

# CHAPTER 8

## Revolution, 1775–1783

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### 1. Prelude to Independence, April 1775 to July 1776 (pp. 141–146)

a. In May of 17\_\_\_\_, one month after the first shots at Lexington and Concord, the Second \_\_\_\_\_ Congress met in Philadelphia. List two reasons this Congress selected George Washington to command the ragtag troops besieging Boston.

(1)

(2)

b. How does the “Olive Branch Petition” of July 1775 on the one hand and the abortive invasion of Canada by American troops under Montgomery and Arnold illustrate the authors’ point that the fighting between May 1775 and July 1776 was a “curious war of inconsistency”?

c. What was significant about Thomas Paine’s pamphlet *Common Sense*? How did it turn a largely local Massachusetts protest for redress of specific grievances into an ideological crusade for the idea of *Republicanism*?

### 2. Declaration of Independence (pp. 146–148)

a. With the stern response of the British to American entreaties, Congress finally asked a committee headed by Thomas \_\_\_\_\_ to draft a Declaration of Independence. What was the main rationale for independence advanced in the Declaration?

b. The authors seem to accept this rationale for independence, calling it an “inspiration to countless revolutionary movements against arbitrary authority” (p. 148). \*\*\* With this in mind, do you expect that the authors will be similarly sympathetic to the southern states in 1861 when they use a similar rationale to throw off the “arbitrary authority” of the federal government?

### 3. Patriots and Loyalists (pp. 148–152)

a. Read the section on “Patriots” and the insert on the “Loyalists.” \*\*\* If you had been a young person of military age in, say, New York at the time, would you have been a Patriot or a Loyalist? Or would you have tried to stay neutral? Why?

b. An old saying goes that “history is written by winners.” \*\*\* Had the British won the war, what might the “patriots” have been called in the history books?

**4. Military History of the War (pp. 152–160)**

a. Read this section to get an overview of the three distinct phases of fighting over the eight-year course of the War: **first**, in the Patriot strongholds around Boston (1775–1776); **second**, in the New York/Pennsylvania area as the British tried to split the northern from the southern colonies along the Hudson River Valley (1776–1778); and **finally**, to the southern campaigns ending in the British defeat at Yorktown (1778–1781). As you read the account of the War, identify the following:

- (1) Valley Forge (Pa.):
- (2) Saratoga (N.Y.):
- (3) Comte de Rochambeau (Fr.):
- (4) Gen. Charles Cornwallis (Br.):

b. Note the critical nature of the alliance with France, concluded by Franklin after the pivotal American victory at Saratoga (1777). \*\*\* Do you think that victory would have been possible without the French (Yes \_\_\_/No \_\_\_) and what do you think were their two main contributions?

- (1)
- (2)

**5. Treaty of Paris, 1783 (pp. 160–162)**

a. On p. 162, the authors say that the final peace terms granted by the British were “liberal almost beyond belief.” John \_\_\_\_\_, the main American negotiator, came to Paris expecting little more than recognition of sovereignty for the thirteen ex-colonies. In addition, though, the British granted to the U.S. all the territory between the \_\_\_\_\_ Mountains and the \_\_\_\_\_ River. Why do the authors say that the British were so magnanimous to their recently rebellious offspring?

b. \*\*\* Do you think this settlement was fair to the American ally France?

## DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE (Appendix Page A31)

1. Read the second paragraph carefully and summarize in two or three sentences the rationale for independence advanced in the Declaration. \*\*\* Does that rationale make sense to you?
  
2. Like a legal indictment, the Declaration then goes on to enumerate some eighteen specific grievances against “the present King” (note, not against “Parliament” or “the British government”). \*\*\* Look over these grievances and list the three that you think are the most significant, i.e., grievances that really are serious enough to warrant a break from the mother country. Then list the three that you think are the weakest or most frivolous.

Most Significant

Most Frivolous (Petty, silly)

(1)

(1)

(2)

(2)

(3)

(3)

3. Look at the closing paragraph of the Declaration. Note phrases like “these United Colonies are . . . absolved from all allegiance . . .” and “as free and independent states, they have the right to levy war, conclude peace. . . .” \*\*\* Do you see any significance in the fact that the “United States” are referred to in the plural form rather than the singular? What do you guess was the concept of “nationhood” held by the signers of the Declaration?

## CHAPTER 8 TERM SHEET

### Revolution

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#### **Pages 141–146**

Second Continental Congress (May 1775)

George Washington

Bunker Hill

“Olive Branch Petition” (July 1775)

Hessians

Thomas Paine *Common Sense* (1776)

#### **Pages 146–148**

Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776)

#### **Pages 148–152**

Patriots

“Tories”

Patrick Henry

#### **Pages 152–160**

Valley Forge (1777–1778)

Saratoga (October 1777)

French support (1778)

Comte de Rochambeau (1780)

British southern strategy

Gen. Charles Cornwallis

Adm. John Paul Jones

Yorktown (1781)

#### **Pages 160–162**

Benjamin Franklin/John Adams/John Jay

“A Separate Peace” USA negotiates a secret agreement- Why and what?

Treaty of Paris II (1783)