

BR: D9

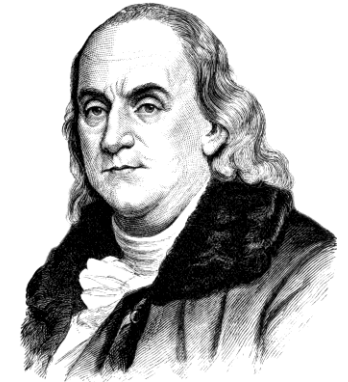
Imagine that you are a colonist, just after the Battle of Bunker hill. How do you feel about the war that seems to be breaking about? Are you excited? Scared? Worried? Why?

U.S. History I

Ch. 5.4 Moving Toward Independence, Part I

The Second Continental Congress

May 10th, 1775: The **Second Continental Congress** meet together. The mentioned leaders from the first congress all came (Washington, Patrick Henry, etc.), but some new ones as well.



Benjamin Franklin, likely one of the most **accomplished** and **respected** men in the colonies, also arrived. He had gone to London in 1765 to represent the American colonies and **helped to get the Stamp Act repealed**.



John Hancock of Mass., was a wealthy merchant that supported the patriot cause, giving **donations** to the **Sons of Liberty** and other patriot groups. He was chosen as the **President of the Congress**.

A black and white image of John Hancock's signature, written in a large, flowing cursive script.

Finally, **Thomas Jefferson**, one of the younger members of the **Virginia House of Burgesses**, was fast becoming well known for his **brains** and **writing skills**.



Governing the Colonies

This congress took their job very seriously. They knew that war was likely on the horizon, but they still wanted to **avoid it** if necessary. Still, they **prepared** for it as well.

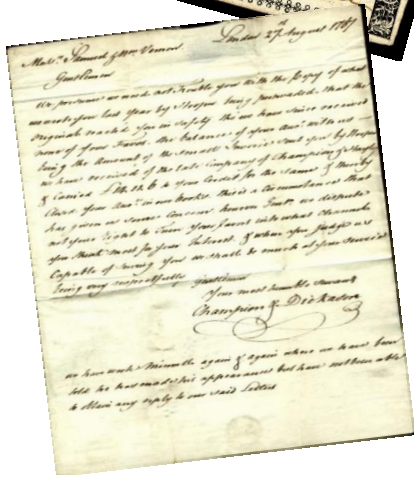
Some of the things they did:

- Authorized the **printing of money** for the colonies
- Created a postal service, with **Benjamin Franklin** in charge

- Created committees to meet w/ foreign powers, including Native Americans

- Most importantly**, they created the national **Continental Army**, to fight against the British in a better organized way than before.

- John Adams** recommended **George Washington** be their commander, and everyone else agreed. [VID](#)

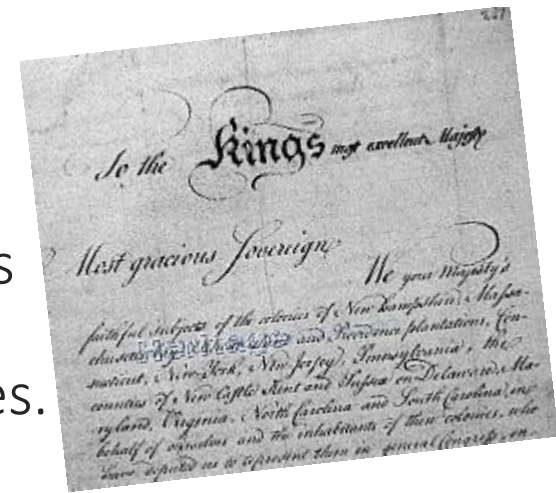


Must it be War, then?

As a last ditch effort to avoid conflict, the Congress issued the **Olive Branch Petition**, which formally requested that King George III listen to the colonies. They assured him that they preferred peace, but would also protect their rights, which Parliament seemed to care little for. [The King's Response?](#)

The King refused to even read the petition, and hired 30,000 German **mercenary** troops to help quell the rebellion. However, it did unite the colonies in their quest for independence.

Meanwhile, the Colonists knew that British troops to the north, in the Quebec Province were planning an attack on New York. They marched north from **Ft. Ticonderoga**, and captured **Montreal** in November 1775. An attack led by Benedict Arnold **failed** to take **Quebec** during the winter however.



Colonies on the Offensive



George Washington, the new Continental Army Commander

Gen. Washington had meanwhile left the Congress, and made his way to Mass. He arrived just a few weeks after the Battle of Bunker Hill.

While the number of soldiers willing to defend the colonies continued to grow, they **lacked leadership, discipline and organization**. He spent the next several months drilling and training them to become a formidable fighting force.

March, 1776: Washington believes his troops ready for battle. He bombarded the British troops in Boston, led by **Gen. William Howe**, and they quickly retreated to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Washington and his army entered the city as **heroes**.



Common Sense

People still continued to debate the issue of **remaining loyal to Britain** or striving for **independence**. Gradually, the support was growing for independence.

January, 1776: **Thomas Paine** publishes a pamphlet called ***Common Sense*** and in it he argues very well for the colonists to “throw off the shackles with which they are bound” and grasp the freedom and liberty that awaits them...but not under King George III. Thousands of Americans read, debate and many agree with Paine’s arguments. [VID](#)

Primary Resource Analysis: [LINK](#) Pages 7-9

HW:

Finish your Editorial Letter / Political Cartoon previously assigned: we will present these today!

Reminder: Mr. Wright's Relatives 😊

BR: D10

Explain the influence that Thomas Paine had on the American Revolution:

U.S. History I

Ch. 5.4 Moving Toward Independence, Part II

Independence?

As the Second Continental Congress was debating how to move forward, one central idea occupied most minds: **Should the colonies become independent, or remain under British Rule?**

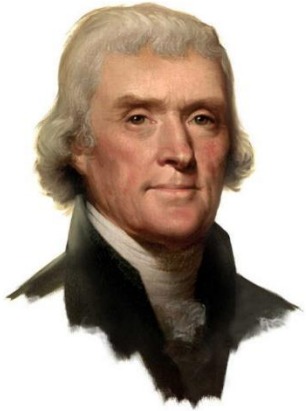
By April 1776, North Carolina had told its delegates to **support independence**. On June 7th, Virginia's **Richard Henry Lee** proposed a bold resolution:

People weren't sure what to do. Many feared that Britain might destroy the colonies, and they all might hang. Others had more hope. [VID](#). They voted on the resolution on July 2nd, 1776: [VID](#)

“That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States . . . and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”



Declaration of Independence

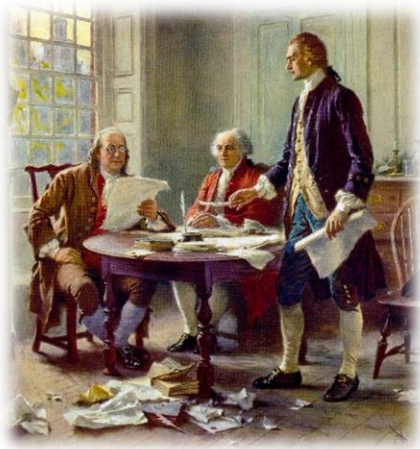


While they debated the issue, a committee was created to draft a **Declaration of Independence**. Thomas Jefferson was selected. He borrowed ideas from MANY great thinkers, like **John Locke**, etc. HO



Locke had written that people had **natural rights**, like **life, liberty, and property**; people had **formed governments to protect these rights**, not to **take them away**. Locke also argued that **any government that did interfere with said rights** could rightfully be overthrown.

The final document, after being edited a bit, was approved **July 4th, 1776**, and then it was signed by the delegates. It was then **copied** and sent to all the colonies. Many people across the colonies celebrated, while some worried for the future. [VID](#)



Declaration Explained:

There are **four major sections** of the Declaration:

1st: The **preamble**, or introduction, states that people who wish to form a new country should explain themselves, and why they are doing it.

The 2nd and 3rd sections list the rights that the colonists believe they should have, and the complaints they have against the British.

The final section proclaims the existence of a new nation, the United States; here is the beginning:

“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.”

Reminder:

Check out the Excerpts on the **Declaration of Independence**.
Read it, and then write it in your own words; due at the end of class.

We will be having a **review** and **test** for this chapter next time.
Good luck!