|  |
| --- |
| **Declaration of Independence: July 4, 1776** |
| PRINCIPLES: * Natural rights (life, liberty, pursuit of happiness)
* Social contract (government gets its power from the “consent of the governed”
* When gov’t fails, people have the rights to alter or abolish that gov’t
 |
| INSPIRED: * French Revolution (late 1700’s)
* South American independence movements (early 1800’s)
* Africa & Asia independence movements (20th century)
 |
| ENLIGHTENMENT PHILOSPHERS:* Many ideas were theirs (natural rights = John Locke, social contract = Rousseau)
* John Locke’s “compact theory” stated: no person may rule another without their consent (ignored the application to slavery)
 |

Second Continental Congress: served as gov’t during the American Revolution

|  |
| --- |
| **American Revolution: 1775-1781 (British surrendered)** |
| Colonists | George Washington led untrained militia  |
| Native Americans  | Many fought with England |
| Slaves | * Fought on both sides – more on England’s side (they promised freedom)
* Some escaped during Revolution, others freed for fighting, some settled in the North & were “free”
 |

* Treaty of Paris – 1783
* France helped colonists (esp. after victory at Saratoga, NY) – British could have isolated New England from rest of colonies if they had won

Effects of American Revolution:

* States make constitutions that limit power of gov’t
* England recognizes US as independent nation (Treaty of Paris)
* Iroquois league destroyed (fought w/England) – Native Americans pushed further west
* Ideas of freedom make some people begin to oppose slavery
* “ “ “ “ “ reconsider women’s roles
* Influenced other parts of world (French Rev, South American independence movements)

Antislavery movement:

* Started by Quakers (in North) before war
* After war: many North states abolished slavery
* Still discrimination – segregation, couldn’t vote (except in New England!)

Articles of Confederation: 1777 --- approved & effective - 1981

* Weak national (federal) gov’t
* State power
* Achievements of Confederation = ended American Revolution; negotiated Treaty of Paris (1763); passage of Land Ordinance of 1785 (determined how states can join the nation) & Northwest Ordinance of 1787 (prohibited slavery in Northwest territory)
* “critical period”: 1780’s – problems: no national currency, had to ask state to tax for $, no president to oversee stuff, no army
* Hard to change Articles – all 13 states had to agree

States developed new, separate state constitutions: representative government