

Module 2: The Constitution

Topic 2 Content: America's Road to Independence

Introduction



Glover Mint: Welcome to the program. I'm Glover Mint. On today's show, my cohost Demi Tracy will quickly trace the timeline of events leading up to America's independence. We begin with tensions between the American colonies and Great Britain reaching the boiling point, although reconciliation was not entirely out of the question yet. What happened to push things over the edge?

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September 1774

America's Road to Independence

September 1774

- The First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.
- All of the colonies, except for Georgia, sent representatives to the meeting to discuss the tensions with the British.
- They drafted the Declaration and Resolves, demanding a repeal of the Intolerable Acts and the removal of British troops from the colonies.
- The Congress demanded that Parliament grant the colonies the power to tax themselves.
- A colonial boycott of all British goods was established until their demands were met, but King George III refused.



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Demi Tracy: In September 1774, the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. All of the colonies, except for Georgia, sent representatives to the meeting to discuss the growing tensions with the British. During these meetings, the Continental Congress drafted the Declaration and Resolves. This was a petition to King George III, demanding a repeal of the Intolerable Acts and the removal of British troops from the colonies. The Continental Congress also demanded that Parliament grant the colonies the power to tax themselves. As a form of protest, a colonial boycott of all British goods was established until the demands were met. However, King George III refused to meet the demands.

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April 1775

America's Road to Independence

April 1775

- Because Boston was under British control, an illegal colonist government was formed outside of Boston to govern the colony of Massachusetts.
- Massachusetts was declared to be in a state of rebellion and British troops were sent to seize military supplies from the rebel government's militia.
- A confrontation occurred between the British troops and the colonial militia in the Massachusetts towns of Lexington and Concord.
- These battles were the first military engagements of the Revolutionary War.



Demi Tracy: Because Boston was under British control, an illegal colonist government was formed outside of Boston to govern the colony of Massachusetts. Massachusetts was declared to be in a state of rebellion, and British troops were sent to seize military supplies from the rebel government's militia. A confrontation occurred between the British troops and the colonial militia in the Massachusetts towns of Lexington and Concord. These battles were the first military engagements of the Revolutionary War.

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May 1775

America's Road to Independence

May 1775

- The Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia.
- The representatives attempted to reconcile with Great Britain, drafting the Olive Branch Petition.
- The petition pledged colonial loyalty to the crown, if unjust legislation was repealed and fair trade and tax negotiations would occur.
- King George III refused to receive the petition, viewing the Continental Congress as an illegal gathering.
- He issued a proclamation declaring that England would make every effort to suppress the colonial rebellion.



Demi Tracy: The Second Continental Congress convened in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in May 1775. Delegates from every colony, except for Georgia, sent representatives to participate. The representatives attempted to reconcile with Great Britain one last time, drafting the Olive Branch Petition. This petition pledged colonial loyalty to the crown, if unjust legislation was repealed and fair trade and tax negotiations could occur. King George III refused to even receive the petition, viewing the Continental Congress as an illegal gathering. He issued a proclamation declaring that England would make every effort to suppress the colonial rebellion.

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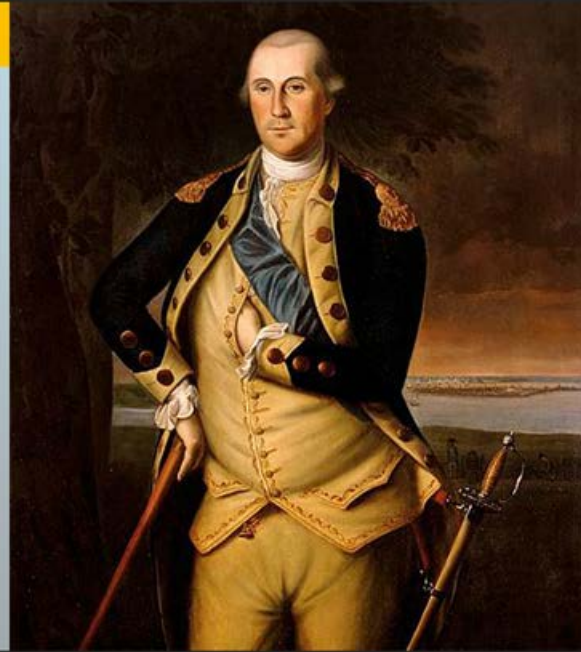
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June 1775

America's Road to Independence

June 1775

- War with England was eminent and the members of the Second Continental Congress assumed the role of the national government.
- They began organizing the resistance to the British government, forming the colonial militias into a Continental Army.
- This army would be commanded by Virginia's George Washington.



Demi Tracy: After the King's refusal to negotiate, war with England was eminent. The members of the Second Continental Congress deemed it necessary to assume the role of the national government. They began organizing the resistance to the British government, deciding to form the colonial militias into Continental Army. This army would be commanded by Virginia's George Washington.

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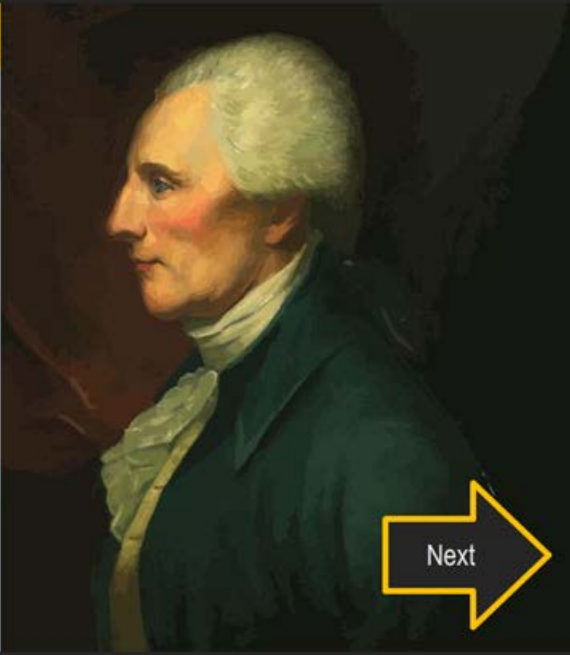
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June 1776


America's Road to Independence

June 1776

- Virginia representative Richard Henry Lee proposed that the colonies officially declare their independence from the British.
- A committee of five representatives was appointed to draft a document.
- On July 2, twelve out of the thirteen colonies agreed that a declaration was necessary.
- The Second Continental Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4.



Next



Demi Tracy: In June 1776, Virginia representative Richard Henry Lee proposed to the Second Continental Congress that the colonies officially declare their independence from the British. A committee of five representatives was appointed to draft a document that would justify the break with England. The Congress reconvened weeks later, and on July 2, 12 out of the 13 colonies agreed that a declaration was necessary. After some revisions, the Second Continental Congress officially adopted the Declaration of Independence on July 4.

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Ending of Episode



Glover Mint: Thank you for joining us on today's episode of WUSG News. See you next time!