

Road to War

A. First continental congress, September-October 1774

1. American action

1) Non-importation, non-exportation, non-consumption

a) Effect of adding these

i) Drain on Britain's economy

b) Easier to enforce

i) You could just say that you won't consume it

c) Non-exportation hit the wealthy most

2) Continental association

a) Provided for a staged escalation for economic warfare

i) Helped out by non-importation, exportation and consumption

ii) Enforced by adult men and heads of household

- Association forces people to join them

- Or else, economic isolation and social exclusion

b) First time an average person takes a stand

i) The entire population will be involved whether they like it or not

3) Declaration of Rights

a) Proposed by the radicals

b) Grievances of the many acts imposed on us

i) Infringement upon basic American rights

2. British reaction: New England, Restraining Act, 1775

a) Upset the British

i) Added to it with the restraining act

- Banned all trade in New England except with England

- Then expand

ii) NY, Delaware, NC and Georgia aren't enforced with the act

3. Ideology

1) Radicals

a) Henry

b) Madison

2) Conservatives

a) Those still loyal to Britain

i) Willing to oppose Britain, but not willing to go to war

ii) Liked the stabilizing effect of monarchy

- Didn't like democracy

3) Independents

a) Not really independents

b) We don't really know what they are

B. Lexington and Concord, April 1775

1. British troops sent out to get Adams and other vital individuals

1) Also seize/destroy arms supply in Concord

C. Second Continental Congress, April 1775

1. Bunker Hill, June

2. Declaration of causes of taking up arms, July
 3. Olive Branch Petition
 4. Fateful November: King
 - 1) Rejected the Olive Branch Petition
 - 2) Declared Continental Congress members traitors
 5. Common Sense, January 1776
 6. Germans hired
- D. Declaration of Independence
1. Military setting in Spring 1776
 - 1) Post-Bunker Hill
 - a) British troops withdrew from Boston
 - i) March 17th is a holiday for Massachusetts
 - Evacuation day
 - It's the day the British left
 - ii) Wanted to support loyalists
 - Weren't many loyalists in New England
 - Went to NY instead
 - b) NY is heavily loyalist
 - i) Also to resupply
 - ii) Better operating base
 - iii) Easily defendable because it had islands
 - Boston isn't easily defendable
 - But Americans believe that they drove the British out
 - British left voluntarily
 - c) All royal governors left
 - i) Battle at Great Bridge in VA
 - Made loyalists leave
 - ii) By June-July 1776, American soil is under American hands
 - No British to join us
 - 2) Implications
 - a) British now have to take the offense
 - i) Colonists take on the defense
 2. Psychological setting
 - 1) Mindset for independence
 - a) John Adams said that independence started in 1775 because of the public's mindset
 - b) American's attitude towards the acts by Britain
 - i) We were still fundamentally loyal to the king
 - We sent them the Olive-Branch Petition but he didn't look at it
 - c) Publication of "Common Sense" is a major turning point
 - 2) Thomas Paine
 - a) Presented ideas that would change American outlook
 - b) Wrote "CS"
 - i) 2 forms
 - Peace meals/newspapers

- Pamphlet form
- ii) Appealed to the Americans
 - Sold 120,000 copies in 3 months
 - Other stats say half million were sold
 - Common for pubs to have the pamphlets as well
- iii) Contents were revolutionary
 - Opened with an attack on the king, "Tyranny with king and house of lords", but house of commons is good
 - At first Americans were blaming Commons
 - Paine says that the King took away the power from the Commons
- 3) Hiring of mercenaries by British
 - a) Nobody knew if they were coming to America
 - b) The idea of George sending foreign mercenaries show that he didn't care about us
- 3. Political setting
 - 1) Congress is moving towards independence
 - a) Authorized armed privateer
 - i) Only independent nations could do that
 - b) Placed embargo on trade with Britain
 - c) States to disarm loyalists
 - d) Impetus shifted from Congress to state
 - 2) Silas Dean was sent to France to talk with them to aid us
 - a) Another committee appointed to ask for help
 - i) Forming a foreign alliance