

# Transcript

## Speaker 1

The American Revolution changed the world. It's not just about the birth of the United States. It has ramifications across the globe. So studying the American Revolution, understanding it, and putting it in a global context, I think is vitally important for us to understand why we are where we are now.

## Speaker 2

I think to believe in America, rooted in the American Revolution, is to believe in possibility. That, to me, is the extraordinary thing about the Patriot side of the fight. I think everybody on every side including people who were denied even the ownership of themselves, had the sense of possibility worth fighting for.

## Speaker 3

In late May of 1780, shortly after the British capture of Charleston, South Carolina, An elite loyalist group of green-clad cavalry and mounted infantry, called the British Legion, were in hot pursuit of Continental soldiers fleeing north. Their commander was a 25-year-old English officer, Bannister Tarleton, handsome, rakish, ruthless, and determined to make himself a celebrated soldier. Tarleton, wrote the British chronicler Horace Walpole, boasts of having butchered more men and lain with more women than anybody in the army. Tarleton caught up with the rebels near the North Carolina border, a region called the Waxhaws, and demanded they surrender.

## Speaker 4

You will order every person under your command to pile his arms in one hour. If you are rash enough to reject these terms, the blood be upon your head.

## Speaker 3

The Patriots chose to fight. Tarleton's men quickly overwhelmed them. Some who dropped their weapons and asked for quarter received none. They refused my terms, Tarleton wrote. I have cut 170 officers and men to pieces. He may have destroyed the last continental force in South Carolina, but he had also helped inspire local patriots to oppose British occupation. When they went into battle over the coming months, many would be eager to deal out what they called Tarleton's Quarter to any loyalist unlucky enough to fall into their hands.

## Speaker 5

The British government was very good at seizing and occupying cities. Newport, Philadelphia, New York, Charleston, Savannah-- these are the kind of main ports that, throughout the war, Britain could secure. But holding those places were not holding America. Pacifying an entire countryside is an entirely different task than seizing strategic positions.

Speaker 3

General Charles Cornwallis had been left in charge in the South, with clear orders from General Henry Clinton back in New York. He was not to move on to North Carolina and Virginia until South Carolina was completely pacified. It was to be the first full-scale military occupation of an entire colony in North America.

Speaker 4

When the British take the decision to move the war decisively to the south, I think they're trying to exploit the fact that there are smaller numbers of white colonists and larger numbers of slaves in those territories, and the colonists will be more vulnerable.

Speaker 6

I determined to go to Charleston and throw myself into the hands of the English. They received me readily, and I began to feel the happiness of liberty, of which I knew nothing before. Boston King.

Speaker 3

At his headquarters in New York, General Clinton continued to believe most South Carolinians were loyalists. He had insisted that patriots swear allegiance to the crown or be considered as enemies and treated accordingly. Those who did swear allegiance were swiftly disillusioned as their loyalist neighbors began to settle old scores. Those insurgents who refused the oath and dared to take up arms against the king, Tarleton told General Cornwallis, don't deserve leniency and would get none from him or his men.

Speaker 1

The oath of allegiance was really going too far, because it obliged them to publicly identify as on the British side. But I think the fundamental problem is that the British are reluctant to restore civil government in the territories they occupy. They maintain military government. And, of course, that reinforces the American claim that the British are set on imposing despotism on the colonies.

Speaker 5

One of the things that happens in wartime is people who are really good politicians, they create binaries. You're either with us or you're against us. The fact of the matter is,

in real life, that's actually not true. There's often more than two possibilities. There are a lot of people in Thirteen Colonies who actually didn't care that much about the outcome. They just wanted it over.

Speaker 1

The British are heavily reliant on recruiting loyalists as soldiers. And loyalists are often very embittered. And of course, if you've got soldiers who are keen on revenge, they're not the ideal instruments of pacification.

Speaker 3

On June 22, 1780, at a tiny settlement called Brown's Crossroads, Captain Christian Huck, a loyalist with a well-earned reputation for cruelty, was there to administer the oath of allegiance. Captain Huck stunned the crowd by warning that even if the rebels were as thick as the trees, and Jesus Christ would come down and lead them, he would still defeat them. His audience, Presbyterians all, considered that blasphemy. For the next few weeks, Christian Huck continued to burn homes, menace women, and murder rebels. In July, after he took a Patriot family hostage, the militia caught up to him and killed him, along with many of his men. New volunteers were now swelling Patriot ranks. By early August, Cornwallis had to admit that the whole country is in an absolute state of rebellion.

Speaker 7

There was no one about in the streets, only a few sad and frightened faces in the windows. I talked to some of the principal citizens, informing them that this was but the vanguard of a much larger.

Speaker 8

Force on the way, and that our king had decided to uphold them with all his power and strength. General Rochambeau.

Speaker 3

On July 11, 1780, five French warships and a host of transport vessels had emerged from the fog that blanketed the harbor at Newport, Rhode Island, and some 4,600 officers and men under the Comte de Rochambeau came ashore. Protestant residents weren't sure if these Catholic foreigners had come to help or conquer them. But when the French commander promised that his men would pay for everything they needed in silver coin, not worthless continental paper, a French officer remembered, Their countenances brightened at this mention of hard money. The next day, General Rochambeau wrote to Washington, Here we are, sir, at your orders. On September 25th, Washington and his staff inspected the fortifications at West Point on the Hudson. They were scheduled to dine with the general whom Washington had just

appointed commander of the fort, one of his best soldiers, Benedict Arnold. Washington had been startled by what poor condition the fortifications were in and concerned that Arnold had not been there to greet him. He was not at his headquarters either when his commander arrived for dinner.

Speaker 9

No one could give me any information where he was. The impropriety of his conduct, when he knew I was to be there, struck me very forcibly. I had not the least idea of the real cause.

Speaker 3

That evening, when his trusted aide, Alexander Hamilton, brought him a bundle of papers, Washington discovered the real cause. Benedict Arnold, the commander of West Point, the place Washington considered the most important post in America, had deserted and fled to the British that morning. Worse still, he had planned to surrender the fort and all the men stationed in it to the enemy. Few soldiers had contributed more to the revolutionary cause than Benedict Arnold. Time and again, he had exhibited extraordinary initiative and bravery on the battlefield and was severely wounded twice.

Speaker 10

He had done all these miracles on the battlefield, but he was not seeing any of the recognition he believed he deserved. Why am I doing this? I've lost my personal finances. I've destroyed my body. For what?

Speaker 3

Two years earlier, Washington had made Arnold military commander in Philadelphia. It had not gone well. He used his position to profit from the sale of confiscated Loyalist property. He had also settled into the same mansion the British commander had occupied and was accused of being far too close to wealthy merchants suspected of Loyalist sympathies.

Speaker 10

While Arnold is in Philadelphia, he falls in love with a young woman named Peggy Shippen, whose family is of loyalist sympathies, who had gotten to know the British officers during the British occupation of Philadelphia quite well. And one of them was a Major Andre, who, just as it so happened, would become the head of the British spy network. And whether or not Peggy was the one who made this all happen, Soon after the two of them are married, Arnold begins to make overtures to the British.

Speaker 3

In the strictest secrecy, he began to communicate through Major John Andre that he'd gone to war only to redress legitimate American grievances, not independence, and had been appalled when Congress allied itself with Catholic France, which he believed was the enemy of liberty and Protestantism. He now volunteered to enlist in the King's service, either as an officer in the British Army or by cooperating on some concerted plan to sabotage the revolutionary cause. For 17 months, coded messages had gone back and forth before a concrete plan could be agreed upon. Arnold was to persuade Washington to give him command of West Point, and all the American outposts on the Hudson, and then weaken their defenses so that General Clinton's forces could sail up the river and take them all. In exchange, Arnold was to be made a general in the British service and paid 20,000 British pounds, plus 500 pounds a year for the rest of his life. Andre had explicit orders. He was not to cross into rebel territory, dress as a civilian, or carry any papers. He disobeyed all three, and on his way back to the British lines, Andre was captured by three New York militiamen with incriminating documents hidden in his stockings in Benedict Arnold's handwriting.

Speaker 10

This came as a devastating blow to Washington. And it was a blow to the American people to realize that one of their own, one of their own that had been a great hero, could make this decision to turn on all of them.

Speaker 11

Since the fall of Lucifer, nothing has equaled the fall of Arnold. He will now sink as low as he had been high before. And as the devil made war upon heaven after his fall, so I expect Arnold will upon America. Should he ever fall into our hands, he will be a sweet sacrifice. General Nathanael Greene.

Speaker 3

General Cornwallis's planned invasion of North Carolina would be a three-pronged assault. On the right, a column would seize the port of Wilmington, ensuring that supplies could flow smoothly inland from the coast. In the center, Cornwallis would himself lead the bulk of his army toward the tiny town of Charlotte, then just a crossroads and a courthouse. On the left, Major Patrick Ferguson and perhaps a thousand loyalists were to guard his flank and try to rally more men from the backcountry. Ferguson, a Scottish-born career soldier who directed his men in battle with a silver whistle, led his loyalist force across the border into western North Carolina. He released rebel prisoners and sent them over the Blue Ridge Mountains with a message for those patriots who called themselves the Over Mountain Men, the settlers who had defied the 1763 proclamation forbidding them to occupy Indian lands. The British victory was inevitable, Ferguson told them, and every man who laid down his arms would be treated gently and justly. But the frontiersmen did not believe him. News

of Tarleton's cruelty and loyalist abuses was still fresh. Instead of surrendering, they came swarming over the mountains after Ferguson, who realized he was in trouble, changed course, and moved toward Charlotte. Along the way, he issued a proclamation meant to rally loyalists.

Speaker 4

Gentlemen, if you choose to be \*\*\*\*\* upon forever and ever by a set of mongrels, say so at once, and let your women turn their backs upon you and look out for real men to protect them. If you wish or deserve to live and bear the name of men, grasp your arms in a moment and run to camp. The backwater men have crossed the mountains.

Speaker 7

That's the wrong tone to take when you're communicating with these backcountry, over-the-mountain men, these Scots-Irish settlers.

Speaker 3

Just inside South Carolina, Ferguson unaccountably decided to make a stand on a hill grandly named Kings Mountain. Nearly 1,000 Patriot militia, half over mountain men and half from the Virginia and Carolina backcountry, were right behind him. On October 7, 1780, the Patriots attacked with terrifying ferocity.

Speaker 9

They appeared like so many devils from the infernal regions. They were the most powerful-looking men ever beheld, tall, raw-boned and sinewy with long, matted hair, such men as were never before seen in the Carolinas. Drury Mathis.

Speaker 3

As the Patriots closed in on the summit, Ferguson continued to ride from point to point, waving his saber, blowing his whistle, trying to get his loyalists to hold on. Several balls slammed into him at once. He tumbled from his saddle. Ferguson had been the only British soldier in the battle that day. Everyone else on both sides was an American. The Loyalists surrendered.

Speaker 12

The dead lay in heaps on all sides, while the groans of the wounded were heard in every direction. Great God, said I, is this the fate of mortals? Was it for this cause that man was brought into the world? Private James Collins.

Speaker 7

After King's Mountain, patriots murder many of their captives. If they see somebody among the captives who gives them a dirty look, they'll say, Oh, I know that guy. He

burned a farm just over the next hill, and he killed somebody's family. Let's string him up. And so all kinds of atrocities take place.

Speaker 3

When Cornwallis learned that the Patriots had annihilated a thousand-man loyalist force, he pulled his army out of Charlotte and headed back into South Carolina.

Speaker 11

South Carolina. When I left the Northern Army, I expected to find in this Southern department a thousand difficulties to which I was a stranger. The embarrassments far exceed my utmost apprehension. I have but a shadow of an army, Nathanael Greene.

Speaker 10

I think Nathanael Greene is the unsung hero of the American Revolution. Without Nathanael Greene in the South grinding it out, battle after battle in the war-torn South, the Revolution could have easily been lost.

Speaker 3

George Washington had sent Nathanael Greene as commander of what was left of the Southern Army. I think I am giving you a general, Washington told a South Carolina congressman. But what can a general do without men, without arms, without clothing, without provisions? Greene's forces were outnumbered by more than two to one. Nonetheless, he decided to divide his small army. It makes the most of my inferior force, he explained, for it compels my adversary to divide his. Greene himself and most of his men marched into South Carolina to a camp near Churraw on the Pee Dee River. Meanwhile, Daniel Morgan led what Greene called his flying army west to annoy the enemy in that quarter and spirit up the people. In response, Cornwallis sent Bannister Tarleton after Daniel Morgan. Morgan chose to make a stand at the cow pens, a rolling meadow 500 yards long and almost as wide, on which herdsmen grazed their cattle on the way to market. He expected Tarleton to lead a headlong charge into his ranks and planned to take advantage of his rash opponent.

Speaker 7

Daniel Morgan was a master tactician. His planning for the Battle of Cowpens is really brilliant in the way that he draws Tarleton into a trap.

Speaker 3

Morgan knew that his less reliable militia, faced with an onrushing enemy, would likely break and run. So he would try to turn that weakness into a strength. For the next day's battle, he would arrange his men in three lines, 150 yards apart. Militiamen would man the first two. Morgan ordered them to fire just two volleys each into the oncoming

enemy and then retreat behind the third line, manned by seasoned Continentals. He hoped the enemy, convinced the militia were running away, would charge and suddenly find themselves under deadly fire from his most experienced fighters hidden behind a rise.

Speaker 12

About sunrise on the 17th of January, 1781, the enemy came in full view. The sight, to me at least, seemed somewhat imposing. They halted for a short time and then advanced rapidly, as if certain of victory. Private James Collins.

Speaker 3

The first line of militia managed to pick off a few regulars, and then, following orders, fell back. When the enemy came within 50 yards of the second line, the militia fired two volleys into them, a heavy and galling fire, Morgan remembered, that felled 2/3 of Tarleton's infantry officers. But just as Tarleton had assumed it would, the second line appeared to fall apart, too. The British stepped up their pace, eager to catch the fleeing militia. Surely, Tarleton thought, The battle was nearly won. His men raced up a slope, and at its crest, suddenly found themselves face-to-face with the third line, and under what a Continental officer remembered as a very destructive fire, which they little expected. This time, it was the Patriots who charged with bayonets, emitting a blood-curdling war cry they had adapted from native warriors. A yell that would reverberate on southern battlefields for decades.

Speaker 12

Morgan rode up in front, and waving his sword, cried out, Give them one more fire, and the day is ours. We then advanced briskly. They began to throw down their arms and surrender themselves. Private James Collins.

Speaker 3

It was all over in 35 minutes. The British lost 300 men, killed or wounded. 525 more were taken prisoners. Tarleton managed to get away, but Daniel Morgan was exultant. I have given him, he said, a devil of a whipping. News of Tarleton's defeat stunned General Cornwallis. Nearly a third of his army was now lost.

Speaker 11

There are few generals that have run oftener than I have done. But I have taken care not to run too far, and commonly have run as fast forward as backward, to convince our enemy that we were like a crab that could run either way. Nathanael Greene.

Speaker 3

One by one, all across the lower south, British outposts either surrendered to Patriots or were abandoned. Fort Watson, Camden, Orangeburg, Fort Mott, Fort Granby, Fort Galphin, Georgetown, Augusta. General Greene fought three full-scale battles with the British at Hobkirk Hill, '96, and Utah Springs, and lost them all. But he inflicted such heavy casualties each time that the enemy was forced to withdraw closer and closer to Charleston. We fight, Greene said. Get beat. Rise and fight again. As Britain's grip on the region weakened, the anarchy that had characterized the backcountry for months spiraled into chaos. Partisans on both sides seemed bent on being more cruel than those on the other. They tortured and murdered captives, burned homes and flogged their owners, raped women and hanged their husbands. Gangs of bandits held up travelers and plundered farms.

Speaker 11

With us in the north, the difference is little more than a division of sentiment. But here, they prosecute each other with little less than savage fury. You can have no idea of the distress and misery that prevail in this quarter. Nathanael Green.

Speaker 3

By the end of the summer of 1781, the British would be penned up in just three coastal towns in the Carolinas and Georgia-- Wilmington, Charleston, and Savannah. London's Southern strategy was falling apart. Britain was more alone than ever, at war with the Netherlands now, as well as with France and Spain. And its West Indian islands and Gibraltar and the Mediterranean were under attack. To London, North America mattered less and less, and General Clinton in New York could do little more than make sure that city remained in British hands.

Speaker 13

The British stronghold is in New York. It's where they won the battle in 1776 against George Washington, which is one of the reasons George Washington really wants to take New York, because he feels very humiliated by that specific battle. So for him, since that time, it became almost an obsession. If we take New York, we're gonna win this war.

Speaker 3

When word came that French warships and more French troops would arrive on the East Coast sometime that summer, Washington and Rochambeau met in Connecticut to discuss where the fleet might, in fact, do the most good-- at New York or in Virginia, where Cornwallis was now headed. Washington still favored New York. Rochambeau told him that he preferred to leave the decision to the Comte de Grasse, the admiral now commanding the French fleet in the Caribbean. But in private letters to de Grasse, Rochambeau argued that blockading the Chesapeake should take precedence. In the

meantime, Rochambeau marched his more than 4,000 men from Newport to join Washington's army in Westchester County, New York. The French were stunned by what they saw.

Speaker 4

I cannot too often repeat how astonished I have been at the American army. It is inconceivable that troops nearly naked, badly paid, and composed of old men, \*\*\*\*\* and children should march so well.

Speaker 3

On May 20th, 1781, Lord Cornwallis arrived at Petersburg, Virginia. He commanded some 7,000 British, German, and Loyalist troops. After three mostly fruitless weeks spent marching through the backcountry, Cornwallis and his men started southeast towards Williamsburg. Some 4,500 ex-slaves now trailed along behind. By bringing the war into Virginia, Cornwallis had provided the largest body of black people in North America the possibility of freedom. Among those who threw in their lot with the British were three from Thomas Jefferson's estates, and 16 from George Washington's Mount Vernon.

Speaker 14

What do you do? Do you stay, or do you take a chance at your freedom and leave your family? How many people can go with you? Sometimes whole families left together. I would imagine it being frightened, but there's also a sense of hope, because the system that they were in may be destroyed. and that they may have an opportunity for freedom.

Speaker 3

Cornwallis began to receive a series of contradictory communications from General Clinton back in New York City. First, Cornwallis was to send nearly half his forces north to New York. Then, Clinton changed his mind. Instead, he was to locate and fortify a deep-water, year-round port in Virginia, suitable for the Royal Navy's largest warships, Cornwallis's engineers recommended Yorktown. He arrived there on August 2nd, 1781. On August 14th, Washington learned that the French fleet under Admiral de Grasse was on its way to the Chesapeake, not New York.

Speaker 9

Matters having now come to a crisis, and a decisive plan to be determined on, I was obliged to give up all idea of attacking New York.

Speaker 13

George Washington is a realistic military man who knows when to not attack. And so, with the advice of the French that had much more experience in warfare, he listens to them and decides to march through the South.

Speaker 3

Then word arrived from Lafayette that Cornwallis was establishing his army at Yorktown. If the French navy could command the Chesapeake and keep the British fleet out, Lafayette wrote, the British army would, I think, be ours. Leaving 4,000 Continentals behind, the French and American armies began to make their way south in three great columns on August 18.

Speaker 13

It's hot and humid, and as the French write, infested by mosquitoes. You have to think of thousands of men marching through these little roads. They have to create bridges. They have to get obstacles out of the way. We have a lot of animals behind them. In order to not walk in the middle of the day, they start in the middle of the night. So it's pitch dark, and you just walk.

Speaker 3

To deceive the British into thinking that he was planning an amphibious assault on Staten Island or Sandy Hook, Washington had made sure that false documents suggesting an imminent attack fell into British hands.

Speaker 10

It's a brilliant series of deceptive maneuvers that Washington is able to pull off. By the time Clinton realizes that Washington is not going after him, but is on his way south, Washington is in Philadelphia.

Speaker 3

By late summer, work had begun on the fortifications at Yorktown itself. On the morning of August 30th, Captain Johann Ewald looked out toward the Chesapeake Bay.

Speaker 5

I could detect three heavy vessels in the distance. We soon had news that the three vessels which lay before our noses were French.

Speaker 3

Admiral de Grasse was now lying at anchor, just inside the narrow entrance to the Chesapeake Bay, between Cape Charles and Cape Henry.

Speaker 10

The Chesapeake is a huge bay, but its point of access is the two capes. It's very narrow, and anyone who can control that controls this huge body of water.

Speaker 3

On the morning of September 5th, A dispatch rider caught up with George Washington near Head of Elk, Maryland, with the good news that the French fleet had arrived. That same day, though, sailors aboard de Grasse's flagship spotted sails approaching from the north. They were 19 British ships sent from New York with orders to find and destroy the French fleet. de Grasse might have stayed where he was, blocking entrance to the bay. But if he had done so, the eight French ships loaded with heavy siege guns that were on their way from Newport would have been kept out of the Chesapeake. De Grasse moved out into the open sea to confront his enemy. The two fleets maneuvered for six hours. Commanders scattered sand across their decks to absorb the sailor's blood they knew was about to be shed. 00 in the afternoon, they opened fire. The broadsides continued until dark. The result was a standoff, but the British vessels got the worst of it and were forced to limp back to New York. Meanwhile, the French squadron from Newport carrying the heavy siege guns had slipped unnoticed into the bay. And avoiding Cornwallis's defenses at Yorktown, sailed up the James River. And Washington and Rochambeau's armies were arriving at Williamsburg. Cornwallis was trapped.

Speaker 7

From the very beginning, Washington recognized that this war was going to end when the stars aligned. He's been waiting for this, and he snatches at it.

Speaker 15

We prepared to move down and pay our old acquaintance, the British, a visit. They thought the fewer, the better. We thought the more, the merrier. Joseph Plomb-Martin.

Speaker 3

On September 28, 1781, at 5 a.m., the French and American armies, now 18,000 strong, started toward Yorktown. The Allies established a crescent-shaped encampment around the town, the French on the left, the Americans on the right. At dawn on September 30, French and American troops edged cautiously toward the outermost British defenses, expecting stiff resistance. Instead, they found them empty. Cornwallis, outnumbered three to one, had pulled his men back into town.

Speaker 7

Cornwallis makes a fatal mistake. He's exhausted. He's depressed. A commander who otherwise is very effective is just not at his best.

Speaker 3

00 in the afternoon on October 9th, the French opened fire. Two hours later, Washington was given the honor of touching off the first American cannon. All along the Allied lines, cannon and mortars began firing into Yorktown.

Speaker 4

It was as if one witnessed the shock of an earthquake. 3,600 shot by the enemy were counted in this 24 hours these were fired at the city into our lines and against the ships in the harbor Private Johan Konrad D it was.

Speaker 2

Absolutely horrific there was no moment to rest there was no place to hide for days there was continuous bombardment.

Speaker 3

At about 10 o'clock in the morning, on October 17th, 1781, a drummer appeared on a British parapet, beating his drum, the signal that Cornwallis wished to negotiate. When the thunder of the guns drowned out the drumming, an officer climbed up next to the soldier and waved a white handkerchief. He might have beat away till doomsday if he had not been sighted by men on the front lines. But when the firing ceased, I thought I had never heard a drum equal to it. The most delightful music to us all.

Speaker 9

Ebenezer Denny.

Speaker 3

The Battle of Yorktown was over. The patriots and their French allies had won. The world would never be the same. Surrender negotiations went on for a day and a half. As the British and Germans marched out of what was left of Yorktown, Washington and Rochambeau waited on horseback. Lord Cornwallis was nowhere to be seen. He claimed to be ill. But as a professional soldier, he may simply have been too humiliated at having to surrender his army to a group of rebels to make an appearance.

Cornwallis's second in command, General Charles O'Hara, stood in for him and tried to surrender his sword to General Rochambeau. Rochambeau refused to accept it. We are subordinate to the Americans, he said. General Washington will give you orders. Washington wouldn't accept it either. He passed O'Hara on to his second-in-command, Benjamin Lincoln, who formally accepted the sword and then handed it back, as custom dictated.

Speaker 1

To the ultimate humiliation, not only having to surrender to the Americans, but having to surrender to the second-in-command of the Americans.

Speaker 5

With what soldiers in the world could one do what was done by these men? One can perceive what an enthusiasm which these poor fellows call liberty can do. Johann Evar.

Speaker 4

This is a blow, my lord, which gives me the most serious concern, as it will, in its consequences, be exceedingly detrimental to the king's interest in this country. Henry Clinton.

Speaker 3

In a speech to Parliament, King George III said that while recent events in Virginia had been unfortunate, he remained determined to fight on, to restore my deluded subjects to that happy and prosperous condition which they formerly derived from obedience to the laws. But Britain had grown weary of the war. More than 30,000 British, German, and loyalist troops had lost their lives in North America. The British national debt had doubled. Other battlefields seemed more important-- in the Caribbean, where they would soon destroy Admiral de Grasse's fleet, in the Mediterranean, where they still held Gibraltar, and in India, where they continued to expand their empire. On February 27, 1782, Parliament voted to halt all offensive activity in North America. Lord North's government fell. Not long after the surrender, slaveholders began turning up at Yorktown, eager to reclaim the surviving runaways who had fled to the British. Washington set up two fortified posts where slaves were to be kept under guard until their owner came to claim them. Patriot troops were encouraged to help track them down. Cornwallis's defeated men were marched to prison camps in the interior. Eager to get them back, Parliament finally recognized captured Americans as prisoners of war. Redcoats and rebels alike could expect to be exchanged. Everywhere, patriots were seeking revenge on men and women who had once been their neighbors and fellow subjects of the king. The mob, one loyalist wrote, now reigns, fully and uncontrolled. In Georgia, patriots hunted down and killed loyalists who had sought sanctuary in the swamps. Other loyalists were exiled and their property confiscated.

Speaker 2

In an incredible gesture at the end of the American Revolution, the British government offers continuing protection to American loyalists. And I don't know of any other precedent for this kind of mass evacuation of civilians organized by a government, and particularly by the military, with a view to helping these refugees get started with a new life somewhere else outside the place that they had always called home.

### Speaker 3

Meanwhile, in Paris, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, John Jay, and Henry Laurens were trying to work out a permanent peace. Ignoring their instructions to include the French, whose assistance had ensured their astonishing victory, the American envoys decided to negotiate alone with British emissaries. Let us be honest and grateful to France, John Jay said, but let us think for ourselves. They had a draft treaty within a week. Its terms were generous to the Americans, so generous they would cause the new British government to fall as well. It declared the 13 former colonies to be free, sovereign, and independent states, and set expansive boundaries stretching all the way from the Great Lakes to Florida and from the Appalachians westward to the Mississippi, a territory larger than England, France, and Spain put together. British troops were to be withdrawn with all convenient speed and were barred, the agreement said, from carrying away any \*\*\*\*\* or other property of the American inhabitants. This provisional treaty was signed by the American and British negotiators on November 30th, 1782. A final comprehensive treaty would not come for another nine months.

### Speaker 13

Some people would say the British lost the war, but then they won the aftermath, and France lost that period. They could not reinvent themselves in order to prevent their collapse. The promise of the American Revolution was, of course, a promise of democracy, of equality, of liberties, of all these new concepts at a time where, in Europe, there were only monarchies. A republic had won against a monarchy. It inspired many.

### Speaker 9

The unparalleled perseverance of the armies of the United States, through almost every possible suffering and discouragement, for the space of eight long years was little short of a standing miracle. George Washington.

### Speaker 3

As the Continental Army began to disband, Washington tried again to persuade Congress to provide his men with at least three months' back pay in cash. But the best they could do was issue a blizzard of paper certificates, vaguely promising to redeem them one day.

### Speaker 15

When the country had drained the last drop of service it could screw out of the poor soldiers, we returned adrift like old worn-out horses. Joseph Plumb Martin.

### Speaker 16

That group of people are ordinary Americans. They won the war because they'd never left. They stayed. That was it. They refused to leave. And You can sound pretty patriotic, but I don't think you can be patriotic enough about them.

Speaker 15

We had lived together as a family of brothers for several years, and now we were to be parted forever, as unconditionally separated as though the grave lay between us.

Speaker 3

By the spring of 1783, More than 30,000 Loyalists and almost as many British and German troops still remained in New York City, all waiting for ships to take them away. Of the more than 3,000 Black people who had also found sanctuary in New York, half were considered the property of Loyalists, and so would have to accompany their owners wherever they chose to go. But most of the rest were runaways, like Harry Washington, who had been the property of George Washington, and Boston King, who had been promised that if they fled their Patriot owners, they would be free. That freedom now seemed in peril.

Speaker 6

Peace was restored between America and Great Britain, which issued universal joy among all parties, except us. who had escaped from slavery and taken refuge in the English army. For a report prevailed at New York that all slaves were to be delivered up to their masters. This dreadful rumor filled us all with inexpressible anguish and terror. Boston King.

Speaker 3

From his headquarters up the Hudson, George Washington continued to insist every runaway be returned to his or her owner. General Carlton refused. National honor, he told Washington, required him to make good on official British pledges made to persons of any complexion.

Speaker 6

The English had compassion upon us in the day of distress. In consequence of this, Each of us received a certificate from the commanding officer at New York, which dispelled all our fears.

Speaker 3

Boston King, Harry Washington, and all the hundreds of other free persons the British allowed to sail north were filled, as King wrote, with joy and gratitude. In the end, Nova Scotia proved cold and unforgiving. Black refugees were not made welcome. Both men would eventually join nearly 1,200 other African-Americans who emigrated again, this

time to Sierra Leone in West Africa, where they founded a new British colony with a new capital city they called Freetown. The 150,000 Native Americans who lived in the vast territory that was now the United States were not so much as mentioned in the treaty.

Speaker 16

We were struck with astonishment at hearing we were forgot. We could not believe it possible such firm friends and allies could be so neglected by England, whom we had served with so much zeal and fidelity. Teyandenego, Joseph Brandt. The losers in the negotiation of Paris are the Native Americans. I mean, it would be hard-pressed to say that they'd be better off if the British had won, but they probably would have.

Speaker 3

As the United States moved inexorably westward, Native nations would continue to fight for their independence for another century. Native Americans would not become citizens of the United States until 1924, and their struggle to remain sovereign would never end. The British were finally gone. Washington was back in the city he had been forced to abandon in 1776. New Yorkers celebrated for days with illuminations, bonfires, and fireworks. And now, George Washington had one more duty to perform. He would ride to Annapolis, Maryland, where the Confederation Congress was now meeting, and formally resign his commission.

Speaker 16

He knew what he was doing. He walks away from power. He's not going to be a Cromwell. He's not going to be a Caesar. He's not going to be what Napoleon is going to become. He could have easily become dictator head, and he had no interest in that whatsoever.

Speaker 4

These are the times that tried men's souls, and they are over. than the greatest and completest revolution the world ever knew gloriously and happily accomplished. As United States, we are equal to the importance of the title, but otherwise, we are not. Our union is the most sacred thing, and that which every man should be most proud and tender of. Our great title is Americans. Thomas Paine.

Speaker 3

In late May 1787, 55 delegates met in Philadelphia to draw up a constitution. Nearly half owned slaves. 30 had served in the war. George Washington lent his prestige by agreeing to preside over the convention. Four months later, they had hammered out a four-page document. To devise a government that the American people could agree to live under demanded historic compromises, some creative, some tragic. The Constitution delineated which powers fell to the central government and which

remained with the states. a system of shared sovereignty they called federalism. The architects of the Constitution divided the federal government into three branches-- the legislative, executive, and judicial-- in a delicate balance by which each was meant to check the others to ensure against overreach that could result in tyranny.

Speaker 9

I wish the Constitution which is offered had been made more perfect, but I sincerely believe it is the best that could be obtained at this time. And as a constitutional door is opened for amendment hereafter, the adoption of it is, in my opinion, desirable.

Speaker 17

They were trying to create a system in which you could have a sufficiently powerful government that could work properly for its own people and the great powers of the world and still retain the freedoms of the individual. And that is the great issue that runs all the way through the Revolution. It's a struggle between the possibilities of power and of liberty.

Speaker 3

All 13 states did ratify the Constitution. But before consenting to live under the new federal government, the American people wanted to enshrine the liberties they had won in the Revolution. The Constitution was almost immediately amended with a Bill of Rights guaranteeing freedom of worship and the separation of church and state, freedom of speech and assembly, the right to keep and bear arms, trial by jury, and a ban on cruel and unusual punishment. When the time came to choose the first president under the Constitution, George Washington was the only choice and won the vote of every single elector. He was inaugurated in New York City on April 30th, 1789. John Adams, the first vice president, thought the chief executive should have a royal or at least a princely title. But for Washington, President of the United States was honor enough. And when he left the presidency in 1797, King George himself paid tribute. By surrendering first his military and then his political power, he said, George Washington had made himself the greatest character of the age.

Speaker 17

America is predicated on an idea that should act as a poll star for us to provide true North, telling us what it is that we think we can do as a people. The perpetual challenge of the American experiment is to draw on those aspirational ideals, make them our own, hand them off to our children and our grandchildren, and to use that as a propulsion system for being the nation that those forebears thought we could become.

Speaker 8

The American war is over. But this is far from being the case with the American Revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government. Patriots, come forward. Your country demands your services. Hear her proclaiming in sighs and groans. In her governments, in her finances, in her trade, in her manufactures, in her morals and in her manners. The revolution is not over. Benjamin Rush.