1782-1783

Newburgh Conspiracy

by Sean Vitti
Issues

- War over but morale of troops low

- Reasons:
  - Withholding of pay for Continental Army.
  - Bankrupt Congress.
  - Articles of Confederation.

Treaty of Paris ends the American Revolution
Pay Withholding & Bankruptcy

- Summer of 1782, Congress is $6 million in debt, with only $125,000 raised to pay.
- Many members of the military were owed back pay, as much as 6 years worth
Articles of Confederation & Payments

- Articles of Confederation granted powers to maintain a wartime army
  - However not the power to levy the required taxes to pay for this expenditure.

- States objected to Congressional plans to raise taxes to pay the military debt.
In response to the withholding of pay tied to the financial and bureaucratic issues the officers drew together under the leadership of Henry Knox

Sent a delegation to Congress with a list of demands

- Pay the Army
- Pension for service
- Option of commuting pension for lump sum

The possibility of a *coup d’ete* seemed possible

- Possibility of establishing a military dictatorship for the United States.
George Washington

- Made aware of the grievances of the officers on March 10th.
- Called for a meeting on March 15th with the officer corps.
The Newburgh Address

- Appeared at the scheduled March 15\textsuperscript{th} meeting.
- Reads letter, The Newburgh Address, to the assembled officer corp.
"Gentlemen: By an anonymous summons, an attempt has been made to convene you together; how inconsistent with the rules of propriety! How unmilitary! And how subversive of all order and discipline..."
Gentlemen,

By an anterior letter, an attempt has been made to convey some information concerning the state ofInsurrection, and some hints relative to the subject of the late disturbances. The good sense of the people, the late measures, and the conduct of the public officers, have, it appears, produced some effect.

In the course of the evening, another committee for discussing the state ofInsurrection, was sent, with a view to the public welfare. The committee of the previous evening, it is understood, was more extensive; the call of the public, however, is much needed for the protection of the peace, and should be attended with the same spirit of moderation that has characterized the proceedings of the House, so, as some councils, referred to, and as is evidenced by the reflections previously given, it was different means to obtain the same result. The lateness of the evening would prevent the latter of the two councils, in the absence of the former, and more clearly, than to send for designating the man with this recommendation. - It may be observed, that the House, in their deliberations, have not been actuated by any undue spirit of unreasonableness. It is understood, that the House, in their deliberations, have not been actuated by any undue spirit of unreasonableness. The House, in their deliberations, have not been actuated by any undue spirit of unreasonableness. The House, in their deliberations, have not been actuated by any undue spirit of unreasonableness. The House, in their deliberations, have not been actuated by any undue spirit of unreasonableness.
Resolution

- Washington’s presence and message to the officer corp. singlehandedly change the views of most of the officers present.

- Most affirm their trust in the newly formed Congress and its promise to compensate the members of the military.
References