

Chapter 8 Section 1: Why did the Colonies declare independence?

- England refused to repeal the Intolerable Acts, so the colonists met again at the 2nd Continental Congress to decide their next move.
- The 2nd Continental Congress made the following decisions:

- A). George Washington named as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army
- B). As a peaceful gesture, they sent the Olive Branch Petition directly to King George III to appeal to him to help resolve the problems.

RESULTS:

- The King refused to even read their petition and in return he issued the Proclamation of Rebellion of 1775. It announced to the world that the colonists were lawbreakers and he was justified to put down the rebellion 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.

Chapter 8 Section 2: What strengths and weaknesses did the Americans have in the revolution?

- The Patriots were not well prepared for a war with Great Britain. They lacked many supplies. Their troops were untrained and poorly equipped. Also, many loyalists opposed the Patriots cause.

The strengths of the Americans included:

- 1). Fighting on familiar lands (“home field advantage”)
- 2). British generals underestimated the abilities and determination of the Continental Army
- 3). foreign volunteers who believed in the cause of freedom who offered assistance: Marquis de Lafayette, Friedrich von Steuben, Johann De Kalb, Casimir Pulaski, and Thaddeus Kosciuszko.
- 4). George Washington’s leadership and ability to take advantage of British mistakes.
- 5). Alliances with France 1778 after the Battle of Saratoga.

The weaknesses of the Americans included:

- 1). Patriots lacked military training and formal organization (Professional soldiers vs. volunteer army).
- 2). The Americans lacked equipment and money because Congress was unable to tax the people.
- 3). There was still strong loyalist opposition to the Patriots. Even after the Declaration of Independence, about one-third of the population was loyal to the British forces.

By June of 1776, the 2nd Continental Congress had 5 of its delegates (including Thomas Jefferson) to write the Declaration of Independence which would be voted on by each colonies delegation to the Congress.

The Declaration of Independence included three main parts to it:

- A). The philosophy of democratic government
- B). A list of 27 grievances to King George III explaining to the world why they were rebelling
- C). A statement of separation from the British Empire. They were no longer British citizens, but Americans