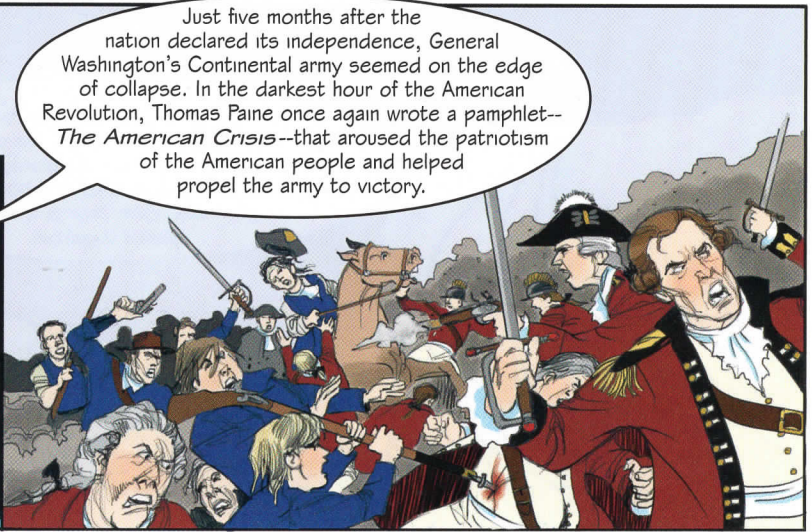
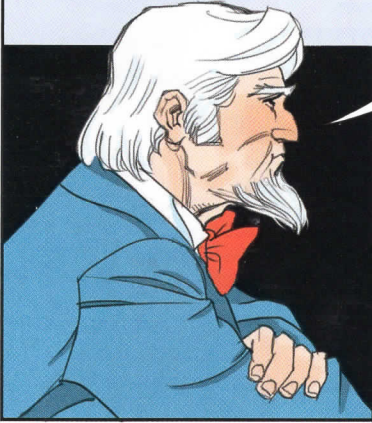


The Crisis

Just five months after the nation declared its independence, General Washington's Continental army seemed on the edge of collapse. In the darkest hour of the American Revolution, Thomas Paine once again wrote a pamphlet--*The American Crisis*--that aroused the patriotism of the American people and helped propel the army to victory.



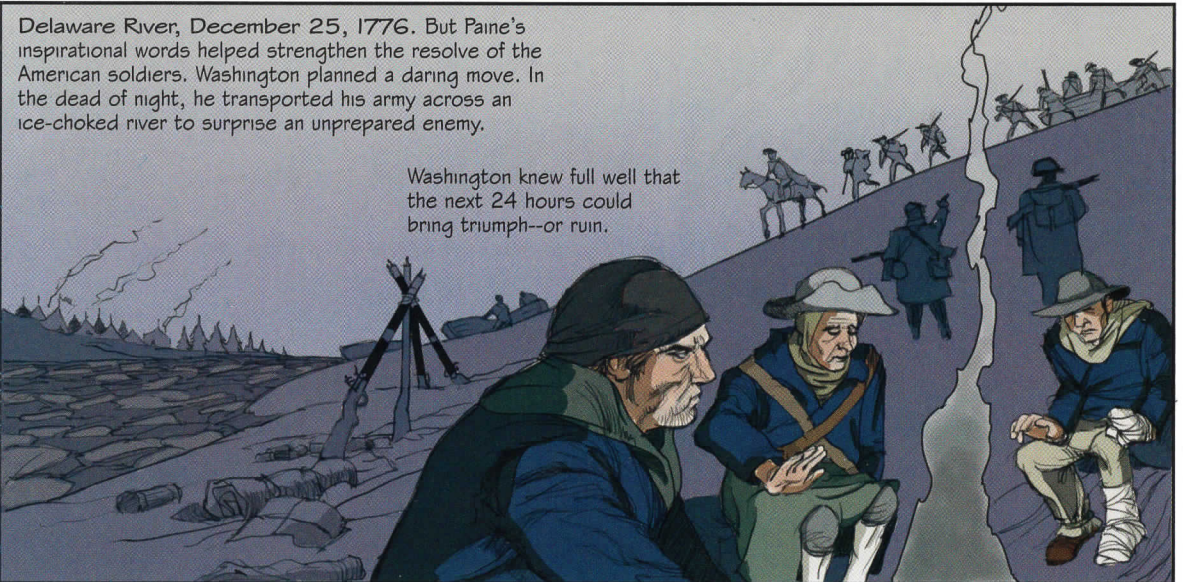
Brooklyn, New York, 1776. Washington's string of defeats had begun in August, at the Battle of Long Island. His troops were forced to retreat across the East River to New York City . . .



. . . and then the British chased them up Manhattan Island and across New Jersey.

Delaware River, December 25, 1776. But Paine's inspirational words helped strengthen the resolve of the American soldiers. Washington planned a daring move. In the dead of night, he transported his army across an ice-choked river to surprise an unprepared enemy.

Washington knew full well that the next 24 hours could bring triumph--or ruin.



December 8, 1776. Crossing into Pennsylvania, the army huddled in the snow on the west banks of the Delaware River, enemy troops on the opposite shore. Washington's men were freezing, sick, ragged, and discouraged.

THOSE BRITISH THIEVES STOLE ALL MY CATTLE AND MY BEST FEATHER BED!

Most planned to go home as soon as their term of enlistment was up at the end of the month.

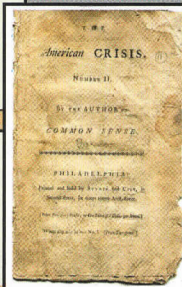
Thomas Paine, working as a war correspondent, retreated with the rest of the army across British-occupied New Jersey. He observed the suffering of civilians . . .

. . . and the gloom of the enlisted troops.

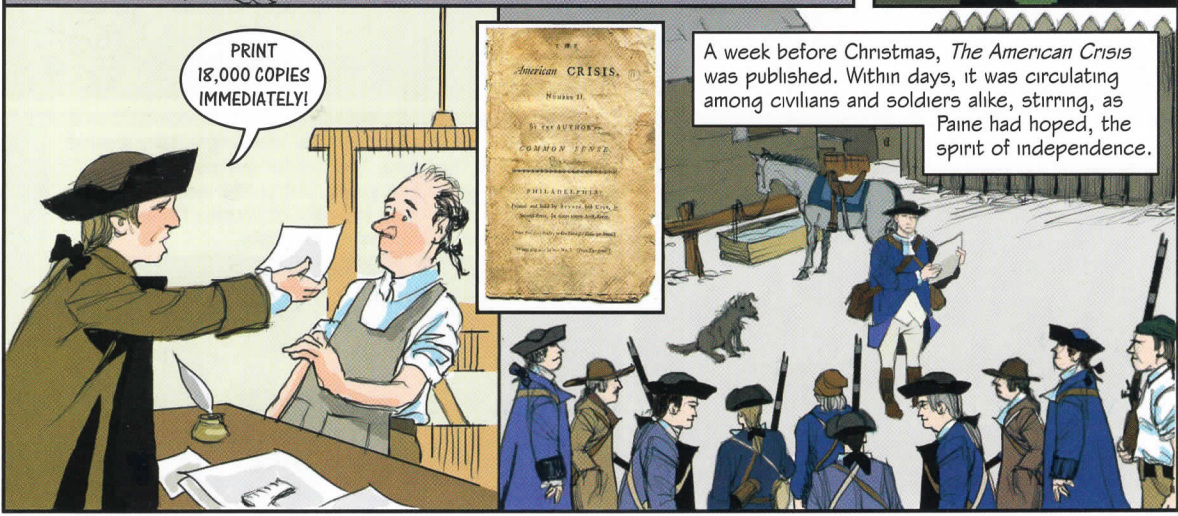
He decided to send a patriotic message to revive the revolutionary cause.

Paine walked the 35 miles to Philadelphia to finish his manuscript and find a printer.

PRINT 18,000 COPIES IMMEDIATELY!



A week before Christmas, *The American Crisis* was published. Within days, it was circulating among civilians and soldiers alike, stirring, as Paine had hoped, the spirit of independence.



Washington seized the moment to plot a sneak attack on German Hessian troops camped across the river at Trenton, New Jersey. Before his 2,400 troops set off, their officers read them *The Crisis*.

"These are the times that try men's souls . . ."



Then, in the dead of night, Washington moved his army across the river.

By 4 a.m., all 2,400 men had crossed the Delaware and landed in New Jersey.



They trudged toward Trenton . . .

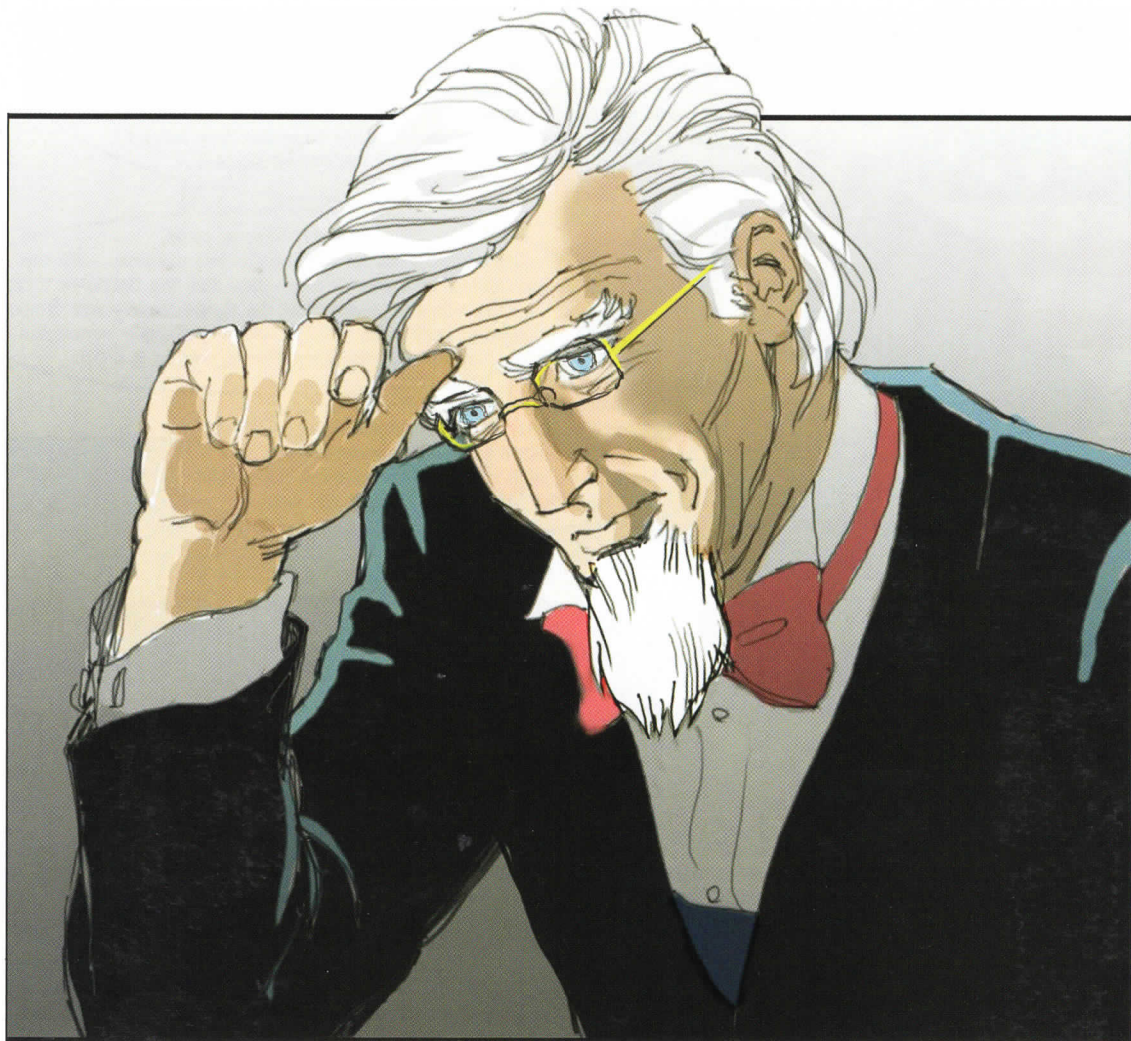
PRESS ON,
PRESS ON!



. . . and caught the Hessians totally by surprise. Washington's triumph was complete.

A few days later, he won another startling victory against the British at Princeton. The war for independence would last another four years. But in this week, General Washington's army--with the help of Thomas Paine--won the confidence of the American people.





EXCERPTS FROM *THE CRISIS*

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."

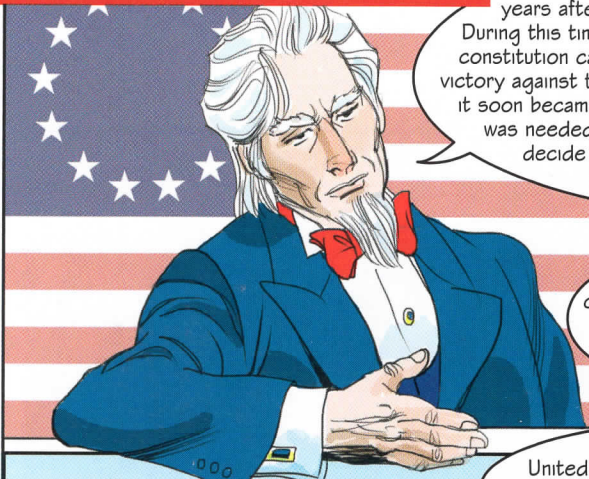
"Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered; yet we have this consolation with us, that the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph. What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: it is dearness only that gives everything its value."

The Constitution

The American Revolution lasted seven long years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. During this time the Continental Congress united the states under a constitution called the Articles of Confederation. After the American victory against the British, the Articles remained the law of the land. Yet it soon became apparent that a stronger, more cohesive government was needed. Once again, delegates gathered in Philadelphia to decide the future of the country. Together they forged the Constitution of the United States.

Against enormous odds, George Washington and the Continental army--with the crucial help of their French allies--had won the Battle of Yorktown in 1781, signaling the end of the Revolutionary War. Some fighting continued until the war was officially concluded with the Paris Peace Treaty, signed in 1783.

Great Britain recognized the United States as an independent nation and fixed its borders at the Atlantic Ocean in the east and the Mississippi River in the west.



Yorktown, Virginia, 1781.



After the British surrendered, some Continental army officers wanted to make Washington king of America.

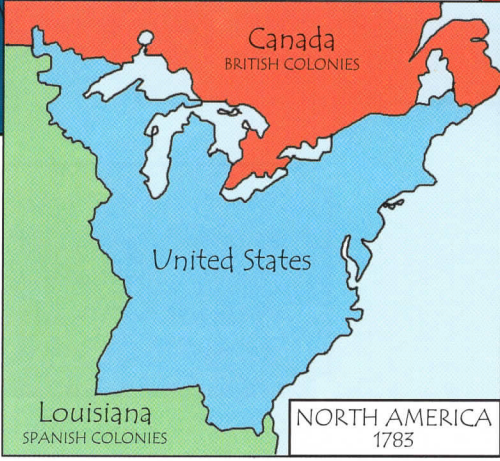


I FOUGHT FOR A REPUBLIC, NOT A MONARCHY!

IF HE RESIGNS, WASHINGTON WILL BE THE GREATEST MAN IN THE WORLD.



Instead, Washington ignored them and resigned from the army, retiring to his estate in Virginia. King George was amazed that he would voluntarily give up power.



Washington had a vision of the "Citizens of America" as the sole "Lords and Proprietors" of a "vast Tract of Continent" and "possessed of absolute freedom and Independency."