

Chapter 8: America Secedes from the Empire Notes

- Battle of Lexington and Concord was the first major battle of the war
 - Many minute-men (20,000) swarmed Boston to trap British
- Second Continental Congress (1775) met to readdress grievances
 - People wanted to continue fighting for their rights, but were not anticipating all-out war and complete secession
 - Money for a new army and navy was raised for defense

Congress Drafts George Washington

- George Washington was chosen to lead the troops attacking the British in Boston
 - He was a Virginia planter aged 43
 - His largest command was 1200 men 20 years ago, and he lost more than half of his battles (not the best general, but morally just)
 - Very good leadership qualities: was patient, courageous, just had good self discipline
 - Congress chose him because he was rich and was not in it for money

Culture and Society: George Washington was the epitome of American ideals, and his spirit were the major factor in determining him as military leader. Although he was not an invincible military leader (he had lost before, and he had never commanded a very large troop), his morals revitalized the troops. He was patient, courageous, disciplined, positive leadership traits that the colonies looked for (as opposed to arrogant and harsh rulers such as King George III). He was also a wealthy but average citizen, being a middle-aged Virginia farmer. Because he was already wealthy and he refused pay, it showed that he was not in it for the money, a clear representation of the colonists' loathing for aristocracy.

Bunker Hill and Hessian Hirelings

- Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold captured Ticonderoga and Crown Point to get ammunition for Boston (1775)
- Battle of Bunker Hill (1775) at Boston, many British slaughtered by American sharpshooters
 - Americans ran out of ammunition and had to retreat
- Continental Congress created Olive Branch Petition (1775) for attempted reconciliation with Great Britain
 - Declined because of Bunker Hill
- King George III formally proclaimed colonies treasonous because of rebellion
 - Sent many Hessians
 - Hessians were foreign troops to help them, mostly from German region of Hesse
 - Many Hessians were in only for the money, not so interested in fighting to win
 - As a result, many deserted to become Americans for land

Politics and Power: The roots of the American Revolutionary War laid in the complex love-hate relationship between the colonies and Great Britain. While the Americas trained militarily, it was not to declare independence from Great Britain, but rather to have the king address their grievances. However, after the Second Continental Congress had set up an official militia, the Americans had slaughtered

many British at the Battle of Bunker Hill, and George Washington was appointed leader of the military, tensions were high. Efforts to reconcile, such as the Olive Branch Petition, were in vain. As a result, King George III declared the colonial rebellion as treason, and he began to hire Hessians (European aid, especially German) to aid him in the Americas. This was a critical time that allowed the Revolutionary War to happen; if the king had decided instead to accept the Olive Tree Petition and answer to the colonies' wants, he may not have lost the colonies at all because that is what they wanted.

The Abortive Conquest of Canada

- Colonists believed that the Canadians also were angry under British rule
 - They were wrong: French Canadians had Quebec Act, were treated nicely by British
- Colonists attempted to take Canada to make Britain weaker (less land and less chance of a northern attack on the colonies)
 - Generals Richard Montgomery and Benedict Arnold had famished armies that were defeated by the French
- Lots of other fighting in the colonies with victories on both sides in 1776:
 - British took Norfolk
 - Americans took Boston
 - Americans took Moore's Creek Bridge
 - Americans took Charleston harbor

Politics and Power: The attempted conquest of Canada was based strongly on a (false) belief that the Canadians hated the British like the Americans. They believed that it would gain them a military advantage as well, gaining a fourteenth colony and reducing threats from the north. Therefore, the campaign against Canada was highly strategic and would have benefitted the colonies if successful—however, a less-than-average force arrived there, deprived of food and morale. In this case, the Americans were wrong with their political presumption, and their military power was weak, hence leading to an easy defeat. In the colonies, there was also the power struggle to maintain major cities. These were also strategic and gave both sides, especially the British who had lost Boston and Charleston, heavy losses.

Thomas Paine Preaches Common Sense

- Loyalty to the king was still very strong long after fighting began
- Thomas Paine published Common Sense
 - Promoted view that the colonies were righteous and that the king was at fault
 - Said that the king needs "consent of the governed"
 - Influenced later thinkers such as Thomas Jefferson
 - Also said that they have to be independent in order to have foreign aid
 - Was an instant bestseller

Paine and the Idea of "Republicanism"

- Paine not only asked for independence, but also the formation of a new form of government a republic
 - A republic had power from the people; leaders were chosen by the people, have "authority by popular consent"

- Idea of republicanism came from Classical Rome and Greece, revived in Renaissance in Europe
 - British politicians worried about the king's power supported it
 - Republicanism already to some extent in American colonies with town hall system in New England, and lack of aristocracies strengthened it
 - Americans also believed in the common good, which Thomas Paine emphasized
- Not all Americans agreed with the policies, didn't want social leveling, wanted aristocracy

Jefferson's "Experiment" of Independence

- Henry Lee wanted independence of the colonies and a clear break from Britain
- Thomas Jefferson appointed to write formal Declaration of Independence to match Lee's claim (approved July 4, 1776)
 - Talked about natural rights of mankind (not just political, British rights)
 - Talked about all men being equal
 - Listed grievances against Great Britain
 - Included "taxing without consent, dispensing with trial by jury, abolishing valued laws, establishing a military dictatorship, maintaining standing armies in peace time, cutting off trade, burning towns, hiring mercenaries, and inciting hostility among the Indians"
 - No more loyalty to the king after the Declaration of Independence; cleared ambivalence
- Inspiration for the creation of the French Declaration of the Rights of Man

American and National Identity: Thomas Paine's ideas truly revolutionized the way the Americans thought. Following the trend of individualistic political beliefs that was revived during the Renaissance in Europe, and having been practiced to some extent in the colonies already with almost-democratic systems as the town halls in New England, the book became a bestseller and reached a great audience. This was the action that decided the necessity of war and break from England—the Declaration of Independence, heavily influenced by *Common Sense's* ideas, would follow soon afterwards. After this, the colonies believed in a republic, a government that worked solely for the common good and by the consent of the citizens, as well as protecting the natural rights of the citizens. These new ideals became ingrained into American society, especially in the founding document of the Declaration of Independence, as well as the French Declaration of the Rights of Man.

Patriots and Loyalists

- Loyalists (Tories) were colonists loyal to the king
 - Usually older, wealthy, educated—wanted to maintain the status quo
 - Also included people who benefitted from the British and Anglican clergy
 - Sometimes American farmers sold to British for profit (against Patriot cause)
 - Usually denser in Anglican regions, except Virginia
 - Everyone was taught to be loyal to king
 - Included many different groups:
 - Ethnic minorities, who thought that the Americans were prejudiced (racist) and that the British would be more fair
 - Many African Americans joined in hopes for freedom; some were, some were not given freedom at end

- Patriots (Whigs) were American rebels
 - Patriots were a minority group
 - Spread their thinking with soldiers by “politically educating” others
 - Usually younger, fiery
 - For example, Samuel Adams and Patrick Henry yelled famously, “Give me liberty or give me death!”
 - Usually denser in Congregational and Presbyterian areas, and in New England
 - Stronger sense of individualism and self-government in New England

Culture and Society: Although there had been numerous conflicts between the poorer, average Americans and the British officials, such as during Bacon’s rebellion between the indentured servants and Governor Berkeley or during Leisler’s rebellion against the aristocracy of New York, society became even more divided as the “Whigs” (the Patriots) and “Tories” (the Loyalists) emerged as polar opposites caught in a conflict. Both sides tried to sabotage the other. These different groups were also different in terms of demographics: the Patriots were often young white Americans, such as former indentured servants who looked for greater freedom and equality. The more conservative, educated, wealthy white men were often Loyalists, as well as the beneficiaries of Britain (such as through trade), African Americans (who were often promised freedom if they helped the British), and Native Americans (who believed that the British would keep the Americans from advancing into the frontier lands). Never had such a strong distinction been created in American history, nor had such widespread hate of fellow colonists occurred.

The Loyalist Exodus

- Persecution of Loyalists became evident after Declaration of Independence
 - Many were imprisoned, some hanged
 - Patriots respected order, so there was no absolute terror
 - 80,000 Loyalists fled or forced out
 - A few hundred thousand milder Loyalists allowed to stay
 - Houses confiscated and sold when left
 - Many worked for the British in the war: as spies, working together with Indians, attacking Patriot homes (and therefore keeping some opponent soldiers home and away from war)

Migration and Settlement: For the first time, persecution of whites happened in the Americas and forced people *back* to England. Instead of the religious persecution that had plagued many of the early American settlers, it was political persecution that forced many British-minded Loyalists back. This led to a huge migration (80,000) of Loyalists back to England. In the colonies, this led to an increased sense of unity (with fewer enemies among them), as well as benefits from selling confiscated houses. However, it also resulted in the remaining Loyalists to either take a milder stance or join the Patriots, or to gain a greater hatred against them; as a result, many Loyalists worked for the British, acting as spies, diplomats with the Native Americans, and harassers of the Patriot homes.

General Washington at Bay

- Washington greatly outnumbered (35,000 British + 500 ships versus 18,000 Patriots)
 - Lost at Battle of Long Island, chased out and luckily escaped

- General William Howe of the British (who also commanded at Bunker Hill) decided not to chase them, because it was wintertime, supplies were coming in slowly, and he had selfish priorities
- Washington stealthily won two victories:
 - Took Trenton that had a thousand Hessians as a surprise attack the day after Christmas
 - Took a small British army at Princeton

Burgoyne's Blundering Invasion

- British strategized to cut off New England from southern and middle colonies by taking the Hudson River Valley
 - From the north, General Burgoyne would come from Lake Champlain
 - Started slowly south the next year after the winter (after being held back by General Benedict)
 - Had 7,000 troops
 - Had many women coming along and a lot of luggage
 - Had to chop through the forest
 - Was swarmed by American forces, who trapped the British and won
 - This was the Battle of Saratoga (1777), won by General Gates, a very decisive battle of the war
 - Boosted American morale
 - Gave Americans French support
 - From the south, General Howe would come from New York
 - Went to attack Philadelphia (the capital) instead of following his plan
 - Captured Philadelphia by winning Washington twice in battle
 - Washington retreated to Valley Forge
 - Stopped at Philadelphia for his comfort, ignoring original plan
 - From the west, Colonel St. Leger would come from the Mohawk Valley
 - Was forced back by Americans
- General Arnold Benedict, who had tried previously to capture Quebec, was still in the area and stalled the British efforts
 - Created a small "fleet" of any floating vessels that held off the British
 - Held off the British for another year because the British could not move in the winter
 - If he hadn't, British would probably have won Fort Ticonderoga again

Politics and Power: This was a confused time of both wins and losses for both sides of the war. Washington, for example, lost New York but won two battles in New Jersey. The British won New York and Pennsylvania, but lost the major force of Burgoyne and the smaller one of St. Leger. At this point of the war, with loyalties well-defined, both sides became ruthless with their strategy. The British attempted to sever the New England colonies from the southern and middle colonies by cutting through the Hudson River Valley, thus ending their colonial unity that was their greatest asset; they failed, luckily for the Americans, and the continued unity was probably what allowed the Americans to win. Meanwhile, Washington had to let Philadelphia and New York be taken by the larger and more powerful British forces, because they were not central to the campaign of preserving the entire nation; he knew

that losing them would not be the most damaging, and the Americans instead fought the British attempt to take the Hudson River Valley, which would likely have led to their doom. To help them, political and military incompetence by General Howe of the British with his self-indulgence probably also helped the Americans greatly, as they were not pursued through the winter and the British plan was not fully carried out as a result of him.

Revolution in Diplomacy?

- Common foe of Britain for Americans and French
 - French wanted to redeem itself and diminish British after defeat in Seven Years' War
- French knew Americans needed help
- Americans had revolutionary ideas about foreign policy
 - Wanted to stop colonialism, mercantilism
 - Supported free trade, freedom of seas
 - Were somewhat impractical, but became ideals of American society
- Model Treaty was a document that described colonies' relation with France
 - Said that the relationship was solely to be commercial and not military or political
- Benjamin Franklin was the diplomat sent to France to negotiate relations
 - Did not exactly conform to Model Treaty (had some military relations), but it did recognize the colonies as independent and benefit the Patriots

The Colonial War Becomes a Wider War

- French, Spain, Holland all turned against Britain in 1778, especially with their navies
 - The American Revolutionary War was now an international war
- Catherine the Great of Russia created the Armed Neutrality of European nations against Britain
 - Threat by European nations made American war not as important, Europe all turned against Britain and was more dangerous
- French gave immense military help to Americans: "guns, money, immense amounts of equipment, about one-half of America's regular armed forces, and practically all of the new nation's naval strength"
- Britain evacuated troops from Philadelphia into New York City
 - Troops were attacked along the way by Washington
 - Troops were trapped in NYC by Washington after that

America in the World: The war quickly became a war of international importance, when more European powers became involved. While the Americans were working towards their best interests of independence from Britain, so were the other European nations: the French, the Dutch, the Spanish, and even the Russians all wanted European superiority, and Great Britain was already weakened. This was another pivotal point in the war; although the American colonists had solely directly worked with the French, they were indirectly cooperating with the joint forces of multiple European superpowers as well. This greatly increased the strength of opposition to Great Britain, whose existence was at threat more from the offensive Europeans rather than the defensive Americans. As a result, the strategy was changed in the Americas with the British forces centralized in New York City only, and not Philadelphia. Meanwhile, the French provided enormous support in arms and men, which further strengthened the war against the British. Without all this help from foreign nations, the war would have been much less

dire and intense for Great Britain and would probably have been drawn out much longer, probably with a British victory.

Blow and Counterblow

- 6,000 French arrived in Newport in 1780 for support
- Benedict Arnold turned traitor in 1780 by selling out information and then fleeing to British
- British began capturing from the southern colonies up
 - The South had a higher percentage of Loyalists
 - Took Georgia and South Carolina
 - Taking Charleston, South Carolina was a heavy blow to the Patriots
 - Americans started winning back in 1781
 - Won King's Mountain and the Cowpens
 - General Greene (the "Fighting Quaker") had a stand-retreat strategy that tired out the enemy, was effective and rid most of the South of British troops

Geography and the Environment: Both sides used geography to their environment. The British, who had more supporter Loyalists in the south, decided to start there and move up. Therefore, it would progressively gain power until it had reached the Patriots who were stronger in the northern colonies. This was successful, until American troops began to fight back. One strategy they used was meant to tire the British out by using physical distance to separate them—a sort of cat-and-mouse game that used geography to the smaller American forces' advantage. Using the terrain was effective for them against the unwieldy British; as a result, General Greene used this method to capture back most of the South for the Patriots.

The Land Frontier and the Sea Frontier

- Native Americans still protective of their land, mostly sided with British
- In the Iroquois, three tribes joined British and two the Patriots
 - Believed that British rule would continue to suppress the Americans from entering their land
 - Leader was Joseph Brant, who had converted to Anglicanism and strong supporter of British
 - In 1779, Americans stopped their ferocious raids
 - In 1784, the British-supporting Native Americans had to sign Treaty of Fort Stanwix
 - First treaty of Americans to Native Americans
 - Native Americans lost much of their land
- Westward expansion still occurred during the war
- George Rogers Clark captured in the weak British west
 - Took Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Vincennes forts with only 175 men by surprise
- American navy consisted mainly of little, ordinary boats and ships
 - Mainly did damage to British merchant shipping
 - Didn't do much against British navy
- Americans had many privateers, small and quick boats that pirated British ones
 - 1,000 privateers with 70,000 men during the war
 - Made Americans more focused on wealth and took men away from war

- Raised morale and brought in necessary gold
- Made British shippers anxious to end the war, insurance rates up extremely high as well

Yorktown and the Final Curtain

- Great inflation in the American colonies, low interest repaid by government
- General Cornwallis went to Yorktown to receive more supplies from British fleet
 - French's Admiral de Grasse had large and ready fleet in West Indies, cut off British ships
 - General Washington and Rochambeau (French) won Cornwallis
 - Cornwallis surrendered, major shock and disappointment to British
- King George III not willing to give up, 54,000 troops still in the Americas
 - Washington stayed at New York

Politics and Power: Like much of the war, the final part was much about strategy: to get the greatest political or military advantage with the fewest losses. This was true for the Native Americans as well: they had mixed loyalties based on who they thought they would benefit from more, and the ones that sided with the British were harshly treated. For the colonists, they resorted to small-scale, tricky tactical maneuvers. For example, General Clark took only 175 men to capture three forts in the sporadic west by surprise attacks. On the seas, little flotillas of ordinary boats were meant to thwart the British, or at least slow them, to sabotage their speed. Lastly, privateers were essentially pirates seeking to gain from British ships, a sneaky and difficult move, but effective for the colonies. Each one of these gained a little bit of power to the Americans over the British, who had stuck to conventional military tactics that did not work against the radical-thinking Americans. This was capped in the final battle at Yorktown, in which the French cut off the British fleet and Washington and a French army worked together to destroy Cornwallis' army—this was essentially a surprise attack of large proportions, similar to the aforementioned smaller acts of sabotage that had been so successful.

Peace at Paris

- American independence and a weariness of war was getting more and more favorable, even in England
 - Whigs replaced Tories in England, more sympathetic to American cause
- Peace negotiators were Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay
 - Were told to work with the French all throughout, but they denied it because they knew France's interests were different than theirs
 - France wanted American support, but they did not want something strong that could threaten them
 - France wanted to "get their money's worth back," as they had a huge part in the Revolutionary War as well
 - John Jay was suspicious, made agreements that went against France
 - British quickly and eagerly accepted to remove France from agreement
- Treaty of Paris (1783) officially recognized the United States as independent
 - United States bounded by Mississippi (west), Florida (south), Great Lakes (north), including large trans-Appalachian region
 - Americans had some share in Newfoundland
 - Americans vowed to not persecute Loyalists and finish paying debts from before

- Treaty of Paris also benefitted Britain
 - Stopping of war stopped British from using up all its resources, which were necessary to become the major world power and to win Napoleon

America in the World: Finally, with war-weary Britain surrendering, the United States were recognized as their own, independent nation in the eyes of the British. What were simply colonies to a powerful mother country became a powerful country of its own, with the independence that it long merited. The Treaty of Paris sealed this decision, and it gave the American colonies much land as well. Although they had not exactly adhered to the French's wants, the treaty was the first mutual agreement between America and Europe. This set the scene for sovereignty and the fulfillment of all of the ideals that they were fighting for; now that it was legitimized, it could create its own policies and elect its own officials to make what they had dreamed with the ideals of Locke's *Common Sense* or Jefferson's Declaration of Independence.

A New Nation Legitimized

- Huge amount of land given to entice Americans away from the French, and to prevent future conflict about trans-Appalachian region
- Americans created a "separate peace" by not going with the interests of the French
 - French were relieved to end costly conflict and not to have to pay Spanish their promises
 - French did not benefit much out of it, led to revolution soon
- American independence won from international conflict, freedom as major theme

American and National Identity: It is significant that America was born out of conflict. This way, the United States was born from a time of inequality and suffering, as well as their overcoming of this ordeal at great odds. This represents American tenacity and their everlasting struggle for freedom—the nation is established on the blood of the martyrs and the enemies they faced, a fact that will never be forgotten and that will continue to empower the nation. Also involved in its creation were the international interactions, especially those with the French (and the British); these also set a tone for an abundance of foreign policy and intervention that would come in the future of America.