

Chapter 8 - The 13 Colonies Declare Independence

Section 1: Why did the colonies declare independence?

- England refused to repeal the Intolerable Acts, so the colonies met again at the 2nd Continental Congress in 1775 to decide their next move.
- The **2nd Continental Congress** made the following decisions:
 - 1). Named George Washington as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army
 - 2). As a peaceful gesture, they sent the **Olive Branch Petition** directly to King George III to appeal to him to help resolve the problems (hopeful of one last chance)
- The king refused to even read their petition and in return he issued the **Proclamation of Rebellion 1775**, which announced to the world that the colonists were lawbreakers and he was justified to put down the rebellion with his troops in the colonies.
- **Thomas Paine** wrote a pamphlet titled, "**Common Sense**", which urged the colonists to seek independence from England in 1776

Soon after Common Sense was read by thousands of colonists, the **2nd Continental Congress** commissioned five of its members to write the Declaration of Independence:

Thomas Jefferson	John Adams	Benjamin Franklin
Roger Sherman	Robert Livingston	

Declaration of Independence 1776 has 3 main ideas:

- 1). Role of government is to **protect natural rights** (unalienable rights)
- 2). Lists the **27 Acts of Tyranny** by King George III and the efforts of the colonies to avoid separation
- 3). Announcement to the world that the colonies are leaving the British Empire - **separate from England permanently**

****Richard Henry Lee - member of the 2nd Continental Congress who proposed the idea for writing a formal separation from the English Empire. It was approved by the members of the 2nd Continental Congress.**

Declaration of Independence - July 4, 1776

"When in the course of human events"

"Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"

"All men are created equal"

"Consent of the governed"

Chapter 8 Section 2: What strengths and weaknesses did the Americans (Patriots) have in the Revolution?

Strengths of the Patriots:

- Fighting on familiar land ("home field advantage")
- British generals underestimated abilities and determination of the **Continental Army**
- **Foreign helpers:**
 - Marquis de Lafayette** - France - noble who believed in the Patriot's cause, volunteered to help General Washington's army
 - Friedrich von Steuben** - Prussia (Germanic State) - helped by drilling the soldiers and teaching them military discipline
 - Johan DeKalb** - Bavaria (Germany) - German soldier; became a general in the Continental Army - killed before the end of the Revolution
 - Casmir Pulaski and Thaddeus Kosciuszko** - Poland - helped plan American defenses at West Point and Saratoga
- **George Washington** - strong leadership skills and the ability to take advantage of British mistakes
- **Alliance** with France after the Battle of Saratoga

Weaknesses of the Patriots:

- lacked military training and formal organization (professional soldiers vs. volunteer army)
- Lacked equipment and money because Congress was unable to tax the people
- There was still very strong loyalist opposition to the Patriots. Even after the Declaration of Independence about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the population were still loyal to the British forces

Chapter 8 Section 3: How did the American Revolution end?

A). **Battle of Saratoga 1777** - marked the turning point of the American Revolution because France signed a military alliance with the colonists. This is the main reason for victory for the Patriots.

B). **Battle of Yorktown 1781** - Final and decisive battle of the war because of the surrender of General Cornwallis to General Washington.

C). **Treaty of Paris 1783:**

- Great Britain officially recognized independence of the United States of America
- The new western boundary of the United States was the Mississippi River
- The northern and southern boundaries were Florida in the south and the Great Lakes in the north
- Lands taken from loyalists during the war had to be returned