pulled down and the lead used to make musket balls.

One of the first readings of the Declaration by the British is believed to have taken place at the Rose and Crown Tavern on Staten Island, New York in the presence of General Howe. British officials in North America sent copies of the Declaration to Great Britain. It was published in British newspapers beginning in mid-August, it had reached Florence and Warsaw by mid-September, and a German translation appeared in Switzerland by October. The first copy of the Declaration sent to France got lost, and the second copy arrived only in November 1776. It reached Portuguese America by Brazilian medical student "Vendek" José Joaquim Maia e Barbalho, who had met with Thomas Jefferson in Nîmes.

The Spanish-American authorities banned the circulation of the Declaration, but it was widely transmitted and translated: by Venezuelan Manuel García de Sena, by Colombian Miguel de Pombo, by Ecuadorian Vicente Rocafuerte, and by New Englanders Richard Cleveland and William Shaler, who distributed the Declaration and the United States Constitution among Creoles in Chile and Indians in Mexico in 1821. The North Ministry did not give an official answer to the Declaration, but instead secretly commissioned pamphleteer John Lind to publish a response entitled *Answer to the Declaration of the American Congress*. British Tories denounced the signers of the Declaration for not applying the same principles of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" to African Americans. Thomas Hutchinson, the former royal governor of Massachusetts, also published a rebuttal. These pamphlets challenged various aspects of the Declaration.

Hutchinson argued that the American Revolution was the work of a few conspirators who wanted independence from the outset, and who had finally achieved it by inducing otherwise loyal colonists to rebel. Lind's pamphlet had an anonymous attack on the concept of natural rights written by Jeremy Bentham, an argument that he repeated during the French Revolution. Both pamphlets questioned how the American slaveholders in Congress could proclaim that "all men are created equal" without freeing their own slaves.

William Whipple, a signer of the Declaration of Independence who had fought in the war, freed his slave Prince Whipple because of his revolutionary ideals. In the postwar decades, other slaveholders also freed their slaves; from 1790 to 1810, the percentage of free blacks in the Upper South increased to 8.3 percent from less than one percent of the black population. Northern states began abolishing slavery shortly after the war for Independence began, and all had abolished slavery by 1804.

Later in 1776, a group of 547 Loyalists, largely from New York, signed a Declaration of Dependence pledging their loyalty to the Crown.

History of the documents

The official copy of the Declaration of Independence was the one printed on July 4, 1776, under Jefferson's supervision. It was sent to the states and to the Army and was widely reprinted in newspapers. The slightly different "engrossed copy" (shown at the top of this article) was made later for members to sign. The engrossed version is the one widely

distributed in the 21st century. Note that the opening lines differ between the two versions.

The copy of the Declaration that was signed by Congress is known as the engrossed or parchment copy. It was probably engrossed (that is, carefully handwritten) by clerk Timothy Matlack. A facsimile made in 1823 has become the basis of most modern reproductions rather than the original because of poor conservation of the engrossed copy through the 19th century.

In 1921, custody of the engrossed copy of the Declaration was transferred from the State Department to the Library of Congress, along with the United States Constitution. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, the documents were moved for safekeeping to the United States Bullion Depository at Fort Knox in Kentucky, where they were kept until 1944. In 1952, the engrossed Declaration was transferred to the National Archives and is now on permanent display at the National Archives in the "Rotunda for the Charters of Freedom".

The document signed by Congress and enshrined in the National Archives is usually regarded as *the* Declaration of Independence, but historian Julian P. Boyd argued that the Declaration, like Magna Carta, is not a single document. Boyd considered the printed broadsides ordered by Congress to be official texts, as well. The Declaration was first published as a broadside that was printed the night of July 4 by John Dunlap of Philadelphia. Dunlap printed about 200 broadsides, of which 26 are known to survive. The 26th copy was discovered in The National Archives in England in 2009.

In 1777, Congress commissioned Mary Katherine Goddard to print a new broadside that listed the signers of the Declaration, unlike the Dunlap broadside. Nine copies of the Goddard broadside are known to still exist. A variety of broadsides printed by the states are also extant, including seven copies of the Solomon Southwick broadside, one of which was acquired by Washington University in St. Louis in 2015.

Several early handwritten copies and drafts of the Declaration have also been preserved. Jefferson kept a four-page draft that late in life he called the "original Rough draught". It is not known how many drafts Jefferson wrote prior to this one, and how much of the text was contributed by other committee members. In 1947, Boyd discovered a fragment of an earlier draft in Jefferson's handwriting. Jefferson and Adams sent copies of the rough draft to friends, with slight variations.

During the writing process, Jefferson showed the rough draft to Adams and Franklin, and perhaps to other members of the drafting committee, who made a few more changes. Franklin, for example, may have been responsible for changing Jefferson's original phrase "We hold these truths to be sacred and undeniable" to "We hold these truths to be self-evident". Jefferson incorporated these changes into a copy that was submitted to Congress in the name of the committee. The copy that was submitted to Congress on June 28 has been lost and was perhaps destroyed in the printing process, or destroyed during the debates in accordance with Congress's secrecy rule.

On April 21, 2017, it was announced that a second engrossed copy had been discovered in the archives at West Sussex County Council in Chichester, England. Named by its finders

the "Sussex Declaration", it differs from the National Archives copy (which the finders refer to as the "Matlack Declaration") in that the signatures on it are not grouped by States. How it came to be in England is not yet known, but the finders believe that the randomness of the signatures points to an origin with signatory James Wilson, who had argued strongly that the Declaration was made not by the States but by the whole people.

Years of exposure to damaging lighting would result in the original Declaration of Independence document having much of its ink fade by 1876.

Legacy

The Declaration was given little attention in the years immediately following the American Revolution, having served its original purpose in announcing the independence of the United States. Early celebrations of Independence Day largely ignored the Declaration, as did early histories of the Revolution. The *act* of declaring independence was considered important, whereas the *text* announcing that act attracted little attention. The Declaration was rarely mentioned during the debates about the United States Constitution, and its language was not incorporated into that document. George Mason's draft of the Virginia Declaration of Rights was more influential, and its language was echoed in state constitutions and state bills of rights more often than Jefferson's words. "In none of these documents," wrote Pauline Maier, "is there any evidence whatsoever that the Declaration of Independence lived in men's minds as a classic statement of American political principles."

Influence in other countries

Many leaders of the French Revolution admired the Declaration of Independence but were also interested in the new American state constitutions. The inspiration and content of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) emerged largely from the ideals of the American Revolution. Lafayette prepared its key drafts, working closely in Paris with his friend Thomas Jefferson. It also borrowed language from George Mason's Virginia Declaration of Rights. The declaration also influenced the Russian Empire, and it had a particular impact on the Decembrist revolt and other Russian thinkers.

According to historian David Armitage, the Declaration of Independence did prove to be internationally influential, but not as a statement of human rights. Armitage argues that the Declaration was the first in a new genre of declarations of independence which announced the creation of new states. Other French leaders were directly influenced by the text of the Declaration of Independence itself. The *Manifesto of the Province of Flanders* (1790) was the first foreign derivation of the Declaration; others include the Venezuelan Declaration of Independence (1811), the Liberian Declaration of Independence (1847), the declarations of secession by the Confederate States of America (1860–61), and the Vietnamese Proclamation of Independence (1945). These declarations echoed the United States Declaration of Independence in announcing the independence of a new state, without necessarily endorsing the political philosophy of the original.

Other countries have used the Declaration as inspiration or have directly copied sections from it. These include the Haitian

declaration of January 1, 1804 during the Haitian Revolution, the United Provinces of New Granada in 1811, the Argentine Declaration of Independence in 1816, the Chilean Declaration of Independence in 1818, Costa Rica in 1821, El Salvador in 1821, Guatemala in 1821, Honduras in 1821, Mexico in 1821, Nicaragua in 1821, Peru in 1821, Bolivian War of Independence in 1825, Uruguay in 1825, Ecuador in 1830, Colombia in 1831, Paraguay in 1842, Dominican Republic in 1844, Texas Declaration of Independence in March 1836, California Republic in November 1836, Hungarian Declaration of Independence in 1849, Declaration of the Independence of New Zealand in 1835, and the Czechoslovak declaration of independence from 1918 drafted in Washington D.C. with Gutzon Borglum among the drafters. The Rhodesian declaration of independence is based on the American one, as well, ratified in November 1965, although it omits the phrases "all men are created equal" and "the consent of the governed". The South Carolina declaration of secession from December 1860 also mentions the U.S. Declaration of Independence, though it omits references to "all men are created equal" and "consent of the governed".

Revival of interest

Interest in the Declaration was revived in the 1790s with the emergence of the United States's first political parties. Throughout the 1780s, few Americans knew or cared who wrote the Declaration. But in the next decade, Jeffersonian Republicans sought political advantage over their rival Federalists by promoting both the importance of the Declaration and Jefferson as its author. Federalists responded by casting doubt on Jefferson's authorship or originality, and

by emphasizing that independence was declared by the whole Congress, with Jefferson as just one member of the drafting committee. Federalists insisted that Congress's act of declaring independence, in which Federalist John Adams had played a major role, was more important than the document announcing it. But this view faded away, like the Federalist Party itself, and, before long, the act of declaring independence became synonymous with the document.

A less partisan appreciation for the Declaration emerged in the years following the War of 1812, thanks to a growing American nationalism and a renewed interest in the history of the Revolution. In 1817, Congress commissioned John Trumbull's famous painting of the signers, which was exhibited to large crowds before being installed in the Capitol. The earliest commemorative printings of the Declaration also appeared at this time, offering many Americans their first view of the signed document. Collective biographies of the signers were first published in the 1820s, giving birth to what Garry Wills called the "cult of the signers". In the years that followed, many stories about the writing and signing of the document were published for the first time.

When interest in the Declaration was revived, the sections that were most important in 1776 were no longer relevant: the announcement of the independence of the United States and the grievances against King George. But the second paragraph was applicable long after the war had ended, with its talk of self-evident truths and unalienable rights. The identity of natural law since the 18th century has seen increasing ascendancy towards political and moral norms versus the law of nature, God, or human nature as seen in the past. The

Constitution and the Bill of Rights lacked sweeping statements about rights and equality, and advocates of groups with grievances turned to the Declaration for support. Starting in the 1820s, variations of the Declaration were issued to proclaim the rights of workers, farmers, women, and others. In 1848, for example, the Seneca Falls Convention of women's rights advocates declared that "all men and women are created equal".

John Trumbull's Declaration of Independence (1817–1826)

John Trumbull's painting *Declaration of Independence* has played a significant role in popular conceptions of the Declaration of Independence. The painting is 12-by-18-foot (3.7 by 5.5 m) in size and was commissioned by the United States Congress in 1817; it has hung in the United States Capitol Rotunda since 1826. It is sometimes described as the signing of the Declaration of Independence, but it actually shows the Committee of Five presenting their draft of the Declaration to the Second Continental Congress on June 28, 1776, and not the signing of the document, which took place later.

Trumbull painted the figures from life whenever possible, but some had died and images could not be located; hence, the painting does not include all the signers of the Declaration. One figure had participated in the drafting but did not sign the final document; another refused to sign. In fact, the membership of the Second Continental Congress changed as time passed, and the figures in the painting were never in the same room at the same time. It is, however, an accurate depiction of the room in Independence Hall, the centerpiece of

the Independence National Historical Park in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Trumbull's painting has been depicted multiple times on U.S. currency and postage stamps. Its first use was on the reverse side of the \$100 National Bank Note issued in 1863. A few years later, the steel engraving used in printing the bank notes was used to produce a 24-cent stamp, issued as part of the 1869 Pictorial Issue. An engraving of the signing scene has been featured on the reverse side of the United States two-dollar bill since 1976.

Slavery and the Declaration

The apparent contradiction between the claim that "all men are created equal" and the existence of slavery in the United States attracted comment when the Declaration was first published. Many of the founders understood the incompatibility of the statement of natural equality with the institution of slavery, but continued to enjoy the "Rights of Man". Jefferson had included a paragraph in his initial rough Draft of the Declaration of Independence vigorously condemning the evil of the slave trade, and condemning King George III for forcing it onto the colonies, but this was deleted from the final version.

He has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating it's most sacred rights of life and liberty in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemispere, or to incure miserable death in their transportation hither. this piratical warfare, the opprobium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. determined to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative for suppressing every legislative

attempt to prohibit or to restrain this execrable commerce determining to keep open a market where MEN should be bought and sold: and that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished die, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms among us, and to purchase that liberty of which he had deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom he also obtruded them: thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people, with crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another.

Jefferson himself was a prominent Virginia slaveowner, owning six hundred enslaved Africans on his Monticello plantation. Referring to this contradiction, English abolitionist Thomas Day wrote in a 1776 letter, "If there be an object truly ridiculous in nature, it is an American patriot, signing resolutions of independency with the one hand, and with the other brandishing a whip over his affrighted slaves." The African-American writer Lemuel Haynes expressed similar viewpoints in his essay "Liberty Further Extended," where he wrote that "Liberty is Equally as pre[c]ious to a Black man, as it is to a white one".

In the 19th century, the Declaration took on a special significance for the abolitionist movement. Historian Bertram Wyatt-Brown wrote that "abolitionists tended to interpret the Declaration of Independence as a theological as well as a political document". Abolitionist leaders Benjamin Lundy and William Lloyd Garrison adopted the "twin rocks" of "the Bible and the Declaration of Independence" as the basis for their philosophies. "As long as there remains a single copy of the Declaration of Independence, or of the Bible, in our land," wrote Garrison, "we will not despair." For radical abolitionists

such as Garrison, the most important part of the Declaration was its assertion of the right of revolution. Garrison called for the destruction of the government under the Constitution, and the creation of a new state dedicated to the principles of the Declaration.

On July 5, 1852, Frederick Douglass delivered a speech asking the question, *What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?*

The controversial question of whether to allow additional slave states into the United States coincided with the growing stature of the Declaration. The first major public debate about slavery and the Declaration took place during the Missouri controversy of 1819 to 1821. Anti-slavery Congressmen argued that the language of the Declaration indicated that the Founding Fathers of the United States had been opposed to slavery in principle, and so new slave states should not be added to the country. Pro-slavery Congressmen led by Senator Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina argued that the Declaration was not a part of the Constitution and therefore had no relevance to the question.

With the abolitionist movement gaining momentum, defenders of slavery such as John Randolph and John C. Calhoun found it necessary to argue that the Declaration's assertion that "all men are created equal" was false, or at least that it did not apply to black people. During the debate over the Kansas–Nebraska Act in 1853, for example, Senator John Pettit of Indiana argued that the statement "all men are created equal" was not a "self-evident truth" but a "self-evident lie". Opponents of the Kansas–Nebraska Act, including Salmon P.

Chase and Benjamin Wade, defended the Declaration and what they saw as its antislavery principles.

John Brown's Declaration of Liberty

In preparing for his raid on Harpers Ferry, said by Stephen Douglass to be the beginning of the end of slavery in the United States, abolitionist John Brown had many copies printed of a Provisional Constitution. (When the seceding states created the Confederate States of America 16 months later, they operated for over a year under a Provisional Constitution.) It outlines the three branches of government in the quasi-country he hoped to set up in the Appalachian Mountains. It was widely reproduced in the press, and in full in the Select Senate Committee report on John Brown's insurrection (the Mason Report).

Much less known, as Brown did not have it printed, is his Declaration of Liberty, dated July 4, 1859, found among his papers at the Kennedy Farm. It was written out on sheets of paper attached to fabric, to allow it to be rolled, and it was rolled when found. The hand is that of Owen Brown, who often served as his father's amanuensis.

Imitating the vocabulary, punctuation, and capitalization of the 73-year-old U.S. Declaration, the 2000-word document begins:

July 4th 1859

- A Declaration of Liberty
By the Representatives of the slave Population of the
United States of America

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for an Oppressed People to Rise, and assert their Natural Rights, as Human Beings, as Native & mutual Citizens of a free Republic, and break that odious Yoke of oppression, which is so unjustly laid upon them by their fellow Countrymen, and to assume among the powers of Earth the same equal privileges to which the Laws of Nature, & natures God entitle them; A moderate respect for the opinions of Mankind, requires that they should declare the causes which incite them to this just & worthy action.

We hold these truths to be Self Evident; That All Men are Created Equal; That they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. That among these are Life, Liberty; & the persuit of happiness. That Nature hath freely given to all Men, a full Supply of Air. Water, & Land; for their sustinance, & mutual happiness, That No Man has any right to deprive his fellow Man, of these Inherent rights, except in punishment of Crime. That to secure these rights governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That when any form of Government, becomes destructive to these ends, It is the right of the People, to alter, Amend, or Remoddel it, Laying its foundation on Such Principles, & organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect the safety, & happiness of the Human Race.

The document was apparently intended to be read aloud, but so far as is known Brown never did so, even though he read the Provisional Constitution aloud the day the raid on Harpers Ferry began. Very much aware of the history of the American Revolution, he would have read the Declaration aloud after the

revolt had started. The document was not published until 1894, and by someone who did not realize its importance and buried it in an appendix of documents. It is missing from most but not all studies of John Brown.

Lincoln and the Declaration

The Declaration's relationship to slavery was taken up in 1854 by Abraham Lincoln, a little-known former Congressman who idolized the Founding Fathers. Lincoln thought that the Declaration of Independence expressed the highest principles of the American Revolution, and that the Founding Fathers had tolerated slavery with the expectation that it would ultimately wither away. For the United States to legitimize the expansion of slavery in the Kansas–Nebraska Act, thought Lincoln, was to repudiate the principles of the Revolution. In his October 1854 Peoria speech, Lincoln said:

Nearly eighty years ago we began by declaring that all men are created equal; but now from that beginning we have run down to the other declaration, that for some men to enslave others is a "sacred right of self-government". ... Our republican robe is soiled and trailed in the dust. ... Let us repurify it. Let us re-adopt the Declaration of Independence, and with it, the practices, and policy, which harmonize with it. ... If we do this, we shall not only have saved the Union: but we shall have saved it, as to make, and keep it, forever worthy of the saving.

The meaning of the Declaration was a recurring topic in the famed debates between Lincoln and Stephen Douglas in 1858. Douglas argued that the phrase "all men are created equal" in the Declaration referred to white men only. The purpose of the

Declaration, he said, had simply been to justify the independence of the United States, and not to proclaim the equality of any "inferior or degraded race". Lincoln, however, thought that the language of the Declaration was deliberately universal, setting a high moral standard to which the American republic should aspire. "I had thought the Declaration contemplated the progressive improvement in the condition of all men everywhere", he said. During the seventh and last joint debate with Steven Douglas at Alton, Illinois, on October 15, 1858, Lincoln said about the declaration:

I think the authors of that notable instrument intended to include all men, but they did not mean to declare all men equal in all respects. They did not mean to say all men were equal in color, size, intellect, moral development, or social capacity. They defined with tolerable distinctness in what they did consider all men created equal—equal in "certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This they said, and this they meant. They did not mean to assert the obvious untruth that all were then actually enjoying that equality, or yet that they were about to confer it immediately upon them. In fact, they had no power to confer such a boon. They meant simply to declare the right, so that the enforcement of it might follow as fast as circumstances should permit. They meant to set up a standard maxim for free society which should be familiar to all, constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even, though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people, of all colors, everywhere.

According to Pauline Maier, Douglas's interpretation was more historically accurate, but Lincoln's view ultimately prevailed. "In Lincoln's hands," wrote Maier, "the Declaration of Independence became first and foremost a living document" with "a set of goals to be realized over time".

Like Daniel Webster, James Wilson, and Joseph Story before him, Lincoln argued that the Declaration of Independence was a founding document of the United States, and that this had important implications for interpreting the Constitution, which had been ratified more than a decade after the Declaration.

The Constitution did not use the word "equality", yet Lincoln believed that the concept that "all men are created equal" remained a part of the nation's founding principles. He famously expressed this belief in the opening sentence of his 1863 Gettysburg Address: "Four score and seven years ago [i.e. in 1776] our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."

Lincoln's view of the Declaration became influential, seeing it as a moral guide to interpreting the Constitution. "For most people now," wrote Garry Wills in 1992, "the Declaration means what Lincoln told us it means, as a way of correcting the Constitution itself without overthrowing it."

Admirers of Lincoln such as Harry V. Jaffa praised this development. Critics of Lincoln, notably Willmoore Kendall and Mel Bradford, argued that Lincoln dangerously expanded the scope of the national government and violated states' rights by reading the Declaration into the Constitution.

Women's suffrage and the Declaration

In July 1848, the Seneca Falls Convention was held in Seneca Falls, New York, the first women's rights convention. It was organized by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Mary Ann McClintock, and Jane Hunt. They patterned their "Declaration of Sentiments" on the Declaration of Independence, in which they demanded social and political equality for women. Their motto was that "All men *and women* are created equal", and they demanded the right to vote.

Twentieth century and later

The Declaration was chosen to be the first digitized text (1971).

The Memorial to the 56 Signers of the Declaration of Independence was dedicated in 1984 in Constitution Gardens on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., where the signatures of all the original signers are carved in stone with their names, places of residence, and occupations.

The new One World Trade Center building in New York City (2014) is 1776 feet high to symbolize the year that the Declaration of Independence was signed.

Popular culture

The adoption of the Declaration of Independence was dramatized in the 1969 Tony Award-winning musical *1776* and the 1972 film version, as well as in the 2008 television miniseries *John Adams*. In 1970, The 5th Dimension recorded the opening of the Declaration on their album *Portrait* in the

song "Declaration". It was first performed on the *Ed Sullivan Show* on December 7, 1969, and it was taken as a song of protest against the Vietnam War. The Declaration of Independence is a plot device in the 2004 American film *National Treasure*. After the 2009 death of radio broadcaster Paul Harvey, Focus Today aired a "clip" of Harvey speaking about the lives of all the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Chapter 29

Articles of Confederation

The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union was an agreement among the 13 original states of the United States of America that served as its first constitution. It was approved after much debate (between July 1776 and November 1777) by the Second Continental Congress on November 15, 1777, and sent to the states for ratification. The Articles of Confederation came into force on March 1, 1781, after ratification by all the states. A guiding principle of the Articles was to preserve the independence and sovereignty of the states. The weak central government established by the Articles received only those powers which the former colonies had recognized as belonging to king and parliament.

The document provided clearly written rules for how the states' "league of friendship" would be organized. During the ratification process, the Congress looked to the Articles for guidance as it conducted business, directing the war effort, conducting diplomacy with foreign states, addressing territorial issues and dealing with Native American relations. Little changed politically once the Articles of Confederation went into effect, as ratification did little more than legalize what the Continental Congress had been doing. That body was renamed the Congress of the Confederation; but most Americans continued to call it the *Continental Congress*, since its organization remained the same.

As the Confederation Congress attempted to govern the continually growing American states, delegates discovered that

the limitations placed upon the central government rendered it ineffective at doing so. As the government's weaknesses became apparent, especially after Shays' Rebellion, some prominent political thinkers in the fledgling union began asking for changes to the Articles. Their hope was to create a stronger government. Initially, some states met to deal with their trade and economic problems. However, as more states became interested in meeting to change the Articles, a meeting was set in Philadelphia on May 25, 1787. This became the Constitutional Convention. It was quickly agreed that changes would not work, and instead the entire Articles needed to be replaced. On March 4, 1789, the government under the Articles was replaced with the federal government under the Constitution. The new Constitution provided for a much stronger federal government by establishing a chief executive (the President), courts, and taxing powers.

Background and context

The political push to increase cooperation among the then-loyal colonies began with the Albany Congress in 1754 and Benjamin Franklin's proposed Albany Plan, an inter-colonial collaboration to help solve mutual local problems. Over the next two decades, some of the basic concepts it addressed would strengthen; others would weaken, especially in the degree of loyalty (or lack thereof) owed the Crown. Civil disobedience resulted in coercive and quelling measures, such as the passage of what the colonials referred to as the Intolerable Acts in the British Parliament, and armed skirmishes which resulted in dissidents being proclaimed rebels. These actions eroded the number of Crown Loyalists

(Tories) among the colonials and, together with the highly effective propaganda campaign of the Patriot leaders, caused an increasing number of colonists to begin agitating for independence from the mother country. In 1775, with events outpacing communications, the Second Continental Congress began acting as the provisional government.

It was an era of constitution writing—most states were busy at the task—and leaders felt the new nation must have a written constitution; a "rulebook" for how the new nation should function. During the war, Congress exercised an unprecedented level of political, diplomatic, military and economic authority. It adopted trade restrictions, established and maintained an army, issued fiat money, created a military code and negotiated with foreign governments.

To transform themselves from outlaws into a legitimate nation, the colonists needed international recognition for their cause and foreign allies to support it. In early 1776, Thomas Paine argued in the closing pages of the first edition of *Common Sense* that the "custom of nations" demanded a formal declaration of American independence if any European power were to mediate a peace between the Americans and Great Britain. The monarchies of France and Spain, in particular, could not be expected to aid those they considered rebels against another legitimate monarch. Foreign courts needed to have American grievances laid before them persuasively in a "manifesto" which could also reassure them that the Americans would be reliable trading partners. Without such a declaration, Paine concluded, "[t]he custom of all courts is against us, and will be so, until, by an independence, we take rank with other nations."

Beyond improving their existing association, the records of the Second Continental Congress show that the need for a declaration of independence was intimately linked with the demands of international relations. On June 7, 1776, Richard Henry Lee introduced a resolution before the Continental Congress declaring the colonies independent; at the same time, he also urged Congress to resolve "to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign Alliances" and to prepare a plan of confederation for the newly independent states. Congress then created three overlapping committees to draft the Declaration, a model treaty, and the Articles of Confederation. The Declaration announced the states' entry into the international system; the model treaty was designed to establish amity and commerce with other states; and the Articles of Confederation, which established "a firm league" among the thirteen free and independent states, constituted an international agreement to set up central institutions for the conduct of vital domestic and foreign affairs.

Drafting

On June 12, 1776, a day after appointing a committee to prepare a draft of the Declaration of Independence, the Second Continental Congress resolved to appoint a committee of 13 to prepare a draft of a constitution for a union of the states. The committee met frequently, and chairman John Dickinson presented their results to the Congress on July 12, 1776. Afterward, there were long debates on such issues as state sovereignty, the exact powers to be given to Congress, whether to have a judiciary, western land claims and voting procedures. To further complicate work on the constitution, Congress was

forced to leave Philadelphia twice, for Baltimore, Maryland, in the winter of 1776, and later for Lancaster then York, Pennsylvania, in the fall of 1777, to evade advancing British troops. Even so, the committee continued with its work.

The final draft of the *Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union* was completed on November 15, 1777. Consensus was achieved by: including language guaranteeing that each state retained its sovereignty, leaving the matter of western land claims in the hands of the individual states, including language stating that votes in Congress would be *en bloc* by state, and establishing a unicameral legislature with limited and clearly delineated powers.

Ratification

The Articles of Confederation was submitted to the states for ratification in late November 1777. The first state to ratify was Virginia on December 16, 1777; 12 states had ratified the Articles by February 1779, 14 months into the process. The lone holdout, Maryland, refused to go along until the landed states, especially Virginia, had indicated they were prepared to cede their claims west of the Ohio River to the Union. It would be two years before the Maryland General Assembly became satisfied that the various states would follow through, and voted to ratify. During this time, Congress observed the Articles as its *de facto* frame of government. Maryland finally ratified the Articles on February 2, 1781. Congress was informed of Maryland's assent on March 1, and officially proclaimed the Articles of Confederation to be the law of the land.

Article summaries

The Articles of Confederation contain a preamble, thirteen articles, a conclusion, and a signatory section. The individual articles set the rules for current and future operations of the confederation's central government. Under the Articles, the states retained sovereignty over all governmental functions not specifically relinquished to the national Congress, which was empowered to make war and peace, negotiate diplomatic and commercial agreements with foreign countries, and to resolve disputes between the states. The document also stipulates that its provisions "shall be inviolably observed by every state" and that "the Union shall be perpetual".

Summary of the purpose and content of each of the 13 articles:

- Establishes the name of the confederation with these words: "The stile of this confederacy shall be 'The United States of America.'"
- Asserts the sovereignty of each state, except for the specific powers delegated to the confederation government: "Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right, which is not by this Confederation expressly delegated."
- Declares the purpose of the confederation: "The said States hereby severally enter into a firm league of friendship with each other, for their common defense, the security of their liberties, and their mutual and general welfare, binding themselves to assist each other, against all force offered to, or attacks made upon them, or any of them, on account

of religion, sovereignty, trade, or any other pretense whatever."

- Elaborates upon the intent "to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship and intercourse among the people of the different States in this union," and to establish equal treatment and freedom of movement for the free inhabitants of each state to pass unhindered between the states, excluding "paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice." All these people are entitled to equal rights established by the state into which they travel. If a crime is committed in one state and the perpetrator flees to another state, he will be extradited to and tried in the state in which the crime was committed.
- Allocates one vote in the Congress of the Confederation (the "United States in Congress Assembled") to each state, which is entitled to a delegation of between two and seven members. Members of Congress are to be appointed by state legislatures. No congressman may serve more than three out of any six years.
- Only the central government may declare war, or conduct foreign political or commercial relations. No state or official may accept foreign gifts or titles, and granting any title of nobility is forbidden to all. No states may form any sub-national groups. No state may tax or interfere with treaty stipulations already proposed. No state may wage war without permission of Congress, unless invaded or under imminent attack on the frontier; no state may maintain a peacetime standing army or navy, unless infested by

pirates, but every State is required to keep ready, a well-trained, disciplined, and equipped militia.

- Whenever an army is raised for common defense, the state legislatures shall assign military ranks of colonel and below.
- Expenditures by the United States of America will be paid with funds raised by state legislatures, and apportioned to the states in proportion to the real property values of each.
- Powers and functions of the United States in Congress Assembled.
- Grants to the United States in Congress assembled the sole and exclusive right and power to determine peace and war; to exchange ambassadors; to enter into treaties and alliances, with some provisos; to establish rules for deciding all cases of captures or prizes on land or water; to grant letters of marque and reprisal (documents authorizing privateers) in times of peace; to appoint courts for the trial of pirates and crimes committed on the high seas; to establish courts for appeals in all cases of captures, but no member of Congress may be appointed a judge; to set weights and measures (including coins), and for Congress to serve as a final court for disputes between states.
- The court will be composed of jointly appointed commissioners or Congress shall appoint them. Each commissioner is bound by oath to be impartial. The court's decision is final.

- Congress shall regulate the post offices; appoint officers in the military; and regulate the armed forces.
- The United States in Congress assembled may appoint a president who shall not serve longer than one year per three-year term of the Congress.
- Congress may request requisitions (demands for payments or supplies) from the states in proportion with their population, or take credit.
- Congress may not declare war, enter into treaties and alliances, appropriate money, or appoint a commander in chief without nine states assented. Congress shall keep a journal of proceedings and adjourn for periods not to exceed six months.
- When Congress is in recess, any of the powers of Congress may be executed by "The committee of the states, or any nine of them", except for those powers of Congress which require nine states *in* Congress to execute.
- If Canada [referring to the British Province of Quebec] accedes to this confederation, it will be admitted. No other colony could be admitted without the consent of nine states.
- Affirms that the Confederation will honor all bills of credit incurred, monies borrowed, and debts contracted by Congress before the existence of the Articles.
- Declares that the Articles shall be perpetual, and may be altered only with the approval of Congress and the ratification of all the state legislatures.

Congress under the Articles

Army

Under the Articles, Congress had the authority to regulate and fund the Continental Army, but it lacked the power to compel the States to comply with requests for either troops or funding. This left the military vulnerable to inadequate funding, supplies, and even food. Further, although the Articles enabled the states to present a unified front when dealing with the European powers, as a tool to build a centralized war-making government, they were largely a failure; Historian Bruce Chadwick wrote:

George Washington had been one of the very first proponents of a strong federal government. The army had nearly disbanded on several occasions during the winters of the war because of the weaknesses of the Continental Congress. ... The delegates could not draft soldiers and had to send requests for regular troops and militia to the states. Congress had the right to order the production and purchase of provisions for the soldiers, but could not force anyone to supply them, and the army nearly starved in several winters of war.

Phelps wrote:

It is hardly surprising, given their painful confrontations with a weak central government and the sovereign states, that the former generals of the Revolution as well as countless lesser officers strongly supported the creation of a more muscular union in the 1780s and fought hard for the

ratification of the Constitution in 1787. Their wartime experiences had nationalized them.

The Continental Congress, before the Articles were approved, had promised soldiers a pension of half pay for life. However Congress had no power to compel the states to fund this obligation, and as the war wound down after the victory at Yorktown the sense of urgency to support the military was no longer a factor. No progress was made in Congress during the winter of 1783–84. General Henry Knox, who would later become the first Secretary of War under the Constitution, blamed the weaknesses of the Articles for the inability of the government to fund the army. The army had long been supportive of a strong union.

Knox wrote:

The army generally have always reprobated the idea of being thirteen armies. Their ardent desires have been to be one continental body looking up to one sovereign. ... It is a favorite toast in the army, "A hoop to the barrel" or "Cement to the Union".

As Congress failed to act on the petitions, Knox wrote to Gouverneur Morris, four years before the Philadelphia Convention was convened, "As the present Constitution is so defective, why do not you great men call the people together and tell them so; that is, to have a convention of the States to form a better Constitution."

Once the war had been won, the Continental Army was largely disbanded. A very small national force was maintained to man the frontier forts and to protect against Native American

attacks. Meanwhile, each of the states had an army (or militia), and 11 of them had navies. The wartime promises of bounties and land grants to be paid for service were not being met. In 1783, George Washington defused the Newburgh conspiracy, but riots by unpaid Pennsylvania veterans forced Congress to leave Philadelphia temporarily.

The Congress from time to time during the Revolutionary War requisitioned troops from the states. Any contributions were voluntary, and in the debates of 1788, the Federalists (who supported the proposed new Constitution) claimed that state politicians acted unilaterally, and contributed when the Continental army protected their state's interests. The Anti-Federalists claimed that state politicians understood their duty to the Union and contributed to advance its needs. Dougherty (2009) concludes that generally the States' behavior validated the Federalist analysis. This helps explain why the Articles of Confederation needed reforms.

Foreign policy

The 1783 Treaty of Paris, which ended hostilities with Great Britain, languished in Congress for several months because too few delegates were present at any one time to constitute a quorum so that it could be ratified. Afterward, the problem only got worse as Congress had no power to enforce attendance. Rarely did more than half of the roughly sixty delegates attend a session of Congress at the time, causing difficulties in raising a quorum. The resulting paralysis embarrassed and frustrated many American nationalists, including George Washington. Many of the most prominent national leaders, such as Washington, John Adams, John

Hancock, and Benjamin Franklin, retired from public life, served as foreign delegates, or held office in state governments; and for the general public, local government and self-rule seemed quite satisfactory. This served to exacerbate Congress's impotence.

Inherent weaknesses in the confederation's frame of government also frustrated the ability of the government to conduct foreign policy.

In 1786, Thomas Jefferson, concerned over the failure of Congress to fund an American naval force to confront the Barbary pirates, wrote in a diplomatic correspondence to James Monroe that, "It will be said there is no money in the treasury. There never will be money in the treasury till the Confederacy shows its teeth."

Furthermore, the 1786 Jay-Gardoqui Treaty with Spain also showed weakness in foreign policy. In this treaty, which was never ratified, the United States was to give up rights to use the Mississippi River for 25 years, which would have economically strangled the settlers west of the Appalachian Mountains. Finally, due to the Confederation's military weakness, it could not compel the British army to leave frontier forts which were on American soil — forts which, in 1783, the British promised to leave, but which they delayed leaving pending U.S. implementation of other provisions such as ending action against Loyalists and allowing them to seek compensation. This incomplete British implementation of the Treaty of Paris would later be resolved by the implementation of Jay's Treaty in 1795 after the federal Constitution came into force.

Taxation and commerce

Under the Articles of Confederation, the central government's power was kept quite limited. The Confederation Congress could make decisions but lacked enforcement powers. Implementation of most decisions, including modifications to the Articles, required unanimous approval of all thirteen state legislatures.

Congress was denied any powers of taxation: it could only request money from the states. The states often failed to meet these requests in full, leaving both Congress and the Continental Army chronically short of money. As more money was printed by Congress, the continental dollars depreciated. In 1779, George Washington wrote to John Jay, who was serving as the president of the Continental Congress, "that a wagon load of money will scarcely purchase a wagon load of provisions." Mr. Jay and the Congress responded in May by requesting \$45 million from the States. In an appeal to the States to comply, Jay wrote that the taxes were "the price of liberty, the peace, and the safety of yourselves and posterity." He argued that Americans should avoid having it said "that America had no sooner become independent than she became insolvent" or that "her infant glories and growing fame were obscured and tarnished by broken contracts and violated faith." The States did not respond with any of the money requested from them.

Congress had also been denied the power to regulate either foreign trade or interstate commerce and, as a result, all of the States maintained control over their own trade policies. The states and the Confederation Congress both incurred large

debts during the Revolutionary War, and how to repay those debts became a major issue of debate following the War. Some States paid off their war debts and others did not. Federal assumption of the states' war debts became a major issue in the deliberations of the Constitutional Convention.

Accomplishments

Nevertheless, the Confederation Congress did take two actions with long-lasting impact. The Land Ordinance of 1785 and Northwest Ordinance created territorial government, set up protocols for the admission of new states and the division of land into useful units, and set aside land in each township for public use. This system represented a sharp break from imperial colonization, as in Europe, and it established the precedent by which the national (later, federal) government would be sovereign and expand westward—as opposed to the existing states doing so under their sovereignty.

The Land Ordinance of 1785 established both the general practices of land surveying in the west and northwest and the land ownership provisions used throughout the later westward expansion beyond the Mississippi River. Frontier lands were surveyed into the now-familiar squares of land called the township (36 square miles), the section (one square mile), and the quarter section (160 acres). This system was carried forward to most of the States west of the Mississippi (excluding areas of Texas and California that had already been surveyed and divided up by the Spanish Empire). Then, when the Homestead Act was enacted in 1867, the quarter section became the basic unit of land that was granted to new settler-farmers.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 noted the agreement of the original states to give up northwestern land claims, organized the Northwest Territory and laid the groundwork for the eventual creation of new states. While it didn't happen under the articles, the land north of the Ohio River and west of the (present) western border of Pennsylvania ceded by Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, eventually became the states of: Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, and the part of Minnesota east of the Mississippi River. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 also made great advances in the abolition of slavery. New states admitted to the union in this territory would never be slave states.

No new states were admitted to the Union under the Articles of Confederation. The Articles provided for a blanket acceptance of the Province of Quebec (referred to as "Canada" in the Articles) into the United States if it chose to do so. It did not, and the subsequent Constitution carried no such special provision of admission. Additionally, ordinances to admit Frankland (later modified to Franklin), Kentucky, and Vermont to the Union were considered, but none were approved.

Presidents of Congress

- Under the Articles of Confederation, the presiding officer of Congress—referred to in many official records as *President of the United States in Congress Assembled*—chaired the Committee of the States when Congress was in recess, and performed other administrative functions. He was not, however, an executive in the way the later President of the United

States is a chief executive, since all of the functions he executed were under the direct control of Congress.

U.S. under the Articles

The peace treaty left the United States independent and at peace but with an unsettled governmental structure. The Articles envisioned a permanent confederation but granted to the Congress—the only federal institution—little power to finance itself or to ensure that its resolutions were enforced. There was no president, no executive agencies, no judiciary, and no tax base. The absence of a tax base meant that there was no way to pay off state and national debts from the war years except by requesting money from the states, which seldom arrived. Although historians generally agree that the Articles were too weak to hold the fast-growing nation together, they do give credit to the settlement of the western issue, as the states voluntarily turned over their lands to national control.

By 1783, with the end of the British blockade, the new nation was regaining its prosperity. However, trade opportunities were restricted by the mercantilism of the British and French empires. The ports of the British West Indies were closed to all staple products which were not carried in British ships. France and Spain established similar policies. Simultaneously, new manufacturers faced sharp competition from British products which were suddenly available again. Political unrest in several states and efforts by debtors to use popular government to erase their debts increased the anxiety of the political and economic elites which had led the Revolution. The apparent

inability of the Congress to redeem the public obligations (debts) incurred during the war, or to become a forum for productive cooperation among the states to encourage commerce and economic development, only aggravated a gloomy situation. In 1786–87, Shays' Rebellion, an uprising of dissidents in western Massachusetts against the state court system, threatened the stability of state government.

The Continental Congress printed paper money which was so depreciated that it ceased to pass as currency, spawning the expression "not worth a continental". Congress could not levy taxes and could only make requisitions upon the States. Less than a million and a half dollars came into the treasury between 1781 and 1784, although the governors had been asked for two million in 1783 alone.

When John Adams went to London in 1785 as the first representative of the United States, he found it impossible to secure a treaty for unrestricted commerce. Demands were made for favors and there was no assurance that individual states would agree to a treaty. Adams stated it was necessary for the States to confer the power of passing navigation laws to Congress, or that the States themselves pass retaliatory acts against Great Britain. Congress had already requested and failed to get power over navigation laws. Meanwhile, each State acted individually against Great Britain to little effect. When other New England states closed their ports to British shipping, Connecticut hastened to profit by opening its ports.

By 1787 Congress was unable to protect manufacturing and shipping. State legislatures were unable or unwilling to resist attacks upon private contracts and public credit. Land

speculators expected no rise in values when the government could not defend its borders nor protect its frontier population.

The idea of a convention to revise the Articles of Confederation grew in favor. Alexander Hamilton realized while serving as Washington's top aide that a strong central government was necessary to avoid foreign intervention and allay the frustrations due to an ineffectual Congress. Hamilton led a group of like-minded nationalists, won Washington's endorsement, and convened the Annapolis Convention in 1786 to petition Congress to call a constitutional convention to meet in Philadelphia to remedy the long-term crisis.

Signatures

The Second Continental Congress approved the Articles for distribution to the states on November 15, 1777. A copy was made for each state and one was kept by the Congress. On November 28, the copies sent to the states for ratification were unsigned, and the cover letter, dated November 17, had only the signatures of Henry Laurens and Charles Thomson, who were the President and Secretary to the Congress.

The Articles, however, were unsigned, and the date was blank. Congress began the signing process by examining their copy of the Articles on June 27, 1778. They ordered a final copy prepared (the one in the National Archives), and that delegates should inform the secretary of their authority for ratification.

On July 9, 1778, the prepared copy was ready. They dated it and began to sign. They also requested each of the remaining states to notify its delegation when ratification was completed.

On that date, delegates present from New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia and South Carolina signed the Articles to indicate that their states had ratified. New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland could not, since their states had not ratified. North Carolina and Georgia also were unable to sign that day, since their delegations were absent.

After the first signing, some delegates signed at the next meeting they attended. For example, John Wentworth of New Hampshire added his name on August 8. John Penn was the first of North Carolina's delegates to arrive (on July 10), and the delegation signed the Articles on July 21, 1778.

The other states had to wait until they ratified the Articles and notified their Congressional delegation. Georgia signed on July 24, New Jersey on November 26, and Delaware on February 12, 1779. Maryland refused to ratify the Articles until every state had ceded its western land claims. Chevalier de La Luzerne, French Minister to the United States, felt that the Articles would help strengthen the American government. In 1780 when Maryland requested France provide naval forces in the Chesapeake Bay for protection from the British (who were conducting raids in the lower part of the bay), he indicated that French Admiral Destouches would do what he could but La Luzerne also "sharply pressed" Maryland to ratify the Articles, thus suggesting the two issues were related.

On February 2, 1781, the much-awaited decision was taken by the Maryland General Assembly in Annapolis. As the last piece of business during the afternoon Session, "among engrossed Bills" was "signed and sealed by Governor Thomas Sim Lee in

the Senate Chamber, in the presence of the members of both Houses... an Act to empower the delegates of this state in Congress to subscribe and ratify the articles of confederation" and perpetual union among the states. The Senate then adjourned "to the first Monday in August next." The decision of Maryland to ratify the Articles was reported to the Continental Congress on February 12. The confirmation signing of the Articles by the two Maryland delegates took place in Philadelphia at noon time on March 1, 1781, and was celebrated in the afternoon. With these events, the Articles were entered into force and the United States of America came into being as a sovereign federal state.

Congress had debated the Articles for over a year and a half, and the ratification process had taken nearly three and a half years. Many participants in the original debates were no longer delegates, and some of the signers had only recently arrived. The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union were signed by a group of men who were never present in the Congress at the same time.

Signers

The signers and the states they represented were:

- Connecticut
- Roger Sherman
- Samuel Huntington
- Oliver Wolcott
- Titus Hosmer
- Andrew Adams
- Delaware

- Thomas McKean
- John Dickinson
- Nicholas Van Dyke
- Georgia
- John Walton
- Edward Telfair
- Edward Langworthy
- Maryland
- John Hanson
- Daniel Carroll
- Massachusetts Bay
- John Hancock
- Samuel Adams
- Elbridge Gerry
- Francis Dana
- James Lovell
- Samuel Holten
- New Hampshire
- Josiah Bartlett
- John Wentworth Jr.
- New Jersey
- John Witherspoon
- Nathaniel Scudder
- New York
- James Duane
- Francis Lewis
- William Duer
- Gouverneur Morris
- North Carolina
- John Penn
- Cornelius Harnett
- John Williams

- Pennsylvania
- Robert Morris
- Daniel Roberdeau
- Jonathan Bayard Smith
- William Clingan
- Joseph Reed
- Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
- William Ellery
- Henry Marchant
- John Collins
- South Carolina
- Henry Laurens
- William Henry Drayton
- John Mathews
- Richard Hutson
- Thomas Heyward Jr.
- Virginia
- Richard Henry Lee
- John Banister
- Thomas Adams
- John Harvie
- Francis Lightfoot Lee

Roger Sherman (Connecticut) was the only person to sign all four great state papers of the United States: the Continental Association, the United States Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution.

Robert Morris (Pennsylvania) signed three of the great state papers of the United States: the United States Declaration of

Independence, the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution.

John Dickinson (Delaware), Daniel Carroll (Maryland) and Gouverneur Morris (New York), along with Sherman and Robert Morris, were the only five people to sign both the Articles of Confederation and the United States Constitution (Gouverneur Morris represented Pennsylvania when signing the Constitution).

Revision and replacement

On January 21, 1786, the Virginia Legislature, following James Madison's recommendation, invited all the states to send delegates to Annapolis, Maryland, to discuss ways to reduce interstate conflict. At what came to be known as the Annapolis Convention, the few state delegates in attendance endorsed a motion that called for all states to meet in Philadelphia in May 1787 to discuss ways to improve the Articles of Confederation in a "Grand Convention." Although the states' representatives to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia were only authorized to amend the Articles, the representatives held secret, closed-door sessions and wrote a new constitution. The new Constitution gave much more power to the central government, but characterization of the result is disputed. The general goal of the authors was to get close to a republic as defined by the philosophers of the Age of Enlightenment, while trying to address the many difficulties of the interstate relationships. Historian Forrest McDonald, using the ideas of James Madison from *Federalist 39*, described the change this way:

The constitutional reallocation of powers created a new form of government, unprecedented under the sun. Every previous national authority either had been centralized or else had been a confederation of sovereign states. The new American system was neither one nor the other; it was a mixture of both.

In May 1786, Charles Pinckney of South Carolina proposed that Congress revise the Articles of Confederation. Recommended changes included granting Congress power over foreign and domestic commerce, and providing means for Congress to collect money from state treasuries. Unanimous approval was necessary to make the alterations, however, and Congress failed to reach a consensus. The weakness of the Articles in establishing an effective unifying government was underscored by the threat of internal conflict both within and between the states, especially after Shays' Rebellion threatened to topple the state government of Massachusetts.

Historian Ralph Ketcham commented on the opinions of Patrick Henry, George Mason, and other Anti-Federalists who were not so eager to give up the local autonomy won by the revolution:

Antifederalists feared what Patrick Henry termed the "consolidated government" proposed by the new Constitution. They saw in Federalist hopes for commercial growth and international prestige only the lust of ambitious men for a "splendid empire" that, in the time-honored way of empires, would oppress the people with taxes, conscription, and military campaigns. Uncertain that any government over so vast a domain as the United States could be controlled by the people, Antifederalists saw in the enlarged powers of the general government only the familiar threats to the rights and liberties

of the people. Historians have given many reasons for the perceived need to replace the articles in 1787. Jillson and Wilson (1994) point to the financial weakness as well as the norms, rules and institutional structures of the Congress, and the propensity to divide along sectional lines.

Rakove identifies several factors that explain the collapse of the Confederation. The lack of compulsory direct taxation power was objectionable to those wanting a strong centralized state or expecting to benefit from such power. It could not collect customs after the war because tariffs were vetoed by Rhode Island. Rakove concludes that their failure to implement national measures "stemmed not from a heady sense of independence but rather from the enormous difficulties that all the states encountered in collecting taxes, mustering men, and gathering supplies from a war-weary populace." The second group of factors Rakove identified derived from the substantive nature of the problems the Continental Congress confronted after 1783, especially the inability to create a strong foreign policy. Finally, the Confederation's lack of coercive power reduced the likelihood for profit to be made by political means, thus potential rulers were uninspired to seek power.

When the war ended in 1783, certain special interests had incentives to create a new "merchant state," much like the British state people had rebelled against. In particular, holders of war scrip and land speculators wanted a central government to pay off scrip at face value and to legalize western land holdings with disputed claims. Also, manufacturers wanted a high tariff as a barrier to foreign goods, but competition among states made this impossible without a central government.

Legitimacy of closing down

Two prominent political leaders in the Confederation, John Jay of New York and Thomas Burke of North Carolina believed that "the authority of the congress rested on the prior acts of the several states, to which the states gave their voluntary consent, and until those obligations were fulfilled, neither nullification of the authority of congress, exercising its due powers, nor secession from the compact itself was consistent with the terms of their original pledges."

According to Article XIII of the Confederation, any alteration had to be approved unanimously:

[T]he Articles of this Confederation shall be inviolably observed by every State, and the Union shall be perpetual; nor shall any alteration at any time hereafter be made in any of them; unless such alteration be agreed to in a Congress of the United States, and be afterwards confirmed by the legislatures of every State.

On the other hand, Article VII of the proposed Constitution stated that it would become effective after ratification by a mere nine states, without unanimity:

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.

The apparent tension between these two provisions was addressed at the time, and remains a topic of scholarly

discussion. In 1788, James Madison remarked (in *Federalist No. 40*) that the issue had become moot: "As this objection... has been in a manner waived by those who have criticised the powers of the convention, I dismiss it without further observation." Nevertheless, it is a historical and legal question whether opponents of the Constitution could have plausibly attacked the Constitution on that ground. At the time, there were state legislators who argued that the Constitution was not an alteration of the Articles of Confederation, but rather would be a complete replacement so the unanimity rule did not apply. Moreover, the Confederation had proven woefully inadequate and therefore was supposedly no longer binding.

Modern scholars such as Francisco Forrest Martin agree that the Articles of Confederation had lost its binding force because many states had violated it, and thus "other states-parties did not have to comply with the Articles' unanimous consent rule". In contrast, law professor Akhil Amar suggests that there may not have really been any conflict between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution on this point; Article VI of the Confederation specifically allowed side deals among states, and the Constitution could be viewed as a side deal until all states ratified it.

Final months

On July 3, 1788, the Congress received New Hampshire's all-important ninth ratification of the proposed Constitution, thus, according to its terms, establishing it as the new framework of governance for the ratifying states. The following day delegates considered a bill to admit Kentucky into the Union as a sovereign state. The discussion ended with Congress making

the determination that, in light of this development, it would be "unadvisable" to admit Kentucky into the Union, as it could do so "under the Articles of Confederation" only, but not "under the Constitution".

By the end of July 1788, 11 of the 13 states had ratified the new Constitution. Congress continued to convene under the Articles with a quorum until October. On Saturday, September 13, 1788, the Confederation Congress voted the resolve to implement the new Constitution, and on Monday, September 15 published an announcement that the new Constitution had been ratified by the necessary nine states, set the first Wednesday in January 1789 for appointing electors, set the first Wednesday in February 1789 for the presidential electors to meet and vote for a new president, and set the first Wednesday of March 1789 as the day "for commencing proceedings" under the new Constitution. On that same September 13, it determined that New York would remain the national capital.

Chapter 30

Congress of the Confederation

The Congress of the Confederation, or the Confederation Congress, formally referred to as the United States in Congress Assembled, was the governing body of the United States of America from March 1, 1781, to March 4, 1789.

A unicameral body with legislative and executive function, it was composed of delegates appointed by the legislatures of the several states. Each state delegation had one vote. It was preceded by the Second Continental Congress (1775–1781) and was created by the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union in 1781.

The Congress continued to refer itself as the Continental Congress throughout its eight-year history, although modern historians separate it from the two earlier congresses, which operated under slightly different rules and procedures until the later part of American Revolutionary War.

The membership of the Second Continental Congress automatically carried over to the Congress of the Confederation when the latter was created by the ratification of the Articles of Confederation, and had the same secretary as the Second Continental Congress, Charles Thomson.

The Congress of the Confederation was succeeded by the Congress of the United States as provided for in the new United States Constitution, proposed September 17, 1787, in Philadelphia and adopted by the United States in 1788.

History

- On March 1, 1781, the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union were signed by delegates of Maryland at a meeting of the Second Continental Congress, which then declared the Articles ratified. As historian Edmund Burnett wrote, "There was no new organization of any kind, not even the election of a new President." The Congress still called itself the Continental Congress. Nevertheless, despite its being generally the same exact governing body, with some changes in membership over the years as delegates came and went individually according to their own personal reasons and upon instructions of their state governments, some modern historians would later refer to the Continental Congress after the ratification of the Articles as the Congress of the Confederation or the Confederation Congress.

The Congress of the Confederation opened in the last stages of the American Revolution. Combat ended in October 1781, with the surrender of the British after the Siege and Battle of Yorktown.

The British, however, continued to occupy New York City, while the American delegates in Paris, named by the Congress, negotiated the terms of peace with Great Britain. Based on preliminary articles with the British negotiators made on November 30, 1782, and approved by the "Congress of the Confederation" on April 15, 1783, the Treaty of Paris was further signed on September 3, 1783, and ratified by the Confederation Congress then sitting at the Maryland State

House in Annapolis on January 14, 1784. This formally ended the American Revolutionary War between Great Britain and the thirteen former colonies, which on July 4, 1776, had declared independence. In December 1783, General George Washington, commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, journeyed to Annapolis after saying farewell to his officers (at Fraunces Tavern) and men who had just reoccupied New York City after the departing British Army.

On December 23, at the Maryland State House, where the Congress met in the Old Senate Chamber, he addressed the civilian leaders and delegates of Congress and returned to them the signed commission they had voted him back in June 1775, at the beginning of the conflict. With that simple gesture of acknowledging the first civilian power over the military, he took his leave and returned by horseback the next day to his home and family at Mount Vernon near the colonial river port city on the Potomac River at Alexandria in Virginia.

Congress had little power, and without the external threat of a war against the British, it became quite difficult to get enough delegates to meet to form a quorum. Nonetheless, the Congress still managed to pass important laws, most notably the Northwest Ordinance of 1787.

The War of Independence saddled the country with an enormous debt. In 1784, the total Confederation debt was nearly \$40 million. Of that sum, \$8 million was owed to the French and Dutch. Of the domestic debt, government bonds, known as loan-office certificates, composed \$11.5 million, certificates on interest indebtedness \$3.1 million, and continental certificates \$16.7 million.

The certificates were non-interest bearing notes issued for supplies purchased or impressed, and to pay soldiers and officers. To pay the interest and principal of the debt, Congress had twice proposed an amendment to the Articles granting them the power to lay a 5% duty on imports, but amendments to the Articles required the consent of all thirteen states: the 1781 impost plan had been rejected by Rhode Island and Virginia, while the revised plan, discussed in 1783, was rejected by New York.

Without revenue, except for meager voluntary state requisitions, Congress could not even pay the interest on its outstanding debt. Meanwhile, the states regularly failed or refused, to meet the requisitions requested of them by Congress.

To that end, in September 1786, after resolving a series of disputes regarding their common border along the Potomac River, delegates of Maryland and Virginia called for a larger assembly to discuss various situations and governing problems to meet at the Maryland state capital on the Chesapeake Bay. The later Annapolis Convention with some additional state representatives joining in the sessions first attempted to look into improving the earlier original Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union.

There were enough problems to bear further discussion and deliberation that the Convention called for a wider meeting to recommend changes and meet the next year in the late Spring of 1787 in Philadelphia. The Confederation Congress itself endorsed the Call and issued one on its own further inviting the states to send delegates. After meeting in secret all

summer in the Old Pennsylvania State House now having acquired the nickname and new title of Independence Hall, from the famous action here eleven years earlier. The Philadelphia Convention, under the presidency of former General George Washington instead of a series of amendments, or altering the old charter, issued a proposed new Constitution for the United States to replace the 1776–1778 Articles. The Confederation Congress received and submitted the new Constitution document to the states, and the Constitution was later ratified by enough states (nine were required) to become operative in June 1788. On September 13, 1788, the Confederation Congress set the date for choosing the new Electors in the Electoral College that was set up for choosing a President as January 7, 1789, the date for the Electors to vote for the President as on February 4, 1789, and the date for the Constitution to become operative as March 4, 1789, when the new Congress of the United States should convene, and that they at a later date set the time and place for the Inauguration of the new first President of the United States.

The Congress of the Confederation continued to conduct business for another month after setting the various dates. On October 10, 1788, Congress formed a quorum for the last time; afterward, although delegates would occasionally appear, there were never enough to officially conduct business. The last meeting of the Continental Congress was held March 2, 1789, two days before the new Constitutional government took over; only one member was present at said meeting, Philip Pell, an ardent Anti-Federalist and opponent of the Constitution, who was accompanied by the Congressional secretary. Pell oversaw the meeting and adjourned the Congress *sine die*.

Presiding officer

The Continental Congress was presided over by a president (referred to in many official records as *President of the United States in Congress Assembled*), who was a member of Congress elected by the other delegates to serve as a neutral discussion moderator during meetings. Elected to a non-renewable one-year term, this person also chaired the Committee of the States when Congress was in recess and performed other administrative functions. He was not, however, an executive in the way the later President of the United States is a chief executive since all of the functions he executed were under the direct control of Congress. There were 10 presidents of Congress under the Articles. The first, Samuel Huntington, had been serving as president of the Continental Congress since September 28, 1779.

Meeting sites

The Second Continental Congress was meeting at the Old Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall), in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, at the time the Articles of Confederation entered into force on March 1, 1781, but left after an anti-government protest by several hundred soldiers of the Continental Army in June 1783. Congress moved its meeting site successively to Princeton, New Jersey, Annapolis, Maryland, Trenton, New Jersey, and then in January 1785 New York City, which remained the seat of government for several years.

Chapter 31

Treaty of Paris (1763) and Boston Massacre

Treaty of Paris (1763)

The Treaty of Paris, also known as the Treaty of 1763, was signed on 10 February 1763 by the kingdoms of Great Britain, France and Spain, with Portugal in agreement, after Great Britain and Prussia's victory over France and Spain during the Seven Years' War.

The signing of the treaty formally ended conflict between France and Great Britain over control of North America (the Seven Years' War, known as the French and Indian War in the United States), and marked the beginning of an era of British dominance outside Europe. Great Britain and France each returned much of the territory that they had captured during the war, but Great Britain gained much of France's possessions in North America. Additionally, Great Britain agreed to protect Roman Catholicism in the New World. The treaty did not involve Prussia and Austria as they signed a separate agreement, the Treaty of Hubertusburg, five days later.

Exchange of territories

During the war, Great Britain had conquered the French colonies of Canada, Guadeloupe, Saint Lucia, Martinique,

Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Tobago, the French "factories" (trading posts) in India, the slave-trading station at Gorée, the Sénégal River and its settlements, and the Spanish colonies of Manila (in the Philippines) and Havana (in Cuba). France had captured Minorca and British trading posts in Sumatra, while Spain had captured the border fortress of Almeida in Portugal, and Colonia del Sacramento in South America.

In the treaty, most of the territories were restored to their original owners, but Britain was allowed to keep considerable gains. France and Spain restored all their conquests to Britain and Portugal. Britain restored Manila and Havana to Spain, and Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Gorée, and the Indian factories to France. In return, France recognized the sovereignty of Britain over Canada, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Tobago.

France also ceded the eastern half of French Louisiana to Britain; that is, the area from the Mississippi River to the Appalachian Mountains. France had already secretly given Louisiana to Spain in the Treaty of Fontainebleau (1762), but Spain did not take possession until 1769. Spain ceded East Florida to Britain. In addition, France regained its factories in India but recognized British clients as the rulers of key Indian native states and pledged not to send troops to Bengal. Britain agreed to demolish its fortifications in British Honduras (now Belize) but retained a logwood-cutting colony there. Britain confirmed the right of its new subjects to practise Catholicism.

France lost all of its territory in mainland North America except for the territory of Louisiana west of the Mississippi

River. France retained fishing rights off Newfoundland and the two small islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, where its fishermen could dry their catch. In turn, France gained the return of its sugar colony, Guadeloupe, which it considered more valuable than Canada. Voltaire had notoriously dismissed Acadia as *quelques arpents de neige* (a few acres of snow).

Louisiana question

The Treaty of Paris is frequently noted as France giving Louisiana to Spain. However, the agreement to transfer had occurred with the Treaty of Fontainebleau (1762), but it was not publicly announced until 1764. The Treaty of Paris gave Britain the east side of the Mississippi (including Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which was to be part of the British territory of West Florida). New Orleans, on the east side, remained in French hands (albeit temporarily). The Mississippi River corridor in what is now Louisiana was later reunited following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803 and the Adams–Onís Treaty in 1819.

The 1763 treaty states in Article VII:

VII. In order to reestablish peace on solid and durable foundations, and to remove for ever all subject of dispute with regard to the limits of the British and French territories on the continent of America; it is agreed, that, for the future, the confines between the dominions of his Britannick Majesty and those of his Most Christian Majesty, in that part of the world, shall be fixed irrevocably by a line drawn along the middle of the River Mississippi, from its source to the river Iberville, and from thence, by a line drawn along the middle of this river, and

the lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea; and for this purpose, the Most Christian King cedes in full right, and guaranties to his Britannick Majesty the river and port of the Mobile, and every thing which he possesses, or ought to possess, on the left side of the river Mississippi, except the town of New Orleans and the island in which it is situated, which shall remain to France, provided that the navigation of the river Mississippi shall be equally free, as well to the subjects of Great Britain as to those of France, in its whole breadth and length, from its source to the sea, and expressly that part which is between the said island of New Orleans and the right bank of that river, as well as the passage both in and out of its mouth: It is farther stipulated, that the vessels belonging to the subjects of either nation shall not be stopped, visited, or subjected to the payment of any duty whatsoever. The stipulations inserted in the IVth article, in favour of the inhabitants of Canada shall also take place with regard to the inhabitants of the countries ceded by this article.

Canada question

British perspective

The war was fought all over the world, but the British began the war over French possessions in North America.

After a long debate of the relative merits of Guadeloupe, which produced £6 million a year in sugar, and Canada, which was expensive to keep, Great Britain decided to keep Canada for strategic reasons and to return Guadeloupe to France. The war had weakened France, but it was still a European power.

British Prime Minister Lord Bute wanted a peace that would not push France towards a second war.

Although the Protestant British worried about having so many Roman Catholic subjects, Great Britain wanted neither to antagonize France by expulsion or forced conversion nor French settlers to leave Canada to strengthen other French settlements in North America.

French perspective

Unlike Lord Bute, the French Foreign Minister, the Duke of Choiseul, expected a return to war. However, France needed peace to rebuild. France preferred to keep its Caribbean possessions with their profitable sugar trade, rather than the vast Canadian lands, which had been a financial burden on France. French diplomats believed that without France to keep the Americans in check, the colonists might attempt to revolt. In Canada, France wanted open emigration for those, such as nobility, who would not swear allegiance to the British Crown. Finally, France required protection for Roman Catholics in North America.

Text relating castle

Article IV stated:

IV. His Most Christian Majesty renounces all pretensions which he has heretofore formed or might have formed to Nova Scotia or Acadia in all its parts, and guaranties the whole of it, and with all its dependencies, to the King of Great Britain: Moreover, his Most Christian Majesty cedes and guaranties to his said Britannick Majesty, in full right, Canada, with all its

dependencies, as well as the island of Cape Breton, and all the other islands and coasts in the gulph and river of St. Lawrence, and in general, every thing that depends on the said countries, lands, islands, and coasts, with the sovereignty, property, possession, and all rights acquired by treaty, or otherwise, which the Most Christian King and the Crown of France have had till now over the said countries, lands, islands, places, coasts, and their inhabitants, so that the Most Christian King cedes and makes over the whole to the said King, and to the Crown of Great Britain, and that in the most ample manner and form, without restriction, and without any liberty to depart from the said cession and guaranty under any pretence, or to disturb Great Britain in the possessions above mentioned.

His Britannick Majesty, on his side, agrees to grant the liberty of the Catholick religion to the inhabitants of Canada: he will, in consequence, give the most precise and most effectual orders, that his new Roman Catholic subjects may profess the worship of their religion according to the rites of the Romish church, as far as the laws of Great Britain permit. His Britannick Majesty farther agrees, that the French inhabitants, or others who had been subjects of the Most Christian King in Canada, may retire with all safety and freedom wherever they shall think proper, and may sell their estates, provided it be to the subjects of his Britannick Majesty, and bring away their effects as well as their persons, without being restrained in their emigration, under any pretence whatsoever, except that of debts or of criminal prosecutions: The term limited for this emigration shall be fixed to the space of eighteen months, to be computed from the day of the exchange of the ratification of the present treaty.

Dunkirk question

During the negotiations that led to the treaty, a major issue of dispute between Britain and France had been over the status of the fortifications of the French coastal settlement of Dunkirk. The British had long feared that it would be used as a staging post to launch a French invasion of Britain. Under the 1713 Treaty of Utrecht, the British had forced France to concede extreme limits on those fortifications. The 1748 Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle had allowed more generous terms, and France constructed greater defences for the town.

The 1763 treaty had Britain force France to accept the 1713 conditions and to demolish the fortifications that had been constructed since then. That would be a continuing source of resentment to France, which would eventually have that clause overturned in the 1783 Treaty of Paris, which brought an end to the American Revolutionary War.

Reactions

When Lord Bute became the British prime minister in 1762, he pushed for a resolution to the war with France and Spain since he feared that Great Britain could not govern all of its newly-acquired territories. In what Winston Churchill would later term a policy of "appeasement," Bute returned some colonies to Spain and France in the negotiations.

Despite a desire for peace, many in the British Parliament opposed the return of any gains made during the war. Notable among the opposition was former Prime Minister William Pitt,

the Elder, who warned that the terms of the treaty would lead to further conflicts once France and Spain had time to rebuild and later said, "The peace was insecure because it restored the enemy to her former greatness. The peace was inadequate, because the places gained were no equivalent for the places surrendered." The treaty passed by 319 votes to 65.

The Treaty of Paris took no consideration of Great Britain's battered continental ally, Frederick II of Prussia, who was forced to negotiate peace terms separately in the Treaty of Hubertusburg. For decades after the signing of the Treaty of Paris, Frederick II decried it as a British betrayal.

The American colonists were disappointed by the protection of Roman Catholicism in the Treaty of Paris because of their own strong Protestant faith. Some have called it one reason for the breakdown of American–British relations that led to the American Revolution.

Effects on French Canada

The article provided for unrestrained emigration for 18 months from Canada. However, passage on British ships was expensive. A total of 1,600 people left New France by that clause but only 270 French Canadians. Some have claimed that to be part of British policy to limit emigration.

Article IV of the treaty allowed Roman Catholicism to be practiced in Canada. George III agreed to allow Catholicism within the laws of Great Britain. British laws then included various Test Acts to prevent governmental, judicial and bureaucratic appointments from going to Roman Catholics.

Roman Catholics were believed to be agents of the Jacobite pretenders to the throne, who normally resided in France and were supported by the French regime. This was relaxed in Quebec to some degree, but top positions such as governorships were still held by Anglicans.

Article IV has also been cited as the basis for Quebec often having its unique set of laws that are different from the rest of Canada. There was a general constitutional principle in the United Kingdom to allow colonies taken through conquest to continue their own laws. That was limited by royal prerogative, and the monarch could still choose to change the accepted laws in a conquered colony. However, the treaty eliminated that power because by a different constitutional principle since terms of a treaty were considered paramount. In practice, Roman Catholics could become jurors in inferior courts in Quebec and argue based on principles of French law. However, the judge was British, and his opinion on French law could be limited or hostile. If the case was appealed to a superior court, neither French law nor Roman Catholic jurors were allowed.

Many French residents of what are now Canada's Maritime Provinces, called Acadians, were deported during the Great Expulsion (1755–63). After the signing of the peace treaty guaranteed some rights to Roman Catholics, some Acadians returned to Canada. However, they were no longer welcome in English Nova Scotia. They were forced into New Brunswick, which is a bilingual province today as a result of that relocation.

Much land previously owned by France was now owned by Britain, and the French people of Quebec felt greatly betrayed

at the French concession. Commander-in-Chief of the British Jeffrey Amherst noted that, "Many of the Canadians consider their Colony to be of utmost consequence to France & cannot be convinced... that their Country has been conceded to Great Britain."

Boston Massacre

The Boston Massacre was a confrontation on March 5, 1770, in which British soldiers shot and killed several people while being harassed by a mob in Boston. The event was heavily publicized by leading Patriots such as Paul Revere and Samuel Adams. British troops had been stationed in the Province of Massachusetts Bay since 1768 in order to support crown-appointed officials and to enforce unpopular Parliamentary legislation.

Amid tense relations between the civilians and the soldiers, a mob formed around a British sentry and verbally abused him. He was eventually supported by seven additional soldiers, led by Captain Thomas Preston, who were hit by clubs, stones, and snowballs. Eventually, one soldier fired, prompting the others to fire without an order by Preston. The gunfire instantly killed three people and wounded eight others, two of whom later died of their wounds.

The crowd eventually dispersed after Acting Governor Thomas Hutchinson promised an inquiry, but they re-formed the next day, prompting the withdrawal of the troops to Castle Island. Eight soldiers, one officer, and four civilians were arrested and charged with murder, and they were defended by future U.S. President John Adams. Six of the soldiers were acquitted; the

other two were convicted of manslaughter and given reduced sentences. The two found guilty of manslaughter were sentenced to branding on their hand.

Depictions, reports, and propaganda about the event heightened tensions throughout the Thirteen Colonies, notably the colored engraving produced by Paul Revere.

Background

Boston was the capital of the Province of Massachusetts Bay and an important shipping town, and it was also a center of resistance to unpopular acts of taxation by the British Parliament in the 1760s. In 1768, the Townshend Acts were enacted in the Thirteen Colonies putting tariffs on a variety of common items that were manufactured in Britain and imported in the colonies. Colonists objected that the Acts were a violation of the natural, charter, and constitutional rights of British subjects in the colonies. The Massachusetts House of Representatives began a campaign against the Acts by sending a petition to King George III asking for the repeal of the Townshend Revenue Act. The House also sent the Massachusetts Circular Letter to other colonial assemblies, asking them to join the resistance movement, and called for a boycott of merchants importing the affected goods.

Lord Hillsborough had recently been appointed to the newly created office of Colonial Secretary, and he was alarmed by the actions of the Massachusetts House. In April 1768, he sent a letter to the colonial governors in America instructing them to dissolve any colonial assemblies that responded to the Massachusetts Circular Letter. He also ordered Massachusetts

Governor Francis Bernard to direct the Massachusetts House to rescind the letter. The house refused to comply.

Boston's chief customs officer Charles Paxton wrote to Hillsborough for military support because "the Government is as much in the hands of the people as it was in the time of the Stamp Act." Commodore Samuel Hood responded by sending the 50-gun warship HMS *Romney*, which arrived in Boston Harbor in May 1768. On June 10, 1768, customs officials seized *Liberty*, a sloop owned by leading Boston merchant John Hancock, on allegations that the ship had been involved in smuggling. Bostonians were already angry because the captain of *Romney* had been impressing local sailors; they began to riot, and customs officials fled to Castle William for protection.

Given the unstable state of affairs in Massachusetts, Hillsborough instructed General Thomas Gage, Commander-in-Chief, North America, to send "such Force as You shall think necessary to Boston", and the first of four British Army regiments began disembarking in Boston on October 1, 1768. Two regiments were removed from Boston in 1769, but the 14th and the 29th Regiments of Foot remained.

The *Journal of Occurrences* were an anonymous series of newspaper articles which chronicled the clashes between civilians and soldiers in Boston, feeding tensions with its sometimes exaggerated accounts, but those tensions rose markedly after Christopher Seider, "a young lad about eleven Years of Age", was killed by a customs employee on February 22, 1770. Seider's death was covered in the *Boston Gazette*, and his funeral was described as one of the largest of the time in Boston. The killing and subsequent media coverage inflamed

tensions, with groups of colonists looking for soldiers to harass, and soldiers also looking for confrontation.

Incident

- On the evening of March 5, Private Hugh White stood on guard duty outside the Boston Custom House on King Street (today known as State Street). A wigmaker's apprentice, approximately 13 years old, named Edward Garrick called out to Captain-Lieutenant John Goldfinch, accusing him of refusing to pay a bill due to Garrick's master. Goldfinch had settled the account the previous day, and ignored the insult. Private White called out to Garrick that he should be more respectful of the officer, and the two men exchanged insults. Garrick then started poking Goldfinch in the chest with his finger; White left his post, challenged the boy, and struck him on the side of the head with his musket. Garrick cried out in pain, and his companion Bartholomew Broaders began to argue with White which attracted a larger crowd. Henry Knox was a 19-year old bookseller who later served as a general in the revolution; he came upon the scene and warned White that, "if he fired, he must die for it."As the evening progressed, the crowd around Private White grew larger and more boisterous. Church bells were rung, which usually signified a fire, bringing more people out. More than 50 Bostonians pressed around White, led by a mixed-race former slave named Crispus Attucks, who is well-known when it comes to African American

heroes, throwing objects at the sentry and challenging him to fire his weapon. White had taken up a somewhat safer position on the steps of the Custom House, and he sought assistance. Runners alerted Captain Thomas Preston, the officer of the watch at the nearby barracks. According to his report, Preston dispatched a non-commissioned officer and six privates from the grenadier company of the 29th Regiment of Foot to relieve White with fixed bayonets. The soldiers were Corporal William Wemms and Privates Hugh Montgomery, John Carroll, William McCauley, William Warren, and Matthew Kilroy, accompanied by Preston. They pushed their way through the crowd. Henry Knox took Preston by the coat and told him, "For God's sake, take care of your men. If they fire, you must die." Captain Preston responded "I am aware of it." When they reached Private White on the custom house stairs, the soldiers loaded their muskets and arrayed themselves in a semicircular formation. Preston shouted at the crowd to disperse, estimated between 300 and 400.

The crowd continued to press around the soldiers, taunting them by yelling "Fire!", by spitting at them, and by throwing snowballs and other small objects. Innkeeper Richard Palmes was carrying a cudgel, and he came up to Preston and asked if the soldiers' weapons were loaded. Preston assured him that they were, but that they would not fire unless he ordered it; he later stated in his deposition that he was unlikely to do so, since he was standing in front of them. A thrown object then struck Private Montgomery, knocking him down and causing

him to drop his musket. He recovered his weapon and angrily shouted "Damn you, fire!", then discharged it into the crowd although no command was given. Palmes swung his cudgel first at Montgomery, hitting his arm, and then at Preston. He narrowly missed Preston's head, striking him on the arm instead.

There was a pause of uncertain length (eyewitness estimates ranged from several seconds to two minutes), after which the soldiers fired into the crowd. It was not a disciplined volley, since Preston gave no orders to fire; the soldiers fired a ragged series of shots which hit 11 men.

Three Americans died instantly: rope maker Samuel Gray, mariner James Caldwell, and Crispus Attucks. Samuel Maverick, a 17-year old apprentice ivory turner, was struck by a ricocheting musket ball at the back of the crowd and died early the next morning. Irish immigrant Patrick Carr died two weeks later. Apprentice Christopher Monk was seriously wounded; he was crippled and died in 1780, purportedly due to the injuries that he had sustained in the attack a decade earlier.

The crowd moved away from the immediate area of the custom house but continued to grow in nearby streets. Captain Preston immediately called out most of the 29th Regiment, which adopted defensive positions in front of the state house. Acting Governor Thomas Hutchinson was summoned to the scene and was forced by the movement of the crowd into the council chamber of the state house. From its balcony, he was able to minimally restore order, promising that there would be a fair inquiry into the shootings if the crowd dispersed.

Aftermath

Investigation

- Hutchinson immediately began investigating the affair, and Preston and the eight soldiers were arrested by the next morning. Boston's selectmen then asked him to order the troops to move from the city out to Castle William on Castle Island, while colonists held a town meeting at Faneuil Hall to discuss the affair. The governor's council was initially opposed to ordering the troop withdrawal, and Hutchinson claimed that he did not have the authority to *order* the troops to move. Lieutenant Colonel William Dalrymple was the commander of the troops, and he did not offer to move them. The town meeting became more restive when it learned of this; the council changed its position and unanimously ("under duress", according to Hutchinson's report) agreed to request the troops' removal. Secretary of State Andrew Oliver reported that, had the troops not been removed, "they would probably be destroyed by the people—should it be called rebellion, should it incur the loss of our charter, or be the consequence what it would." The 14th was transferred to Castle Island without incident about a week later, with the 29th following shortly after, leaving the governor without effective means to police the town. The first four victims were buried with ceremony on March 8, Patrick Carr, the fifth and final victim, died on March 14 and was buried with them on March 17 in

the Granary Burying Ground, one of Boston's oldest burial grounds.

On March 27, the eight soldiers, Captain Preston, and four civilians were indicted for murder; the civilians were in the Customs House and were alleged to have fired shots. Bostonians continued to be hostile to the troops and their dependents. General Gage was convinced that the troops were doing more harm than good, so he ordered the 29th Regiment out of the province in May. Governor Hutchinson took advantage of the on-going high tensions to orchestrate delays of the trials until later in the year.

Media battle

- In the days and weeks following the incident, a propaganda battle was waged between Boston's Patriots and Loyalists. Both sides published pamphlets that told strikingly different stories, which were principally published in London in a bid to influence opinion there. The *Boston Gazette's* version of events, for example, characterized the massacre as part of an ongoing scheme to "quell a Spirit of Liberty", and harped on the negative consequences of quartering troops in the city.

Henry Pelham was an engraver and half-brother of celebrated portrait painter John Singleton Copley, and he depicted the event in an engraving. Silversmith and engraver Paul Revere closely copied the image and is often credited as its originator. The engraving contained several inflammatory details. Captain Preston is shown ordering his men to fire, and a musket is

seen shooting out of the window of the customs office, which is labeled "Butcher's Hall." Artist Christian Remick hand-colored some prints. Some copies of the print show a man with two chest wounds and a somewhat darker face, matching descriptions of Attucks; others show no black victim. The image was published in the *Boston Gazette* and circulated widely, and it became an effective anti-British editorial. The image of bright red "lobster backs" and wounded men with red blood was hung in farmhouses throughout New England.

Anonymous pamphlets were published describing the event from significantly different perspectives. *A Short Narrative of the Horrid Massacre* was published under the auspices of the Boston town meeting, principally written by James Bowdoin, a member of the governor's council and a vocal opponent of British colonial policy, along with Samuel Pemberton and Joseph Warren. It described the shooting and other lesser incidents that took place in the days before as unprovoked attacks on peaceful, law-abiding inhabitants and, according to historian Neal Langley York, was probably the most influential description of the event. The account which it provided was drawn from more than 90 depositions taken after the event, and it included accusations that the soldiers sent by Captain Preston had been deployed with the intention of causing harm. In the interest of minimizing impact on the jury pool, city leaders held back local distribution of the pamphlet, but they sent copies to other colonies and to London, where they knew that depositions were headed which Governor Hutchinson had collected. A second pamphlet entitled *Additional Observations on the Short Narrative* furthered the attack on crown officials by complaining that customs officials were abandoning their posts under the pretense that it was too dangerous for them to

do their duties; one customs official had left Boston to carry Hutchinson's gathered depositions to London.

Hutchinson's depositions were eventually published in a pamphlet entitled *A Fair Account of the Late Unhappy Disturbance in Boston*, drawn mainly from the depositions of soldiers. Its account of affairs sought to blame Bostonians for denying the validity of Parliamentary laws. It also blamed the city's citizens for the lawlessness preceding the event, and claimed that they set up an ambush of the soldiers. As it was not published until well after the first pamphlet had arrived in London, it had a much smaller impact on the public debate there.

Trials

The Part I took in Defence of Cptn. Preston and the Soldiers, procured me Anxiety, and Obloquy enough. It was, however, one of the most gallant, generous, manly and disinterested Actions of my whole Life, and one of the best Pieces of Service I ever rendered my Country. Judgment of Death against those Soldiers would have been as foul a Stain upon this Country as the Executions of the Quakers or Witches, anciently. As the Evidence was, the Verdict of the Jury was exactly right. This however is no Reason why the Town should not call the Action of that Night a Massacre, nor is it any Argument in favour of the Governor or Minister, who caused them to be sent here. But it is the strongest Proofs of the Danger of Standing Armies.

- — *John Adams, on the third anniversary of the massacre*

The government was determined to give the soldiers a fair trial so that there could be no grounds for retaliation from the British and so that moderates would not be alienated from the Patriot cause. Several lawyers refused to defend Preston due to their Loyalist leanings, so he sent a request to John Adams, pleading for him to work on the case. Adams was already a leading Patriot and was contemplating a run for public office, but he agreed to help in the interest of ensuring a fair trial. He was joined by Josiah Quincy II after Quincy was assured that the Sons of Liberty would not oppose his appointment, and by Loyalist Robert Auchmuty. They were assisted by Sampson Salter Blowers, whose chief duty was to investigate the jury pool, and by Paul Revere, who drew a detailed map of the bodies to be used in the trial. Massachusetts Solicitor General Samuel Quincy and private attorney Robert Treat Paine were hired by the town of Boston to handle the prosecution. Preston was tried separately in late October 1770. He was acquitted after the jury was convinced that he had not ordered the troops to fire.

The trial of the eight soldiers opened on November 27, 1770. Adams told the jury to look beyond the fact that the soldiers were British. He referred to the crowd that had provoked the soldiers as "a motley rabble of saucy boys, negroes, and molattoes, Irish teagues and outlandish Jack Tarrs" (sailors). He then stated, "And why we should scruple to call such a set of people a mob, I can't conceive, unless the name is too respectable for them. The sun is not about to stand still or go out, nor the rivers to dry up because there was a mob in Boston on the 5th of March that attacked a party of soldiers."

Adams also described the former slave Crispus Attucks, saying "his very look was enough to terrify any person" and that "with one hand [he] took hold of a bayonet, and with the other knocked the man down." However, two witnesses contradict this statement, testifying that Attucks was 12–15 feet away from the soldiers when they began firing, too far away to take hold of a bayonet. Adams stated that it was Attucks' behavior that, "in all probability, the dreadful carnage of that night is chiefly to be ascribed." He argued that the soldiers had the legal right to fight back against the mob and so were innocent. If they were provoked but not endangered, he argued, they were at most guilty of manslaughter. Farah Peterson, of *The American Scholar*, states that Adams' speeches during the trial show that his strategy "was to convince the jury that his clients had only killed a black man and his cronies, and that they didn't deserve to hang for it."

The jury agreed with Adams' arguments and acquitted six of the soldiers after 2½ hours of deliberation. Two of the soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter because there was overwhelming evidence that they had fired directly into the crowd. The jury's decisions suggest that they believed that the soldiers had felt threatened by the crowd but should have delayed firing. The convicted soldiers were granted reduced sentences by pleading *benefit of clergy*, which reduced their punishment from a death sentence to branding of the thumb in open court.

Patrick Carr's deathbed account of the event also played a role in exonerating the eight defendants of murder charges. The testimony of John Jeffries is reprinted below:

- Q: Were you Patrick Carr's surgeon?
- A: I was.
- Q: Was he [Carr] apprehensive of his danger?
- A: He told me... he was a native of Ireland, that he had frequently seen mobs, and soldiers called upon to quell them... he had seen soldiers often fire on the people in Ireland, but had never seen them bear half so much before they fired in his life.
- Q: When had you the last conversation with him?
- A: About four o'clock in the afternoon, preceding the night on which he died, and he then particularly said, he forgave the man whoever he was that shot him, he was satisfied he had no malice, but fired to defend himself.

Justices Edmund Trowbridge and Peter Oliver instructed the jury, and Oliver specifically addressed Carr's testimony: "this Carr was not upon oath, it is true, but you will determine whether a man just stepping into eternity is not to be believed, especially in favor of a set of men by whom he had lost his life". Carr's testimony is one of the earliest recorded uses of the dying declaration exception to the inadmissibility of hearsay evidence in United States legal code.

The four civilians were tried on December 13. The principal prosecution witness was a servant of one of the accused who made claims that were easily rebutted by defense witnesses. They were all acquitted, and the servant was eventually convicted of perjury, whipped, and banished from the province.

Legacy

Contribution to American Revolution

The Boston Massacre is considered one of the most significant events that turned colonial sentiment against King George III and British Parliamentary authority. John Adams wrote that the "foundation of American independence was laid" on March 5, 1770, and Samuel Adams and other Patriots used annual commemorations (Massacre Day) to encourage public sentiment toward independence. Christopher Monk was the boy who was wounded in the attack and died in 1780, and his memory was honored as a reminder of British hostility.

Later events such as the Gaspee Affair and the Boston Tea Party further illustrated the crumbling relationship between Britain and its colonies. Five years passed between the massacre and outright war, and Neil York suggests that there is only a tenuous connection between the two. It is widely perceived as a significant event leading to the violent rebellion that followed. Howard Zinn argues that Boston was full of "class anger". He reports that the *Boston Gazette* published in 1763 that "a few persons in power" were promoting political projects "for keeping the people poor in order to make them humble."

Commemorations

The massacre was remembered in 1858 in a celebration organized by William Cooper Nell, a black abolitionist who saw the death of Crispus Attucks as an opportunity to demonstrate

the role of African Americans in the Revolutionary War. Artwork was produced commemorating the massacre, changing the color of a victim's skin to black to emphasize Attucks' death. In 1888, the Boston Massacre Monument was erected on the Boston Common in memory of the men killed in the massacre, and the five victims were reinterred in a prominent grave in the Granary Burying Ground.

The massacre is reenacted annually on March 5 under the auspices of the Bostonian Society. The Old State House, the massacre site, and the Granary Burying Ground are part of Boston's Freedom Trail, connecting sites important in the city's history.