CONNECTICUT IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

BY

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FOREWORD

Generations of Connecticut historians have given attention to the era of the American Revolution, and most of their interpretations have followed the views of a member of the Revolutionary generation who looked on the yeomen of Connecticut as "Instrument/s/ in the Hands of god" for destroying tyrants.[1] Traditionally, the period between 1765 and 1775 has been considered as "a struggle of a liberty-loving people against the tyranny that sought to dictate and govern them without regard to their will or consent."[2] And without exception, these patriotic state historians have treated the war years, 1775-1783, as a "war for independence." They have written of it in terms of the exploits of Israel Putnam, the heroism of Nathan Hale, the role of brave Connecticut militiamen in the engagements of the Revolution. Their accounts have been used to excuse any local shortcomings too glaring to be glossed over completely.

Only in the twentieth century have historians adopted a more realistic approach. In 1920, Edith Anna Bailey examined the motives of colonial leaders and demonstrated clearly that Connecticut's radical position resulted in large part from British opposition to her efforts at expansion. In his Jared Ingersoll, Lawrence Henry Gipson showed that a very considerable segment of the contemporary population did not feel

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1. Ebenezer Francis to Joshua Huntington, 27 June 1776, Correspondence of the Brothers Joshua and Jedediah Huntington During the Period of the American Revolution. (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, XXII, Hartford, 1923), 38.

2. Elias Benjamin Sanford, A History of Connecticut (Hartford, 1887), 173.

that "tyranny" was the exclusive monopoly of the British--the techniques and motives of the patriots in opposing the crown were hardly above reproach. More recently, Oscar Zeichner has carried on this revisionist tradition in his analysis of the Revolutionary movement. Zeichner focuses attention on sectional cleavages, personal animosities, religious splits, and divergent views over proper economic policy--all of which filled the late colonial period with "controversy" and crystallized the groups which took opposing sides as the imperial-colonial crises developed.

The resistance movement before 1776, then, was far more complex than Connecticut historians traditionally viewed it, just as were the years after 1776. This study will examine Connecticut in the American Revolution in these terms. It will be shown that political differences continued as the voters lined up in opposing camps over the issues of state and national policy and the appropriate powers to be granted to the central government. Far more than a mere "war for independence," the Revolutionary period was a time of accelerated economic, social, and political changes which had begun to transform the old patterns of colonial life by the 1750's. During the American Revolution, the state acquired an aristocracy of wealth for the first time. Also, Connecticut freemen became increasingly independent of the clerical influence which traditionally dominated all aspects of life, and more and more the voters shed their inhibitions about turning their political superiors out of office. At the same time, the isolation of the colony broke down almost completely in response to interstate and international contacts

stimulated by the war. At the close of the American Revolution, Connecticut was far along in the process of becoming the democratic, industrial state of the nineteenth century.

CHAPTER I

THE COLONIAL GOVERNMENT: STRUCTURE AND OPERATION

By the end of the colonial period, there had evolved in Connecticut a complex political system by which the virtually independent colony regulated her internal affairs. This government operated on various levels—that of the colony, the county, the town, and the very important ecclesiastical society, a subdivision of the town. Both the structure and operation of this government were vitally important in determining the way Connecticut handled the flood of new problems encountered during the war for independence. And, in turn, the experiences of the Revolutionary period significantly affected the political system which had come into being during the colonial era.

Connecticut's colonial government functioned nominally under the rather simple provisions of the royal charter of 1662.[1] Though looked upon as a bulwark of defense against encroachments by the home government, this charter was never regarded as a fundamental law. At all times the General Assembly felt free to alter its terms by simple legislation. In addition to this charter, the colony's constitution consisted of the Fundamental Orders, the compact formed by the settlers of the Connecticut River towns in 1639; of legislative enactments; and, finally, of the customs and precedents which determined in large measure how governmental machinery actually functioned.[2]

By the terms of the royal charter, Connecticut was a corporate colony. Corporation business was conducted by the "governor and company" of the

colony and by the "freemen" (essentially, the stockholders), who had a voice in managing company business. "Freemen" were those "made free" of the corporation--that is, those to whom the company had granted the franchise. They alone were entitled to vote for and become officers of the central government. By the time of the Revolution, the government of the colony (strictly speaking, the business of the corporation) was managed by the General Assembly, a legislature consisting of the governor, assistants, and town deputies.[3] Early in the century, the corporation had granted the towns the right of creating new freemen. These enfranchised colonists who might participate in the business of the central government were a group distinct from those qualified only to take part in managing local concerns in town and society meetings.

This central government had a very limited number of permanent personnel, and except during the semi-annual legislative sessions, there were few tangible evidences of its existence. The legislature met alternately in the statehouses of dual capitals, Hartford and New Haven--a carry-over from the days when each was the capital of a separate colony. The governor carried on day-to-day business in the absence of the legislature, but in fact such business was very limited, save during colonial wars. The government had few expenses and paid small salaries.

The legislative branch of government was preeminent, with the judiciary and executive subordinate, rather than coordinate units.[4] The chief executive officer, the governor, was part of the legislative branch and acted as "head of the Assembly," not as a separate unit of government.[5] Elected annually, the governor sat also as presiding officer of the upper house and voted in it whenever there was a tie. Though he might call special Assembly sessions and presented an opening address annually, the gover-

nor could not prorogue the legislature or veto measures. Although commander of the militia, the chief magistrate held almost no patronage power, save in appointing county sheriffs in conjunction with the upper house. However, a mere cataloging of the governor's prerogatives does not tell the entire story. As one of the permanent fixtures of a government with no extensive bureaucracy, the chief executive served as permanent communicating medium with the home government and other colonies.[6] Despite annual elections, governors tended to remain in office for life or good behavior. As representatives of the old, respected families of the large towns, they commanded great personal influence, especially if, as in the case of Jonathan Trumbull, they were men of marked ability.

The governor was usually succeeded in office by the deputy governor, also annually elected. The presiding officer of the upper house in the governor's absence, he acted as lieutenant general of the militia,[7] and by invariable custom, as chief justice of the superior court. The upper house of the legislature served also as the advisory council to the governor. But the upper house, or council, in its executive capacity, had almost ceased to be of importance as an adjunct of government by the time of the Revolution.[8]

The Connecticut legislature, the General Assembly or General Court, had by the eighteenth century divided itself into two houses,[9] each with a veto on the actions of the other—the upper house, or council, and the lower house, or house of representatives. The legislature[10] convened in two regular annual sessions—Hartford, the second Thursday in May and New Haven the second Thursday in October.

In addition to the governor and deputy governor (who attended in an ex-officio capacity when the governor was present),[11] the upper house con-

sisted of twelve assistants or councilors nominated and elected at large annually. The council functioned in complete secrecy, its doors opened only for hearing petitions.[12] The assistants traditionally filled the bench of the superior court. Representing the old families of the coastal and river towns, the council was generally more conservative than the house of representatives.[13] With its quorum of only six assistants, the council might block all legislation and appointments.[14] Much conflict developed between the two houses, especially over the right claimed by the council of voting separately and so wielding a veto power over all measures.[15] These difficulties were ironed out in joint legislative committees.

Every incorporated town of the colony was extended the "liberty" of sending two deputies to the lower house, each of them selected semi-annually in local meetings of the freemen residing in the town.[16] Thus, by the time of the Revolution, the lower house had a potential membership of over 140 deputies, though sometimes towns selected only one, or only one of the two attended. Representatives' salaries, like those of the assistants, were paid by the central treasury. The lower house, which elected its own speaker and clerk, enjoyed the customary parliamentary privileges assumed by colonial assemblies, including that of determining the qualifications of its members. House debates, like those of the council, were closed to the public and never published. Since the government had no administrative commissions or permanent committees, much business was carried on by temporary committees, which often reported to subsequent sessions. Committees might investigate charges of irregularities by some officers of the government, settle religious squabbles, determine the best site for a meeting house, audit accounts, or count ballots for colony elections.

The General Assembly exercised almost unlimited power over civil, religious, judicial, and military affairs of the colony.[17] By statute, it had assumed the right to "Deal and Act in any ... Matter that concerns the good of this Colony: Except the Election of Governor, Deputy-Governor, Assistants, Treasurer and Secretary; which shall be done by the Free-men..." Civil rights of freemen and nonfreemen alike existed only in statutes, save for the charter provision guaranteeing them the rights of Englishmen.[18] Laws were made and repealed, subject only to the vague threat of a royal disallowance, and no subject was considered too broad or too trivial to serve as a proper subject for legislation. Minute regulations were passed to control moral and economic concerns, while specific legislation dealt with such matters as the location of bridges and highways. The Assembly also defined the powers of the executive and of the judiciary, whose personnel it appointed annually. The legislature also controlled the militia and annually appointed the officers above the rank of captain. It made all election and suffrage rules and by joint legislative committee counted ballots for colony elections. The supreme authority in all religious matters, the General Assembly defined the relationship between the Congregational church and the state, and determined the status of dissenters.

The Assembly also delegated all those powers which were exercised by the various units of local government; and it incorporated all towns and ecclesiastical societies, established county governments, and carefully defined the scope of their activities. The lawmakers did not necessarily admit new towns on an equal footing with older ones, as in the case of requiring new towns to pay the salary of one of their deputies.[19] The central government could and often did call to account any officer in the colony, down to the incumbents of minor town and society posts.[20] The Assembly

could assign local officers duties to be performed for the central government,[21] and it could fine or remove them from office at will.[22] In case of disputed local elections, the legislature might determine who should serve.[23] The central government also prescribed fees and oaths for all officeholders in the colony.[24]

The principle of dividing powers among distinct branches of government was unknown. Besides wielding legislative and executive authority, the General Assembly was the supreme court of the colony, and could set aside decisions of any court in the colony. In addition to exercising certain equity jurisdiction, the legislators could grant on any grounds "satisfying to them" pardons and reversals of lower court decisions,"anything in any Law contained in any wise to the contrary notwithstanding"[25] Hence, endless streams of petitions alleging errors in the judgment and proceedings of lower courts occupied much of the lawmakers' time. In its capacity of annually appointing all lower court personnel and militia officers, the Assembly exercised extensive patronage power. This provided a further control over local activities, since legislators could and did distribute posts as rewards for political services, or withheld them to force men into line.[26]

The only real checks on the Assembly, then, lay in the possibility of British intervention, in frequent elections, in the good sense of the legislators, and in custom. But the General Assembly, despite its potentially despotic powers, was really very close to the people, and included many individuals of very high calibre. The lawmakers devoted a large part of each session to weighing the merits of petitions from towns, societies, and individuals who sought their sanction for a great variety of matters; holding lotteries for building bridges, churches, and wharves;

relocating highways and meeting houses; splitting up a church because of dissatisfaction with the minister's theology; selling a minor orphan's real estate to meet maintenance expenses; forgiving a defaulted bond; requesting tax rebates for individuals struck by misfortune or for struggling new towns and parishes.

In addition to the legislators, the government's limited personnel consisted also of the annually-elected secretary and treasurer. The former recorded laws and orders, issued commissions, received petitions, and acted as clerk of the upper house. The treasurer maintained colonial accounts and issued warrants to local officials for the collection of taxes levied by the General Assembly.[27]

All taxes in the colony, whether collected on the warrant of the treasurer, or authorized by county courts or by town and society meetings, were levied on the basis of the "general list" of polls and taxable property for that year.[28] Local "listers" annually notified their townsmen to submit a statement of their taxable property.[29] Each town's tabulation was then submitted to the General Assembly, which made up the grand list for the colony. All taxes took the form of a rate made on the list for the entire colony, or that part covering a town, county, or society, as the case might be. For example, a tax of one pence on the pound might be levied. Each person then paid that sum for every pound of taxable property he had listed. All taxes, including those for the central government, were collected by officials elected on the local level.

Only certain kinds of property were taxable in Connecticut. At the time of the war for independence, the "poll" of each male between sixteen and seventy (with certain exceptions, including officers of the colony government, ministers, and the disabled) was uniformly listed at eighteen

pounds, no matter what his financial resources might be. In this essentially agrarian society, land was the most important item taxed. Such property was listed, not according to its potential rental value or income from produce, but at fixed schedules of rates established by the Assembly.[30] Each acre of meadow land in Hartford County, for instance was listed at fifteen shillings. Only certain other categories of property were listed. Livestock and dwellings[31] were all carried at fixed rates. For example, the value of each four-year old ox was set at four pounds. Personal property also included income or "faculty" taxes, added to lighten the burden of the propertied classes. These taxes were levied on lawyers, merchants, artisans, and money lenders, according to their estimated "faculty" (that is, ability) or in proportion to their incomes or profits.[32] In 1771, certain luxury vehicles were added to this list of taxable property.[33]

Connecticut's judicial system consisted of a hierarchy of lower courts to which the General Assembly, the court of last resort, delegated authority. The superior court, a circuit court rotating among counties, was made up of a chief justice and four judges appointed annually by the Assembly, and exercising original and appellate jurisdiction in civil and criminal cases.[34] This court was practically equivalent to the upper house, since the chief justice was invariably the deputy governor and the other four judges were almost always selected from among the assistants.

The counties of Connecticut—consisting of New Haven, Hartford, New London, Windham, Fairfield, and Litchfield at the time of the Revolution—were of primary importance as areas for organizing the judicial system. In addition, the organs of county government were given administrative

functions on the local level. These counties, created after the original towns were in existence, were amalgamations of towns, rather than the towns being subdivisions of the counties. The Connecticut counties, then, were of much less importance than those of the Southern and Middle colonies. But nevertheless they played a role in local government which has been entirely overlooked by writers who emphasize the importance of the towns only.[35]

The officers of all lower courts were appointed by the Assembly for annual terms. The first of these, the county courts, each functioning under a judge and four justices of the quorum, met semi-annually. Exercising original jurisdiction over land-title disputes, county courts also held original and appellate jurisdiction in civil, criminal, and equity cases. The administrative functions of the justices, who appointed their own clerk and the county treasurer,[36] included regulation of certain intertown concerns, including highways and bridges.[37] In addition, they managed county correction houses;licensed and regulated tanners, attorneys, peddlers, and taverns; and helped locate meeting houses.[38] To supplement fee and fine revenue, they levied county taxes. This was done with the advice of the grandjurymen of the various towns, the only town officers with any voice in county affairs.[39]

Each county was divided into several probate districts, each with one judge, who chose his own clerk. The judge's authority was limited, because the sale of a deceased person's real estate required the consent of the General Assembly.[40]

At the lowest level in this judicial hierarchy were the many justices of the peace—293 in 1773 and 309 in 1774. Although the justices were given commissions granting county-wide jurisdiction, an effort was apparently made to secure at least one for each town. One of the town's deputies

was very often appointed a justice. The governor, deputy governor, and assistants were all justices with colony-wide jurisdiction. The justices of the peace heard minor civil and criminal cases not involving land. Appeals from their decisions might be taken to the county courts. Most of their business concerned drunkenness, improper Sabbath behavior, assault and battery,and the inevitable suits for small debt, in which the people of Connecticut were so habitually involved.[41]

These justices of the peace and the assistants, labelled collectively and individually as "the authority" or "the civil authority" of a town or of a county, also exercised important administrative functions. This delegation of power to "the authority" proved useful in maintaining the control of the central government on the local level.[42] The powers of "the authority" in a town were superior even to those of the selectmen, the most influential officers elected by the towns. For example, "the authority" of a town acted with the selectmen in admitting freemen, qualifying persons to become admitted inhabitants, and inspecting local schools.[43] In case none of "the authority" was available, town officers might undertake certain functions on their own initiative. But if present, "the authority" had to give its approval.[44] At other times, town officers were directed to consult with a member of the authority in the nearest town. These administrative officers performed a wide range of duties, such as granting warrants for town and society tax collectors.[45] On the county level, "the authority" authorized the sheriff to call out the militia, licensed liquor retailers, and assessed taxes for county jails and workhouses.[46] At times,"the authority", always men of much prestige and experience, were consulted by town officers on their own initiative when an important matter was to be considered.[47]

Another officer on the county level was the sheriff,an appointee of

the governor and council at pleasure. Charged with preserving the peace and maintaining the jail, the sheriff selected his own deputies.[48] Although a less important officer than in the Southern and Middle colonies, he had much prestige and influence since he was always a representative of prominent local families.[49] Each county also had a king's attorney, an appointee of the county court, who prosecuted in behalf of the crown.[50]

The most important unit of government on the local level was the town (or township), an incorporated geographical area serving as the unit of representation in the Assembly and originally the basic ecclesiastical unit. Most authorities have implicitly or explicitly treated the Connecticut town as a "miniature republic," sovereign within its own bounds and functioning much as it pleased under its own public servants.[51] An old misinterpretation of the original relationship of the towns to the central government under the Fundamental Orders still colors modern accounts. The colonial system is seen as a federal one, in which towns were the residual legatees of all power, and the central government exercised only authority delegated by these sovereign towns.[52] This interpretation misconstrues the original nature of the union established by the Fundamental Orders and continued under the royal charter--a union which left the towns free to exercise only those powers delegated them by the central government.[53] True enough, towns were free from active interference by the General Assembly much of the time. But at all times, they followed the detailed policies laid down by the legislature. The Assembly could and did interfere directly in town affairs, as in the case of disputed town elections, and no one ever questioned its authority to do so. Town officers, such as selectmen

and constables, performed duties for the central government, as well as for their immediate constituents. And through the channel of county government, the legislature exercised authority over the towns so extensive as to be completely inconsistent with any theory attributing sovereign powers to these local units of government.

An important feature of Connecticut's political system was the large amount of organized activity on the local level. The most important of these local meetings were the town and freeman's meetings, each distinct from the other, but ordinarily confused hopelessly by modern writers.[54] The most important of these both in extent of participation and range of authority, was the town meeting. Rules for participation were carefully stipulated by the legislature.[55] First of all, the male desiring a voice in town affairs had to be a "lawful inhabitant" of his town. To qualify as a bona fide inhabitant, he had to be "of an honest Conversation" and accepted by a majority of the town meeting or by the local "authority" and selectmen. ("Transients" and "strangers" were warned out of town, to safeguard against their becoming local charges in case of poverty.)[56] If he qualified as a lawful inhabitant, were twenty-one years of age, and a "householder" as well, a man might take part in town meeting, provided he owned a freehold estate of fifty shillings or personal property worth forty pounds. This freehold qualification was higher than that for freemanship, but no freeman might be excluded from town meeting. These property qualifications were determined by the value assigned a person's land and personal property. The fixed scale of values set up by the legislature was thus the criterion. Hence only those categories of personal property subject to taxation, including livestock, carriages, and income from trades and professions might be used. The eighteen-pound poll listing of almost all adult

males could not be used for determining voting eligibility.

The qualified inhabitants assembled in the meeting house or town house for the annual December meeting, and at such other times as they desired. After the opening prayer and the selection of a moderator, they decided on measures concerning the town welfare.[57] Methods for voting were not specified. Sometimes choices were indicated by rising or by a show of hands. At times, important officers were selected by ballot.[58] One of the most important annual tasks was selecting officers to perform duties in these communities where few matters were considered of so private a nature as to be outside the scrutiny of public servants.[59] The most important posts were those of selectmen, town clerks, treasurers, constables, surveyors of highways, tax collectors, grand jurymen, and tithingmen. Lesser public servants included fence viewers, haywards, chimney viewers, gagers and packers of casks, branders of horses, sealers of weights and of measures, key keepers, tobacco packers, leather sealers, excise collectors, and "other ordinary town officers." A virtual network of petty officialdom existed in these towns. Enfield filled the following number of posts: 1749, 31; 1759, 42; 1770, 48; 1775, 49.[60] But often one person filled more than one office.

A maximum of seven selectmen was elected. The most important town officers, they acted as town agents, and as such could sue and be sued. They also performed duties for the central government, such as admitting freemen, and might be called before the Assembly to answer for local irregularities. They might pay out town funds, levy assessments, and carried out special duties assigned in town meeting.[61] Exercising the same power in the town as the sheriff in the county, the constables enforced local laws. As a link between town and colony, the constable functioned

at freeman elections and sometimes collected the colony taxes.[62] As an administrative agent of the legislature, he also checked the weights and measures maintained by county treasurers and town selectmen.[63] The Connecticut town clerk, in addition to keeping records of town business and vital statistics, registered all local real estate transactions. If none of "the authority" resided in town, the clerk administered oaths to all town officers.[64] The local treasurer received and paid out funds on warrants from the town meeting or the selectmen. Into his till went town taxes and all fines and forfeitures received from "the authority."[65]

The other important meeting held on the town level, the semi-annual assemblies of the local freemen, convened each September and April to nominate and elect freemen of the colony to office in the central government. Again, qualifications for participation were carefully stipulated.[66] To become "free of the corporation," that is, enfranchised, the male was to be an inhabitant of the colony (in other words, a legal resident of his particular town).[67] He was to receive certification from a majority of his selectmen that he was of legal age, that he met the moral qualification of "a quiet and peaceable Behaviour, and Civil Conversation," and that he met certain property qualifications: a freehold estate valued at forty shillings or personal property worth forty pounds. Just as for town meeting, values given in that year's tax list were the criterion, and hence only those categories of personal property taxed might be used. No specific stipulation excluded the poll tax listing from consideration, but apparently this was understood.[68] After certification, the candidate took the freeman's oath in open freeman's meeting, under the auspices of an assistant or justice of the peace, whereupon his name was enrolled by the

town clerk. The consent of the other freemen was not required. Should any freeman "walk Scandalously, or commit any Scandalous Offence," he might be disfranchised by the superior court. But no provision was made for revoking the franchise if an individual's property later fell below the minimum level. Once he met the property qualification and had taken the oath, the individual was apparently a freeman for life, unless guilty of misconduct.

The fall freeman's meeting,[69] convened after warning by the constable each September (the second Tuesday in some counties and the third in others), was customarily opened with prayer. Then the town's representatives for the October legislature were elected. Next, each freeman listed on a piece of paper the names of twenty freemen from any town in the colony as nominees for election to the most important colony offices the following May. The town's nominations, tabulated by an assistant, justice of the peace, or constable, were sealed and returned by a deputy to the October General Assembly. The legislature then arranged the twenty highest nominees into a printed list which it distributed to the towns.

At the spring freeman's meeting, held the Monday after the first Tuesday in April, deputies were chosen for the May Assembly. Then the official slate of twenty nominees was read. Each freeman, in turn, gave the constable his ballot for the man he wished for governor, then for deputy governor. Ballots were sealed and labelled in turn. Voters were not restricted to selecting these two chief officers from the list of twenty,[70] but invariably they did so, usually from the top of the list. Then balloting for assistants began. The names on the list were read, one by one, in the order officially established by the outgoing legislature. Each freeman cast his allowance of twelve ballots as the names of those he preferred for assistants were called out. The ballots cast for each nominee were

sealed by the constable before the next name was voted on. Then the elector selected his choice for secretary and for treasurer from among any freemen in the colony. The packets of sealed and still untabulated ballots were returned to Hartford by a constable or deputy. In May, a joint committee of the General Assembly tallied the ballots and announced the names of the sixteen men elected. In case the governor, deputy governor, secretary or treasurer died in office, the legislature filled the vacancies.[71]

A clear distinction was made between the town and freeman's meetings, the latter being given a certain religious connotation. Guilford, for example, continued to convene freeman's meetings in the meeting house long after a special town house was built for town meetings.[72] But leadership in both local assemblies was clearly the same. Officials prominent in town meetings, such as selectmen and town clerks, were prominent in colony affairs, and were elected as deputies and assistants.[73] With political control in the same hands, it is understandable that the distinction between the two assemblies became a bit blurred at times. For example, Enfield once selected her deputy in town meeting.[74] Town meetings sometimes urged further privileges for the freemen, such as authorization to vote for delegates to the Continental Congress. At times, town meetings advocated that the Assembly publish its votes and debates.[75] The necessity of this action is readily understandable, for absolutely no provision was made for calling special freeman's meetings as public emergencies arose. Town meetings, often convened the same day as freeman's meetings, assumed the function of drafting instructions for town deputies, in regular or special sessions. Town meetings seem to have drawn up these instructions far more often than did freeman meetings.[76] In times of emergency, such as before and during the

war for independence, the assumption of this prerogative by the town meeting proved very useful.

Connecticut's rather complex system of local government was made still further involved by the role played by a subdivision of the town—the ecclesiastical society or parish. Like the county, this political unit has been entirely ignored in discussions of the governmental structure.[77] The terms "society" or "parish" were used interchangeably to describe what was first of all the geographical area served by one Congregational church. Since most towns were formed around a church in the beginning, township and parish were one and the same geographical area. Their governments were also identical: society and town business was transacted in the same meeting. But as towns expanded and became too large to be served by one church, they broke up into two or more societies—a trend accelerated by the breakdown of religious homogeneity with the Great Awakening. As towns subdivided into parishes, town and society meetings became distinct assemblies. By the time of the Revolution, most Connecticut towns consisted of more than one society.[78]

Parish business was conducted at corporation meetings which only qualified males living within the society might attend. To qualify, the resident was to be of legal age, in full communion with the church, and hold a fifty-shilling freehold estate in that town or society, or forty pounds of taxable personal property, the same as for town meeting.[79] Furthermore, those dissenters from the established church who were by law exempted from paying taxes for support of the Congregational faith were barred.[80]

Parish meetings were conducted like those of the towns. Voters chose a moderator, clerk, treasurer, and a committee of three or more to

conduct society business.[81] Parish activities falling within the jurisdiction of these voters and their agents included levying taxes; managing parish property; hiring and dismissing the minister and determining his salary; keeping records; and, usually, maintaining schools, through school committees. Each society, or else the town if the two were coterminous units, was required to keep at least one school. Large towns and societies were free to split up into smaller school districts.[82]

In many respects, the society was the basic unit of local government in Connecticut.[83] The township might well be labelled a mere collection of separate parishes. People of the colonial period tended to think of themselves first of all as residents of a particular society—Judea, Bethlehem, Ridgebury, Cheshire, or Farmingbury—and only secondarily as inhabitants of a town.[84] The stereotyped picture of the New England town calls to mind a small, close-knit community with its own meeting house, tavern, and village green. But when applied to Connecticut in the late colonial period, at least, this traditional picture is misleading. As a matter of fact, it describes not the town, but rather the parish. The parish was the close-knit, religious, social, and economic unit. The town, a larger political unit useful for purposes of administration and as a basis for representation in the legislature, was usually too extensive in area to be really homogeneous, especially in the older parts of the colony.

The status of the town as an amalgamation of parishes is illustrated in many records of colonial town meetings. These local assemblies often resembled conventions of representatives from different parishes at which society rivalries were threshed out.[85] To prevent one parish from gaining undue influence because of proximity to the meeting place, meetings

were rotated among churches of different societies.[86] The parishes would nominate their alloted quota of town officers at society meetings and present them in town meeting.[87] Each society, in fact, was required to have one or more tithingmen elected at town meeting.[88] Freeman's meetings also recognized these subdivisions of the town, and one town, at least, consistently alloted a deputy to each society for over a century.[89] Selectmen and tax collectors were apportioned among the parishes by town meetings. Or, as in the case of New Haven, with its many parishes, the lone tax collector published a schedule specifying when he would set up shop at the tavern located in each society to receive payments.[90] Important town committees, for example those which debated the proposed Articles of Confederation, consisted of representatives from each society.[91]

Much of Connecticut's local politics, inevitably concerned with religious affairs, involved squabbles between parishes.[92] Self-conscious societies tried to break off as separate towns, while older and larger societies consistently opposed such moves which decreased local revenues. Years sometimes passed before a society became independent. Sometimes local political squabbles involved the commercially-minded residents of one parish and conservative farmers of outlying societies, as in New London, Hartford, and New Haven.[93] Local intrigues often concerned groups of New Light Congregationalists whose endeavors to set up their own societies within the same town were thwarted. Such a group in Enfield became strong enough to block the settlement of any town minister. Finally a compromise was arranged, whereby the Old Lights promised not to oppose the Separatist petition for parish incorporation, in return for New Light permission to hire an orthodox minister.[94]

The other important group activity on the local level was that of

the train band, or local militia company. Very often this basic unit of the colonial military organization was set up on a society level, or else a band was organized for the entire town. All males between sixteen and fifty with certain important exemptions (including colony officials and those in vital occupations) were liable for service. Local soldiers elected their own officers, up through the captains.[95] Conducted on a local green, training days were gala social events, ending with a dinner or liberal distribution of liquid refreshments at the expense of successful candidates.[96] This local group was most extensive in terms of participants, since no religious or property qualifications cut down its membership. Local train bands, under their popular officers, many of them adventurous characters, came to exercise a large amount of extra-legal authority during the Revolutionary crisis, especially in eastern Connecticut.[97]

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A bare outline of the structure of Connecticut's colonial government presents only a part of the story. Equally important for an understanding of the colony's government are the political practices and attitudes of her voters which in large measure determined the way in which the system operated.

On the surface, Connecticut's government appeared unusually responsive and democratic. Town officers were elected by town meetings, ministers by societies, militia officers by privates, state authorities by freemen. The judiciary was re-appointed annually. But behind these outward

forms, one discovers a system essentially aristocratic and paternalistic, with much political power concentrated in the hands of a few. These characteristics of the political system are best illustrated by two outstanding features of the government on both the local and central levels: long tenure of office and multiple office holding.

Annual elections tended to become routine affairs, with voters performing their expected function of returning the incumbents to office.[98] On the colony level, this practice resulted in a magistracy of unusually long experience and service. According to Labaree's analysis[99] of the list of 111 men who served as assistants, deputy governors, and governors between 1662 and 1776, the average individual was elected and re-elected fourteen times, The record was held by Roger Wolcott: twenty-six terms as assistant, nine as deputy governor and three as governor. Two men were elected for thirty-six consecutive terms. Thirty-one per cent served twenty years or more. As individuals died or retired, those on the bottom of the list of twenty nominees moved up and new names were added. With good health and long life, a man might aspire to advance from twentieth to twelfth place and thus become an assistant. Then, with continued good fortune, he might become senior assistant, thus standing in line for the deputy-governorship, and then the governor's chair itself. Once elected chief magistrate, a man usually held the post for life—only two eighteenth-century governors were ever turned out of office. Labaree's study also shows that ten prominent family names account for forty per cent of the assistants and twenty-five for two-thirds of all the top posts. These officials were representatives of the old, inter-married, aristocratic families from the larger towns, including the Huntingtons, Pitkins, Wolcotts, Talcotts, Burrs, Golds, Hamlins, and Laws.

On all levels, political posts became to all intents and purposes lifetime, even hereditary, jobs. To consider the office of colonial secretary as elective would require imagination. Regarded as the personal property of the Wyllys family, its incumbents from 1712 to 1810 were Hezekiah Wyllys, his son, and finally his grandson.[100] The Huntington family of Norwich occupied the office of town clerk for sixteen generations (152 years) with the exception of one year.[101] Probably a near record for one man's filling a post was that of William Hillhouse, New London's deputy for 116 consecutive sessions, or fifty-eight years.[102] The New London ecclesiastical society returned the same clerk to office for thirty years.[103] Ministers were neither hurriedly settled nor hastily dismissed. Once called to a parish, a parson expected to spend his lifetime there, unless irreconcilable theological difficulties arose. Middletown's first four ministers supplied the congregation for nearly 150 years.[104] After the first few years, towns sometimes did not bother to formally reelect incumbents. They continued to hold office by common consent until retirement or death.[105]

The other outstanding characteristic of Connecticut politics, multiple office holding, is best illustrated by the operation of the judicial system. In 1750, a total of fourteen judicial posts was distributed to the deputy governor and twelve assistants.[106] The deputy governor automatically became chief justice of the superior court and four councilors filled the other places on the bench. Of these four, one also became a county court judge and another a probate judge. Of the other eight assistants, one was given a county court post, one a probate commission, and two others both county and probate judgeships. In their capacity as legislators, all these men sat in the General Assembly of the colony and helped draft the laws they were supposed to interpret. Furthermore, all were

automatically justices of the peace for the entire colony. Inevitably, they often heard the same cases more than one time.

The Assembly had a definite policy of dispensing important local offices, particularly justiceships of the peace, among town deputies. Of the 102 representatives present in May, 1752, fifty-three (or fifty-two per cent) received peace commissions. Of these fifty-three, six also became probate judges and one a county court judge as well. In addition, forty-seven military commissions were handed out. A grant total of 107 appointments was alloted the 102 representatives. Only twenty-eight received no additional posts.[107] Other county offices, whether filled by the Assembly, governor and council, or by the organs of county government themselves, went to incumbents of posts in the central government or to their relatives, especially those with the best family connections.[108]

A case study of Colonel Edward Collins of Enfield, a typical Connecticut political figure, illustrates the conditions which prevailed in every town in the land. Son of the local minister, Collins was deacon of his church and united by blood and marriage to the most important local families. After serving his apprentice as hog reeve, constable, and watcher of boys in the meeting house on the Sabbath, he went on to fill many town and county offices. Collins served as Enfield's deputy for thirty-six sessions; selectman twenty-seven years; moderator fourteen times; lister once; town clerk thirty-six years; and on special committees, including the committee of correspondence, twenty times. The General Assembly appointed him justice of the peace from 1772 to 1789.[109] It was the norm for individuals to hold simultaneously military, society, town, county, and colony offices.[110]

These multiple offices were not handed out lightly however. Nor did an individual reach consequential colony posts without a long politi-

cal apprenticeship, beginning on the local level. Town offices were rated according to importance. If one proved worthy in filling minor posts, such as surveyor of highways, he might anticipate promotion to selectman or deputy, and still later to a minor judicial or even higher colony position. The rise of prominent colony magistrates, characterized by a slow, measured pace at which one's capabilities and religious orthodoxy might be watched at every step, usually began in this fashion. An account of the political career of Roger Wolcott, given in his funeral elegy, neatly summarizes the process:

> His worth began to appear, and to be acknowledged first, in a more private manner, among his neighbours and townsmen. They improved him in the business of the town, and at length elected him their representative, at the general assembly. Here he acquitted himself so well, that he began to be noticed in a more public manner. He soon had a commission for the peace; after this, was chosen into the council; then appointed judge of the county court; then one of the judges of the superior court; after this, chosen deputy governor, and appointed chief judge of the superior court, and then chosen governor of the colony of Connecticut.[111]

Apprenticeship in town politics was more likely to be the first step in an illustrious career if, like Wolcott, one were born into a prominent family of an important town.[112] Yet men of humble origins and from small towns, like Roger Sherman, could work their way to the top if they showed marked ability.

This aristocratic, paternalistic political system was reinforced by various factors. Despite the relative ease of bettering one's self economically and socially in colonial America, men of the eighteenth century continued to accept definite social rankings as the natural order of things and to pay deference to their superiors[113]—which in Connecticut included the established clergy and members of the much-intermarried, politically experienced families which made up the colonial aristocracy. It was perfectly natural to retain them in office once they proved them-

selves worthy of the posts they were given. Quite naturally, also, the voter tended to cast his ballot in the same way as did prominent men in town. It was quite apparent for whom one stood if town-meeting voting was done by a show of hands and freeman balloting proceeded as names were called out from a list. The clergy of the established church were also interested in maintaining the standing order. The influence of the Congregational church was most pronounced in Connecticut, and the voter often regarded the minister as his political counselor.[114] The clergy also took an official part in election day proceedings, and a prominent minister gave the annual sermon before the new officials.[115] Apparently they also gave unofficial political advice in choosing men to fill offices at the disposal of the Assembly.[116]

Certain features written into the complicated voting system for colony offices were ingeniously devised to promote routine elections and political control by an aristocracy. The nomination system made for difficulty in organizing opposition in a town. It was claimed that electors knew little of the personal qualifications of nominees who might reside anywhere in the colony. They relied on the advice of prominent neighbors.[117] The election process was endlessly time-consuming.[118] Hence freemen voted for candidates near the top of the list that they might leave early, especially if they lived far from the polls. But the most important factor in promoting routine balloting was the fact that the outgoing General Assembly controlled the official arrangement of the twenty names on the slate of nominees. Invariably, the legislature placed current assistants first on the list, regardless of the number of nominations they received.[119] Voting proceeded in the order the names appeared, and the freemen tended to vote for those officially favored by their superiors.[120]

Barring timely deaths or resignations, it might take a newcomer years to move far enough up the list to be elected to the council.

A study has yet to be made of the effect of property qualifications on the size of the electorate and of the extent of the general political participation in the colony. A set of figures for New Haven is often cited: 1) a freeman meeting of 1766 which indicates that about one in four adult males participated; 2) a town meeting of 1761 in which one in four adult males took part.[121] But these figures tell nothing of the potential electorate. Williamson's study of voting in East Guilford in 1800,[122] under essentially the same property qualifications, indicates that a large percentage of adult males was excluded because they could not meet either the freehold or personal property qualifications. Only about sixty-five per cent of the adult males could have met the freehold test and about thirty-nine per cent both the freehold and personal property qualification. Had the personal property qualification been the only one, it would have severely curtailed the potential electorate, since so few categories of personal property were taxed. Not one landless person assessed for taxes could have qualified under the personal property test. Twenty-five per cent of all freeholders could not meet the minimum freehold qualification. Somewhere between ownership of five and ten acres, the freeholder passed from the ranks of the unenfranchised. But although this potential electorate was limited, it was certainly much larger than the figures for New Haven might indicate.

Records show that elections were not well attended.[123] But other factors than property qualifications were at work in producing lethargic public interest, just as is the case in the twentieth century.[124] For one thing, the figures for town-meeting participation in New Haven are probably

not typical, since it was an old, conservative town. A record for one newly-settled inland town shows a much larger participation in town meeting. The town—Norfolk, in Litchfield County—was overwhelmingly agrarian, so the easier freehold qualification could have been used for eligibility. In 1758, when Norfolk contained forty-three families, a total of forty-four "legal voters" attended the first town meeting.[125] Probably many towns followed irregular procedures or were lax in enforcing qualifications.[126] During the war, there were charges of measures being passed in Winchester, another frontier town, by use of illegal voters. Winchester town records indicate that a respected local widow participated in town meetings. Winchester once voted on qualifications for participation in society meeting, despite the fact that the rules were officially stipulated by the legislature.[127]

Indifference was undoubtedly a much more potent factor than property restrictions in producing the limited electorate. Voter apathy was widespread. Persons qualified did not bother to take necessary steps for enrollment as freemen.[128] At the time of New Haven's first city election, 1784, selectmen stated that out of about 600 adult males in the city limits, 343 qualified as freemen. But about one-fourth of those qualified did not take the oath.[129] Even during the bitter campaign of 1767, it was estimated that only about two-thirds of the freemen bothered to cast ballots,[130] and one observor castigated the "Multitudes /who/ will not leave their Plow to have a Gov.r to their Taste."[131] A New London record indicates that the number of freemen and town-meeting voters fluctuated widely with the rise and decline of issues.[132] Convincing proof that a potentially larger electorate existed is shown by the marked rise in town-meeting participation toward the outbreak of the war.[133]

Materials are available for a limited study of political behavior

in one town, Winchester—a tax list for 1783; supplementary lists showing which of the male taxpayers were then enrolled as freemen; and extensive biographical data about local residents.[134] The tax list cannot give definitive information about those qualified to vote since the individual's property was not broken down. But the residents were almost entirely farmers, so would-be voters could have used the freehold rather than the more restrictive personal property qualification. A tabulation shows that of the 148 male taxpayers, fifty, or 33.8 per cent, were freemen in 1783.[135] The wealthier men were much more inclined to take steps to become freemen. But there were many individuals who had not taken the oath, even though they possessed far more property than neighbors who were freemen. Clearly, more than this 33.8 per cent could have voted, had they desired. These records also indicate that in some families, sons took the oath as soon as they came of age. Yet other families, even though they held considerable property and were respected in the town, had no freemen in their ranks. Apparently, then, family custom was a factor influencing political participation.

The unqualified statement that 33.8 per cent of the male taxpayers of Winchester had taken the freeman oath by 1783 is also misleading, for it hides another significant characteristic of the town's political behavior. Winchester was then divided into two societies—the older or first society, called Winchester, and the smaller, called Winsted. The latter was geographically remote from the older society in which town meetings and presumably also freeman's meetings were held. In fact, at that time, the smaller society was agitating for incorporation as a separate town, because of its isolation and the difficulties of travel between the two centers. The records indicate that forty-five, or 41.2 per cent, of the male taxpayers of Winchester society had taken the freeman's oath, while only five,

or 12.8 per cent, in Winsted had done so. The reason for this difference does not lie in the fact that less men in Winsted could meet the property qualifications. Property distribution was relatively equal in the two societies, though a bit higher in Winchester. In the first society, 86.2 per cent of the taxpayers held property rated at from one to sixty pounds, while 84.6 per cent of those in Winsted fell into this category. The answer undoubtedly lies in the obstacles to travel from the smaller to the larger parish. Significantly also, Winchester males were much more active in town meeting than those of Winsted.[136] Of the 109 male taxpayers in the first society, at least thirty-five (or thirty-two per cent) participated in town and/or society meetings. Yet of the thirty-nine male taxpayers for Winsted society, a minimum of six (or fifteen per cent) took part in town meetings, and only one of them actively. It seems clear that for this one town, at least, the size of the electorate was influenced by factors other than the ability to meet the colonial property qualification: specifically, individual interest and initiative, family custom, and proximity to the local political center of gravity.

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The political system by which the people of colonial Connecticut managed their internal affairs, then, included a central government with very limited personnel, but with a very great potential strength. The General Assembly was authorized to control almost every aspect of colonial life, and exercised complete authority over the various political units operating on the local level—the county, the town, and the society. These extensively developed local governments gave a large portion of the population familiarity with politicial initiative and self-management. But on all levels this outwardly responsive system was aristocratic and pater-

nalistic--a fact influenced by mechanical features of the system and by the state of mind of the people. But nevertheless the system provided definite advantages for administering policy during the war for independence. And in turn the experiences Connecticut encountered during the American Revolution were to affect significantly the operation of the political system which came into being during the colonial era.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER I.

1. See text of charter of 1662 in Acts and Laws of His Majesty's English Colony of Connecticut in America [Acts & Laws] (Hartford, 1769), 3-8. This series of Acts and Laws conveniently codifies the session laws then in force.

2. For this interpretation of the "Connecticut constitution," see Oliver Wolcott to Gov. Trumbull, 9 Jan. and 24 Mar. 1781, Trumbull Papers (Massachusetts Historical Society Collections, ser. 7, vol. III), IV, 183-4, 210-11.

3. Acts & Laws, 27-8.

4. See Nelson P. Mead, Connecticut as a Corporate Colony (Lancaster, Pa., 1906), 15.

5. For functions of the governor, see Acts & Laws, 29-30, 155, and the excellent discussion in Richard J. Purcell, Connecticut in Transition, (Washington, 1918), 180-83.

6. See the large collections of governors' correspondence in the Connecticut Historical Society Collections.

7. Acts & Laws, 2, 4, 30, 155, 20.

8. Mead, 25-7.

9. Ibid., 12-13.

10. For information on the legislature, see especially Acts & Laws, 27-8, 5.

11. Purcell, 183-4.

12. Edward A. Kendall, Travels through the Northern Parts of the United States in the Years 1807 and 1808 (3 vols., New York, 1809), I, 171.

13. For example, the council blocked the formation of new counties favored by the lower house. See Elizabeth Hubbell Schenck, The History of Fairfield County, Connecticut... (2 vols., New York, 1889-1905), II, 268-9; Bernard C. Steiner, A History of the Plantation of Menunkatuck and of the Original Towns of Guilford and Madison (Baltimore, 1897), 152-53.

14. See Purcell, 192-3, 195, 198-9. Zeichner underestimates the power of the council, because he looks only at its authority as set down on paper. Oscar Zeichner, Connecticut's Years of Controversy: 1750-1776 [Zeichner, Conn.] (Chapel Hill, N. C.,, 1949), 5.

15. See Mead, 19-20.

16. For information on the house of representatives, see Acts & Laws, 29-30, and Purcell, 189-90.

17. See Acts & Laws, 27-8. A picture of the operation of the legislature can be gained only from a study of the published records which contain its resolves and laws. See also the excellent discussions in Purcell, 185-7, and Kendall, I, 23.

18. Acts & Laws, 4, 1-2.

19. See Public Records of the Colony of Connecticut /CCR/ (15 vols., Hartford, 1850-1890), XII, 580.

20. See, for example, Joshua Hempstead, The Diary of Joshua Hempstead of New London, Connecticut... (New London Historical Society Collections, Vol. I., New London, 1901), 41, 180.

21. As, for instance, the constable's task of checking weights and measures kept by county courts, and the selectmen's role in admitting freemen.

22. For example, see Acts & Laws, 280, and Isabel S. Mitchell, "Roads and Road-Making in Colonial Connecticut," (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publication, No. 14, New Haven, 1933), 15.

23. See, for instance, Mabel S. Hurlburt, Farmington Town Clerks and Their Times: (1645-1940) (Hartford, 1943), 49.

24. Acts & Laws, 176-83, 58-60.

25. Ibid., 8, 28-9, 307.

26. See Connecticut Courant /Conn.Cour./ 15 May 1769; Connecticut Journal /Conn.Jour./ 7 June 1771; Ezra Stiles, Extracts from the Itineraries and other Miscellanies of Ezra Stiles... ed. by Franklin B. Dexter /Stiles, Itineraries/ (New Haven, 1906), 465.

27. Acts & Laws, 245-6.

28. Ibid., 45, 60, 215, 197-9, 221.

29. For the mechanics and details of the taxation system, see especially, ibid., 135-8, 290, 322.

30. A fact often confused, as in Charles H. Levermore, The Town and City Government of New Haven (Johns Hopkins Studies in Historical and Political Science, 4th ser., Baltimore, 1886), IV, 10n2. For clarification of this point, see the excellent article of Chilton Williamson: "The Connecticut Property Test and the East Guilford Voter: 1800," Connecti- Historical Society Bulletin, XVIX, 101-4. An understanding of the taxation procedures and technicalities is essential for considering the property qualifications for voting. The matter is clarified for the first time in Williamson's study.

31. Dwellings were taxed separately from the land on which they stood. But it is unclear how they were categorized. They would hardly be considered

personal property in determining voting qualifications, yet were not "freehold" property.

32. Acts & Laws, 365, 138, 290.

33. CCR, XIII, 514.

34. Acts & Laws, 30-1.

35. The importance of the county in colonial New England has generally been overlooked. Zeichner apparently does not realize that the county existed in Connecticut.

36. Acts & Laws, 4, 5, 14-5, 31-2, 155, 315; Dorothy Deming, The Settlement of the Connecticut Towns (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, No. 6, New Haven, 1933), 75.

37. Acts & Laws, 87, 90-1, 226, 304; CCR, XIV, 80-1.

38. Acts & Laws, 267, 273, 127,9-10, 289-90, 129-32, 153-4.

39. Ibid., 31.

40. Ibid., 33-4, 53-4.

41. Ibid., 6, 7, 41-2, 53, 73-4, 105, 185-6, 329; Frances M. Caulkins, History of New London, Connecticut.... (New London, 1860), 277, 280-1.

42. See, for instance, The Wolcott Papers; Correspondence and Documents during Roger Wolcott's Governorship of the Colony of Connecticut, 1750-1754, ... (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, Vol. XVI, Hartford, 1916), 413-4.

43. Acts & Laws, 213-4, 291, 99, 22, 241, 80.

44. See, for example, ibid., 102, 129, 190, 35, 241.

45. Ibid., 199, 117, 118.

46. Ibid., 82, 223, 273, 275.

47. See Conn. Jour., 16 Feb. 1770.

48. Acts & Laws, 221-2,83, 328-9.

49. For example, the Lords, Huntingtons, Wolcotts, and Burrs.

50. Ibid., 10, 43.

51. The classic statement of this commonly-held thesis is found in Alexander Johnston, Connecticut: A Study of a Commonwealth-Democracy (Boston, 1887), 78. Zeichner also presents this interpretation: Zeichner, Conn., 4-5.

52. See especially, Johnston, II2, 70-1, 73, 75-6, 62, 135-6, 192-3.

53. For a refutation of Johnston's thesis, see Charles M. Andrews, The River Towns of Connecticut: A Study of Wethersfield, Hartford, and Windsor (Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science, Baltimore, 1889), VII, 29, 78-81, 122-5.

54. For example, by Purcell, 180, and by many modern town historians.

55. Acts & Laws, 241. Zeichner's discussion is hopelessly vague and confused: Zeichner, Conn., 6.

56. Acts & Laws, 99-101. In 1770, additional methods of becoming a lawful inhabitant were made, including that of acquiring real estate to the value of £100 in town or becoming a town officer. Also, lawful inhabitants were permitted to move to a new town if they carried a certification of their status from the original town. CCR, XIII, 362-3.

57. General rules for town meetings are found in Acts & Laws, 240, and also 32, 276.

58. Steiner, Guilford, 144-5; Joseph Perkins Beach, History of Cheshire, Connecticut... (Cheshire, Conn., 1912), 145; Joseph O. Goodwin, East Hartford: Its History and Traditions (Hartford, 1879), 96-7.

59. See, for example, Acts & Laws, 16, 19, 20, 66, 68, 127-8, 191-3, 237, 253-4, 269.

60. Francis Olcott Allen, ed., The History of Enfield, Connecticut (3 vols., Lancaster, Pa., 1900), I, 411-2, 426-7, 440-1, 447-8. In 1756, Enfield's population was 1050 and in 1774, 1360. CCR, X, 617, XIV, 485.

61. Acts & Laws, 240, 246, 211, 99, 190-2, 196; Hempstead, Diary, 180; CCR, XIV, 160-1; Allen, Enfield, I, 434.

62. Acts & Laws, 22-3, 122-3, 57, 46.

63. Ibid., 258.

64. Ibid., 241-3.

65. Ibid., 245-6.

66. See ibid., 80-1. Again, Zeichner's account is vague and confused: Zeichner, Conn., 6-7.

67. Kendall, I, 81.

68. In 1755, Douglass stated this to be the case, but the law does not make any stipulation, although it does in the case of town-meeting property qualifications. William Douglass, A Summary, Historical and Political... (2 vols., Boston, 1755), I, 176. According to Purcell, early in the

nineteenth century the poll tax listing was specifically excluded from consideration in meeting freeman voting qualifications, so apparently it was being used, contrary to the intention of the legislators. Purcell, 220.

69. For the prescribed procedure for freeman's meetings, see Acts & Laws, 45-7. It has never before been described in detail, though Lawrence Gipson does a good job in Jared Ingersoll: A Study in Loyalism in Relation to British Colonial Government (New Haven, 1920),19-20. The process was so complicated that attempts at brief summarization necessarily distort it.

70. CCR, IV , 39.

71. Acts & Laws, 28.

72. Steiner, Guilford, 221.

73. An impression gained from a familiarity with the materials for the colonial period, especially local histories.

74. Allen, Enfield, I, 415.

75. For example, ibid., 454; William Howard Wilcoxson, History of Stratford, Connecticut, 1639-1939 (Stratford, 1939), 522-3; George L. Rockwell, The History of Ridgefield, Connecticut (Ridgefield, 1927), 82.

76. See references to instructions drafted by freeman's meetings in Conn. Cour., 9 Sept. 1765, 23 Sept. 1765.

77. It is discussed only in Kendall, I, 106-7, and there only very briefly.

78. Very rarely, a society might embrace parts of more than one town, and sometimes in large towns served by several churches, the society did not include a definite geographical area.

79. Acts & Laws, 232.

80. Gipson, Ingersoll, 17-18.

81. See Acts & Laws, 231, 316, 165.

82. Ibid., 212, 330.

83. An hypothesis overwhelmingly substantiated by a study of the local histories.

84. For example, see Kendall, I, 106-7, and newspaper advertisements, obituaries, and notices of sales which list residence by parish, with no mention of the town.

85. For the best illustration, see Epaphroditus Peck, A History of Bristol, Connecticut (Hartford, 1932), 119-21.

86. Ibid., 121; Richard Anson Wheeler, History of ... Stonington ... (New London, 1900), 53; Wilcoxson, Stratford, 521.

87. Peck, Bristol, 119; Beach, Cheshire, 145.

88. Acts & Laws, 141.

89. H. B. Smith, A Historical Discourse, Delivered at Abington, January 30, 1853... (Hartford, 1853), 33-5.

90. Conn. Jour., 30 Oct. 1776.

91. Beach, Cheshire, 167-8.

92. For a ludicrous example, see Daniel L. Phillips, Griswold: A History... (n.p., 1929), 76-7.

93. See Caulkins, New London, 399-401; Hempstead, Diary, 178-80; William DeLoss Love, The Colonial History of Hartford...(Hartford,1914), 346.

94. Allen, Enfield, II, 152-6.

95. See Acts & Laws, 157-9.

96. Love, Hartford, 242-4; Caulkins, New London, 406-7; Hempstead, Diary, 17, 70.

97. Gipson, Ingersoll, 30-1.

98. For a humorous instance, see Goodwin, East Hartford, 97.

99. Leonard Woods Labaree, Conservatism in Early American History (New York, 1948), 21-3 and n34.

100. Purcell, 184-5.

101. Frances M. Caulkins, History of Norwich... (n.p., 1866), 133.

102. Johnston, Connecticut, 81-2.

103. Hempstead, Diary, 633.

104. David D. Field, ... Middletown and Its Parishes (Middletown, 1853), 55. The long tenure of ministers is illustrated by the vast number of "half-century sermons" printed in commoration of 50 years' service for one congregation.

105. See Goodwin, East Hartford, 97.

106. Tabulated from CCR, IX, 501-5. This is a typical year.

107. Tabulated from ibid., X, 68-86.

108. See, for example, Dwight Loomis and J. Gilbert Calhoun, eds., The Judicial and Civil History of Connecticut (Boston, 1895), 160.

109. Tabulated from Allen, Enfield, I, II, III, passim; CCR, X-XIV, passim; Public Records of the State of Connecticut [CSR] (9 vols., Hartford, 1894-1953), I-V, passim.

110. Newspapers are filled with obituaries which illustrate this situation.

111. Joseph Perry, The Character of Moses illustrated and improved:... (Hartford, [1767]), 22-3.

112. The leading towns definitely tended to control the colony government. There were 78 men elected assistants between 1700 and 1775. The 78 came from 32 towns. But 11 towns, all but one among the largest in the colony, were the homes of 51 (or 65.4%) of these magistrates. The breakdown shows:

1) Hartford		10	(12.8%)
2) New London		8	(10.3%)
3) Fairfield		6	(7.7%)
4) New Haven, Milford, Stratford	each	4	(5.1%)
5) Norwich, Windsor, Windham, Middletown, Guilford	each	3	(3.8%)

Compiled from lists contained in Gideon H. Hollister, History of Connecticut... (2 vols., New Haven, 1855), I, 497-9.

113. For an excellent illustration of this attitude, see article by "Philemon" in Conn. Jour., 4 Feb. 1774. The involved and very important process of "seating the meeting house" according to the "relative dignity" of each parishioner is another illustration. For a revealing account, see Beach, Cheshire, 85.

114. See especially, Samuel Andrew Peters, A General History of Connecticut... (2nd ed., New York, 1877), 222-3, 201-2; Conn. Jour., 22 April 1774; [Benjamin Gale], A Reply to a Pamphlet.... ([New London], 1755), ix.

115. Kendall, I, 1-7.

116. See Rev. John Davenport to Gov. Talcott, May, 1728, The Talcott Papers;... ed. by Mary Kingsbury Talcott (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, Vols. IV and V, Hartford, 1892-96), I, 113-4.

117. See Conn. Cour., 23 Jan. and 27 Feb. 1769.

118. For example, see Hempstead, Diary, 22, 55.

119. See Conn. Cour., 19 Oct. 1767, 23 Jan. 1769; Simeon E. Baldwin, "The Early History of the Ballot in Connecticut," American Historical Association Papers, IV, 91-2. For example, in 1790, Jonathan Ingersoll received the highest number of nominating votes and William Williams, senior assistant, fell to twentieth place. Yet Williams, automatically placed at the head of the ticket, was elected, while Ingersoll failed of election. Purcell, 197.

120. Conn. Cour., 19 Oct. 1767, 29 Feb. 1768, 23 Jan. 1769.

121. Gipson, Ingersoll, 19, 23.

122. Williamson, "The Connecticut Property Test," 101-4.

123. See, for instance, J.R. Pole, "Suffrage and Representation in Massachusetts: A Statistical Note," William and Mary Quarterly, 3d ser., XIV (1957), 560-92, for some voting statistics for the war period, which show the small participation.

124. Zeichner overemphasizes the importance of property restrictions as as a factor in cutting down political participation. Zeichner, Conn., 8.

125. Theron Wilmot Crissey, comp., History of Norfolk, Litchfield County, Connecticut (Everett, Mass., 1900), 61.

126. See Zeichner, Conn., 7 n28.

127. John Boyd, Annals and Family Records of Winchester, Conn. ... (Hartford, 1873), 139, 134, 76.

128. See, for example, William Chauncey Fowler, History of Durham, Connecticut... (Hartford, 1866), 165.

129. Levermore, Town and City Government of New Haven, 10n2.

130. Stiles, Itineraries, 63.

131. John Devotion to Bishop Newport, 22 Apr. 1767, ibid., 462.

132. H empstead, Diary, 259, 178, 367, 375, 408, 424, 506, 547.

133. For example, see E. B. Huntington, History of Stamford, Connecticut.... (Stamford, 1868), 207.

134. Boyd, Winchester, especially chapters 1-15. The materials are almost unorganized, but the book, despite its chaotic appearance, is a goldmine of information about the local political scene. Many of the other local histories have information of this sort which could and should be studied for additional insights.

135. These figures are of course subject to error. For example, some of the enrolled freemen might have died by this time. But the very extensive biographical information makes such errors quite unlikely.

136. Town meeting figures are of course not precise, but they indicate a trend whichis unmistakeable.

CHAPTER II.

FROM COLONY TO STATE, 1765-1776

In the year 1776, his majesty's English colony of Connecticut renounced her status as a practically self-governing unit of the British Empire for that of a state in the loose confederation established by the Continental Congress. This action climaxed an intercolonial resistance movement which had been gaining momentum for over a decade. The pattern of the revolutionary movement in Connecticut, like that of each other colony, was unique. Religious controversies, disputes arising out of economic developments, and political conflicts filled the last years before the war for independence with internal dissension. These local conditions created groups which took opposing sides on the imperial crises which developed after 1765, and which eventually resulted in the decision for independence.

Despite numerous attempts in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries to place the colony under closer royal supervision, Connecticut managed to retain her unusually broad privileges of self-government. Her magistrates became prudent and skilled diplomats, submitting to the mother country on minor issues but holding firm when vital colonial privileges seemed in jeopardy. Connecticut's politicians and parsons were also satisfied with the way in which their colony preserved the political and religious institutions of the founding fathers. In fact, well into the nineteenth century they still dubbed their state "the land of steady habits." But a closer examination shows that from about 1730 until the outbreak of the war, some decidedly unsteady habits and attitudes emerged in the colony

over economic and religious matters.

Connecticut ministers and magistrates viewed with gloomy foreboding the few dissenting Quakers and Anglicans who intruded among their Saints in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This first split in the religious unity of the Puritan colony was followed by the outbreak of the Great Awakening, the religious revival growing out of dissatisfaction with the cold formalism of the Congregational church and the religious settlement expressed in the Saybrook Platform of 1708. The first major phase of the Great Awakening took place early in the 1730's, when at least sixteen towns experienced an unusual religious excitement. Then, early in the 1740's the revival spread like wildfire through the colony, and Connecticut's churches were violently shaken as irreconcilable differences developed between the Old and New Light members. New Lights split off from the "unconverted" and formed what they called "Separatist" churches, or when the majority became "New Lighted," the Old Light minority was obliged to secede. With most of the ministers and magistrates bitterly opposed to the religious revolution, the standing order intervened with fines, imprisonments, bans on itinerant preaching, and removals from public office. But these moves only stimulated the religious controversy, and radical New Light groups continued to separate themselves from the established church into the 1760's.[1]

The center of Separatist strength was in the eastern counties of New London and Windham, while the southwestern portions of the colony were much less affected by the Awakening. In no small measure, it was the work of Anglican ministers which made southwestern Connecticut steadier and more conservative in its religious principles. In fact, the Church of England substantially increased its membership during the revivals. The Puritans

viewed with alarm the intrusion of the Episcopal Church, "little better than Papist," which expanded steadily, despite fines and prison sentences imposed on its members. In fact, between 1740 and 1755, the Anglican ministers increased in number from seven to eleven, and by 1760, they claimed thirty churches, mostly located in Fairfield County. The Anglicans returned the Puritan animosity, and developed an emphatic dislike for Connecticut's political and religious system. Fearing reprisals against the charter and alarmed by requests for appointment of a bishop, the Assembly conceded tax exemptions to those Episcopalians who supported their own churches in the 1740's.[2]

Since Connecticut politics and religion were hopelessly intermixed, differences stirred up by the revival assumed a political aspect. Two opposing factions emerged, roughly corresponding to the religious alignment caused by the Awakening. The conservative or Old Light faction drew its chief political support from the wealthier and more aristocratic magistrates and ministers. Their opposition, centering in New London and Windham Counties, was supported by the New Lights and those freemen who, while they did not sanction indiscriminate separations from the established church, opposed the restrictive legislation against the religious radicals. Gradually the more radical New Light element gained influence in the Assembly until, by 1759, it exploited a religious dispute in Wallingford to oppose the reelection of Governor Thomas Fitch and several Old Light councilors. The plot failed, but by the early 1760's the New Lights seemed close to winning control of the government, especially because of the "close union among themselves in politics."[3]

At the same time these religious and political differences divided the colony into conservative and radical factions, the freemen gradually

became involved in the land speculation schemes of the Susquehannah Company. This embroilment was ultimately to have a similar divisive influence. The interest in land speculation and expansion was stimulated by the colony's rapidly expanding population, thin soil, and by the appropriation of the remaining public lands by the 1750's. Heavy migrations up the river valleys into western Massachusetts and New Hampshire took place after 1730,[4] and in 1753, the grandiose colonization schemes of the Susquehannah Company were projected. Despite the fact that Connecticut had not claimed any land west of its New York boundary for over a century, the Company's proprietors obtained an Indian release in 1754, and began pressing claims to the northern third of Pennsylvania. Citing the sea-to-sea clause in Connecticut's charter as a basis for the claim, the expansionists received provisional legislative backing in 1755 for their scheme to establish a colony on the Susquehannah River.[5]

The project aroused powerful opposition, first among the Penns because it challenged their jurisdiction and threatened to irritate already unstable Indian relations. This opposition, combined with that of the Indians and Sir William Johnson, raised the alarming possibility of royal intervention, whereupon Governor Fitch ordered a halt in the project in 1762. But the proprietors defied the proclamation, so the following year the Board of Trade ordered the Company to desist until the Privy Council could decide the dispute.[6]

Although the Company submitted to the Board of Trade, its ambitious project fast became a stirring issue in Connecticut. Fearing collision with the Indians, the Penns, and the Crown, prominent leaders, including Jared Ingersoll, Benjamin Gale, and possibly Governor Fitch, began to form the nucleus of an anti-Susquehannah group, especially after 1763. These

men soon found that the expansionists had powerful backing. As early as 1763, Ezra Stiles claimed that the Company "with their connexions are large eno' to influence one Third of the Votes in the Government, and might possibly shake some out of the Council and Assembly" The Board of Trade's order of 1762 only increased their determination. In the critical decades after 1765, the dispute over western lands became even more bitter.[7]

The activities of the Susquehannah Company, the effects of the religious awakening, and the increasing strength of the Anglican Church combined to destroy Connecticut's political homogeneity. The colony's commercial development tended to produce a similar result.

Although most of her inhabitants lived off the colony's somewhat reluctant soil, Connecticut had early turned to trade and the sea. From the beginning, her commerce took the form of shipments of agricultural surpluses to Boston, and later to New York, to pay for English manufactures. But more and more, Connecticut began to develop trade with the West Indies, especially in the late seventeenth century, as lumber and provisions, including livestock and grain, were exchanged for molasses, rum, sugar, salt, and specie. This West-India trade was expanded in the 1740's and '50's as a means of securing the badly-needed hard money for balancing accounts with neighboring merchants.[8]

With direct economic contacts with England at a minimum, Connecticut merchants were invariably indebted to their Boston and New York connections. Several remedies were proposed to achieve economic independence and to stimulate direct trade with the mother country: erection of free ports; promotion of home industry; development of a staple; and duties on imports from other colonies. Such proposals were considered throughout the Revolutionary period, but all remained in the planning stage or else proved unsuccessful.[9]

Attempts to stimulate mercantile and industrial expansion were seriously hampered by a shortage of currency. In an effort to remedy the situation, a group of eastern businessmen, backed by several influential figures, organized the New London Society for Trade and Commerce in 1729. Arguing that it would develop direct trade with Great Britain, the Society was incorporated by the Assembly three years later. Shortly thereafter, these merchants began issuing bills of credit based on real estate mortgages. Fearing possible repercussions against the charter, the Assembly dissolved the organization, a move which created financial problems and feelings of dissatisfaction, rooted chiefly in New London and neighboring communities in the east.[10]

By the time of the Stamp Act, then, serious contention had developed over religious, economic, and political matters, and these differences had more or less split Connecticut's freemen into hostile groups and factions. The religious developments had contributed to these differences—the Great Awakening and the continued expansion of the Anglican Church. Dissatisfaction had also been generated against the Susquehannah claims and the economic conditions of the colony. Each of these devopments tended to divide the colony along rough geographical lines. The New Light revival swept more fiercely through the eastern counties than in the west, the area in which the Anglicans were making their greatest gains. Eastern Connecticut was the center of religious extremism, the home of the leading members of the Susquehannah Company, and as well the focus of the paper money troubles of the 1730's. A spirit of opposition to the home government had already been stirred up in the east as a result of the impending Mohegan case involving the title to 800 square miles of land in and about Windham and New London Counties.[11] That section, then was especially in a mood for resistance

to the British, and under the impact of imperial policy of the 1760's and '70's, these somewhat nebulous colonial factions took more definite shape.

The Revolutionary movement proper was touched off by the British decision to tighten up imperial administration after the Seven Years' War. Already dissatisfied with British commercial policy as it affected their West-India trade, Connecticut importers were alarmed when they learned of the proposed Revenue Act of 1764. Boston merchants appealed to traders in New London to support their opposition to the bill; and in January the Assembly appointed three merchants to draft an official protest. The concern of Connecticut merchants over the decision to enforce the acts of trade resulted in part because the colony had been hit by a severe depression after the prosperity of the war years. With the courts clogged with suits for debt and the press filled with complaints about the scarcity of money, the enforcement of restrictions on the colony's profitable foreign West Indies market was unwelcome.[12]

The second proposal for raising revenue--the Stamp Act--aroused even more opposition. The decision for direct taxation was looked upon as a menace to Connecticut's constitutional rights, for as Eliphalet Dyer remarked: "if Taxes are once begun to be levied ... our charter goes."[13] The Assembly took a similar stand after Jared Ingersoll, the colony agent in London, warned of the impending measure in March, 1764. In October, it drafted an official protest, resting on two contentions: one stressed the right of English subjects to be taxed only by laws to which they had given their approval; the other condemned the Stamp Act as a violation of Connecticut's charter rights. But the legislature's objections, along with

those of the other colonies, were unavailing. Ingersoll, who eventually decided it would be futile to fight the tax, labored with more success to moderate some of its provisions.[14]

Although public opinion was fairly united against the measure, conservatives prepared to accept the inevitable, once it was passed. When he accepted the post of colony stamp distributor, Ingersoll was certain the people would submit to the tax, and upon his return home in July, 1765, prominent men solicited positions as assistant distributors. But large numbers of colonists took a stand of uncompromising opposition and extremists began preparing for resistance, while the press and established clergy combined to denounce the Act. Then many persons began to take more direct action, and in the last week of August, 1765, Ingersoll was hanged in effigy in eastern towns.[15]

From the beginning, the opposition was most violent in the east, where discontented elements were already disturbed by the religious and economic developments of the previous decades. As the Old Light Deputy Benjamin Gale observed:

> the several Factions wh. have subsisted in this Colony, originating with the N London Society--thence metamorphis'd into the Faction for paper Emissions on Loan, thence into N Light, into y^e^ Susquehanna & Delaware Factions--into Orthodoxy--now into Stamp Duty--the Actors are the same, each Change drawing in some New Members--[16]

Now Eastern leaders, including Isarel Putnam, Hugh Ledlie, and John Durkee, organized these discontented elements into the Sons of Liberty and exploited the most explosive issue with which they had ever been presented. Behind these popular leaders were some of the most prominent merchants, ministers, and magistrates in the colony, most of them easterners--Rev. Stephen Johnson of Lyme, the Huntingtons of Norwich and Windham, Elipha-

let Dyer of Windham, Jonathan Trumbull and William Williams of Lebanon, Joseph Trumbull of Norwich, Matthew Griswold of Lyme, the William Pitkins of Hartford, and Thaddeus Burr of Fairfield.

During the summer of 1765, the radical leaders marshalled strength and prepared to make certain that the stamps would never be distributed. Ingersoll was burned in effigy, and the radicals made ready to coerce him in the flesh. Although popular pressure eventually forced the reluctant Governor Fitch to call a special session of the legislature, extremists were not willing to wait for the slow machinery of official protest to start moving. On the way to the Assembly on September 19, Ingersoll was stopped by a force of armed Sons of Liberty from Windham and New London Counties, originally numbering 500, then soon twice that number. After the distributor's enforced resignation by the well-disciplined mob, the legislators could not help but be influenced. That same day, they appointed delegates to the Stamp Act Congress, then two days later adjourned. Their regular session three weeks later was dominated by anti-stamp men who condemned the tax as a violation of the colonial charter and announced that they would never back down from their stand.[17]

With the Act scheduled to go into effect 1 November 1765, Fitch was forced to make a decision about taking the required oath to carry out its provisions. Despite radical pressure, he hesitated until the last moment. Finally, at the end of October, the governor took the oath, despite his personal opposition to the Act. Four assistants, fearing to jeopardize the charter, administered the oath, while the rest of the council withdrew in protest.[18]

After 1 November, popular hostility to the Act increased. The Sons of Liberty forced the New London customs collector to clear ships on

unstamped paper, and through eastern Connecticut courts were asked to resume their business. Throughout the fall and winter of 1765 and 1766, self-constituted groups of radicals convened, drew up lengthy resolutions which condemned the Act as unconstitutional, and threatened to coerce anyone enforcing its provisions.[19]

The Sons of Liberty soon became a huge, well-trained military force under the Colonel Israel Putnam and his following of eastern militia officers. On Christmas day, 1765, the Connecticut Liberty boys signed a military alliance with representatives from New York. They agreed:

> to march with the utmost dispatch, at their own proper costs and expence, on the first proper notice, (which must be signified to them by at least six of the sons of liberty) with their whole force if required, and it can be spared, to the relief of those that shall, are, or may be in danger from the stamp-act, or its promoters and abettors, ... let them be of what rank or condition soever.

Plans were made to bring about similar alliances in all the colonies.[20] Later in December, a New York agent visited Connecticut towns to line up forces to meet anticipated British military action, and the following month a Connecticut spokesman reportedly consulted with the radical leaders in Boston.[21] In describing his enforced resignation, Jared Ingersoll testified to the size and discipline of the force which the popular leaders held under their control. The stamp distributor was met by

> the main Body [of the armed force] who, I judge, were about Five Hundred Men, all on Horseback, and having white Staves,... They were proceded by three Trumpets; next followed two Persons dressed in red, with laced Hats; then the rest, two abreast. Some others, I think, were in red, being, I suppose, Militia Officers.[22]

By March, 1766, 10,000 armed men were reportedly available in the colony at a moment's notice.[23]

Under these conditions, legally-constituted authorities either aided the Sons of Liberty or stood by, practically helpless, unable to con-

trol the course of events. Governor Fitch's proclamation ordering local officials to suppress "riots, tumults and unlawful assemblies" had little effect. In late 1765 and on into 1766, regular governments in town and colony were practically superseded by a new and unofficial authority. Public policy was made at these town, county, and colony-wide mass meetings, first held in the east and then more and more in western towns as well. Under their popular leaders, the "respectable populous" took enforcement measures into their own hands. Delegations were sent to threaten members of the council, while Israel Putnam advised Governor Fitch that if he did not permit his house to be searched for stamps, the building would be "levelled to dust within five minutes."[24] Wallingford's Sons of Liberty promised all-out opposition to the act of Parliament, "to the last extremity, even to take the field."[25]

Determined to purge the government of every official lukewarm in the battle against the Stamp Act, the radicals spearheaded their attack against Governor Fitch and his four faithful councilors. Many of Fitch's enemies opposed his reelection purely because of his refusal to take a firm stand against the Stamp Act. But for many political New Lights and backers of the Susquehannah project, the patriotic issue presented a perfect opportunity to cut off the political heads of their Old Light opponents. In fact, Old Light elements accused the New Light clergy of stirring up the "mobility" for the express purpose of defeating Fitch.[26]

The radical leaders used their Sons of Liberty organization to carry out this project. On 25 March 1766, a colony-wide convention was held at Hartford, at which intercolonial committees of correspondence were set up. The leaders than announced that "as there was a Dissatisfaction in the Colony," a "Change in the Ministry" might be beneficial. The conven-

tion, despite the opposition of Litchfield and New Haven County delegates, thereupon determined "to give the Freemen a Lead in the ensuing Election, since, should they run upon different Men, the Persons desired might not be elected, by the Freemen."[27]

Although many opposed this interference in the prescribed form of nominations, Fitch and the four councilors were unseated. Deputy-Governor William Pitkin was elected chief executive in his stead, and for their new deputy governor, the voters picked Assistant Jonathan Trumbull, merchant and Susquehannah Company proprietor--the candidates of the Sons of Liberty. The newly-elected Assembly soon learned of the repeal of the Stamp Act and proclaimed a day of public thanksgiving and rejoicing. Meanwhile, on 12 May 1766, after twelve years' service as Connecticut's chief magistrate, Thomas Fitch said his good-byes and prepared to return to his native Norwalk,[28] with the distinction of being the second governor in Connecticut history ever to be turned out of office.

The repeal of the Stamp Act and the victory of the "popular party," as the radical faction was called by some contemporaries, did not bring lasting peace either within the colony or in its relations with the Crown. The differences that separated the popular party and the "old party," as the Fitch faction was called, were perpetuated and hardened by the effect of new imperial crises.

Although the Assembly agreed to Gage's request to quarter troops in January, 1767, news of the Townshend Revenue Act the next summer prompted Connecticut to take her strongest stand against the mother country since the Stamp Act crisis.[29] As Trumbull stated, Connecticut opposed this

measure which would grant revenue to the crown for the support of "Tax gatherers and Their Numerous Train, for rendering Governors and Judges independent of the people for their Support,..."[30] Rumors were circulated that the home government intended to appoint the Connecticut superior court in the future.[31]

Although the new act came at a time when the financial condition of the colonial government was generally good, thanks to British aid, and much better than its magistrates pretended it to be,[32] Connecticut taxpayers were unwilling to assume any additional burdens. The financial condition of many inhabitants was unsound, and the general complaint of the merchants was "little trade and less money." The difficulties arising from the shortage of money were aggravated by Connecticut's disadvantageous commercial position, because projects of the merchants for establishing a thriving direct trade with England never got far beyond the talking stage.[33]

These merchants had shown no more respect for the restraints established by the old Molasses Act than did other New England traders. When the British determined to tighten up the customs service after the war, they were met by an equal determination on the part of Connecticut merchants to continue their customary smuggling operations. Between 1766 and 1770, the officers found it difficult, if not impossible, to prevent the running of illicit goods into the Puritan colony. They suspected many New London and New Haven traders of organizing demonstrations against them, while it was openly admitted that New Haven merchants had prescribed a dose of tar and feathers to a townsman who had tattled on them to the customs service.[34]

The reaction of the Assembly to the Townshend acts was slow in coming—in fact no official action was taken until late in the spring of 1768, when the lawmakers petitioned for relief against the new measures on

the grounds that they violated their charter privileges. At the same time, they indirectly aided the non-importation movement, backed by the more zealous patriots, by imposing a special five per-cent import duty on goods brought into the colony by non-resident merchants. This action came too late to suit eastern towns which had already adopted the non-consumption movement of Boston and were supporting non-importation. By the fall of 1769, Connecticut merchants had subscribed to the non-importation program and organized an abortive society to promote the "Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures, Trade, and commerce." All evidence indicates that the colony was true to the non-importation and non-consumption programs, and popular committees did a thorough job of pushing reluctant traders into line. Determined to enforce the program of non-importation even after it had begun to break down in the larger colonial ports, merchants denounced the defections and threatened Yorkers with a loss of Connecticut's trade. But less resolute traders began to bring in goods, and the program broke down completely.[35]

Although the merchants quickly slipped back into their former commercial habits and though the tariff was repealed, the differences between Connecticut's popular and old party members had sharpened between 1766 and 1770, as the colony maneuvered to avoid the expanding imperial jurisdiction. Radical spokesmen, including some of the chief magistrates, had not hesitated to challenge that jurisdiction, and as in the Stamp Act crisis, some hinted at an ultimate split with the Empire. But the more conservative freemen, most of whom had no desire to lose their charter privileges, were loath to antagonize the home authorities, and they were still an influential minority.

The conservative-radical split was also sharpened by issues more

peculiarly local in nature after the Stamp Act. And, significantly enough, these issues tended to divide the colony in the very same way as did the disputes with the mother country. One of the most serious of these local controversies grew out of the realization that the Anglican communion was continuing to grow during these critical years. In 1767, Ezra Stiles estimated that the number of Anglican families was one out of every thirty. The traditional prejudice of the Puritans against the Church of England was aggravated by the fact that their Anglican neighbors had almost universally supported the mother country during the Stamp Act controversy. Indeed, many Connecticut worthies became convinced that the Anglicans were the inveterate enemies of Connecticut's political and religious institutions. Between 1766 and 1770, their fears were intensified by rumors that an episcopate would be established in America.[36]

The Anglicans were not alone in their quarrels with the "standing order." Although New London's chronic dissenters, the Rogerenes, occasionally caused local disturbances, the New Light Separatists were far more numerous. In fact, Stiles estimated in 1767 that they were about equal in number to the Anglicans.[37] The Separatists' persistent demands to be released from the compulsory upkeep of the official establishment, a privilege the other dissenters had long since won, agitated the entire colony. This struggle for religious liberty flared up intermittently between 1767 and 1770, as the privileges of the established churches were attacked and defended in pamphlets and newspapers. Taking a cue from Isaac Backus of Massachusetts, a native of Norwich, the Separatists or Strict Congregationalists were quick to draw parallels between their demands for religious liberty and the colonial fight for political freedom during the Stamp Act crisis. Was not compulsory taxation of the Separatists as unjust as British taxation of the

colonists?[38] The campaign achieved limited success, in part because of this use of Revolutionary political theory. In 1770, the Assembly ruled that Separatists who regularly attended their own services would no longer be subject to the penalties formerly suffered for not worshipping according to law.[39] But still the Separatists had not won the freedom, long before achieved by the Anglicans, Baptists, and Quakers, from compulsory taxes for maintaining the Congregational church.

Revolutionary theory was applied to other internal situations as well, including the unfair situation of voters taxed for maintaining the civil and religious establishment when they did not have sufficient property for voting:

> /I_/t would be made evident that Connecticut, in their religious constitution, are guilty of the like oppression, as the parliament of Great-Britain, in their late unrighteous claim over America, it will be self-evident, that they have departed from the gospel plan.... /N/o person can vote to choose a minister, nor for his support, except he has 50s. feeehold or 40l. in the common list, or a person in full communion with the church, &c. Where is the society but what has got more or less persons that have neither of these qualifications, and so not qualified to vote? Yet they are rated or taxed, and not represented. Is not this the evil that has set this North-America all in commotion, and are they not consulting some measures to avoid that runing /ruining?/ plan of being taxed without their consent. The oppression of the parliament at present is but of a temporal nature, but this of Connecticut strikes up the sacred rights of conscience, and controls that as well the purse without consent or representation... /W_/ when the collector comes for the poor man's rate ... he has no law to plead his right, to save himself from oppression, the law provides no remedy from first to last, he has not money enough to be a freeman or a voter in the society, and all the grace in heaven will not qualify him to be represented in the general assembly, (and if not a church member) at the society. ... I would earnestly & humbly beseech you that are freemen of this colony, seriously to consider this plan undermines the very pillars upon which the British nation's liberty stands. Here is taxation and no representation.[40]

Between the Stamp Act crisis and the outbreak of the war, a flood of anti-slavery propaganda filled the Connecticut newspapers. Often arguments for abolition and suppression of the slave trade were footnoted with

scriptural justifications, but more and more they were backed up by references to contemporary political theory. For example:

> The phrase, natural and unalienable Rights, hath been so often used in all our writings upon civil Matters; that I trust I may safely presume, that it is the sentiment of Americans, that there are such Rights; at least, that it is the sentiment of all such, as have appeared in the cause of Liberty against the late Encroachments of the Mother Country, I would now beg the Sons of Liberty in America, yea all, that are not such Minions to arbitrary Power; as to suppose Men born in a state of Slavery; to reflect a single moment how the Idea of natural and unalienable Rights will comport with that Slavery, to which the Negroes are now subjected among us; For if those Rights, we have so often recouse /sic/ to, are natural and unalienable; then surely they belong to every individual of Mankind; Negroes must therefore be possessed of them unless excluded from the Human Race... And surely if we have any sense of Feeling, an American, that hath shewn himself a Son of Liberty, must blush to reflect, that, in one breath he has been loudly exclaiming against the Tyranny of the British Paliament /sic/ in but attempting to deprive him of his natural Rights; while in the next, is exercising a far worse Tyranny over his Negro Slaves; denying them in the most highhanded arbitrary manner, those Rights which he acknowledges to be Natural and Unalienable; which he deems so sacred and which are so dear to himself.[41]

Although a bill to curb the slave traffic was apparently turned down in October, 1773,[42] a year later the Assembly banned further importations, at the time of the adoption of the Association. However, economic, rather than humanitarian reasons were ascribed: the increase in slave population was "injurious to the poor and inconvenient."[43]

Limited sentiment for political reform was also expressed during the Revolutionary movement. In 1768, one correspondent urged publication of the Assembly debates and votes, the practice in other colonies, in order to give voters information more reliable than mere hearsay for judging the merits of prospective representatives.[44] In 1766, the Wallingford town meeting, fast developing a reputation for radicalism, came out in favor of a relaxation of debt laws and open Assembly debates, as was the custom in Commons, while it opposed monopolization of public offices.[45] One writer attacked this same abuse:

> What right has the judges of the Superior Court, to be members of the general assembly? And whether it is the birthright of the D/eputy/ G./overnor/ to be chief judge of the Superior Court before any other freeman in the colony?[46]

Discontent with nepotism in the council, the uniform poll tax, the exemption system for militia duty, and the nomination and voting system were also expressed.[47] Although much of this sentiment for political change was merely the propaganda of "outs" like Benjamin Gale who were trying to regain power for the old party, listeners were undoubtedly stimulated to think in terms of more responsible government. Popular interest in the operation of the government was to develop much further during the war years.

The problems of Connecticut's magistrates were made even more complex when the dormant Susquehannah issue was revived late in the 1760's. In December, 1768, the speculators resumed their colonizing activities and the following month petitioned the Assembly to transfer Connecticut's claim to the disputed territory to them. Although the lower house repeatedly blocked the measure, the proprietors defiantly voted not to recall their settlers, despite conflicts with the Penn agents. The stage was set for a public debate, as the anti-Susquehannah faction earnestly counselled the colony to take no action which might jeopardize the charter. But the Company's directors made strenuous efforts to swing full government support behind their venture. Although defeated in 1769, they already controlled the council and their membership in the Assembly was increasing. Jonathan Trumbull, elected governor on the death of Pitkin in the fall of 1769, was a long-time proprietor and did not consider it improper to continue his vigorous efforts in the Company's behalf when he became chief magistrate.

This influential pro-Susquehannah alignment also included such influential leaders of the popular party as the Wolcotts, Wyllyses, Huntingtons, Elipha-let Dyer, Jedidiah Elderkin, Nathaniel Wales, Roger Sherman, and Samuel Holden Parsons.[48]

These men remained in control of the administration after their initial victory in 1766, but the "old party" consistently tried to restore ex-Governor Fitch and the fallen councilors. The ensuing campaigns were drawn-out and bitter. With the Susquehannah project an issue once more, the election of 1770 was preceded by the most acrimonious political struggle since 1767, and the results showed that Fitch had come very close to de-feating Trumbull. These two rivals never forgot their differences, even during the comparatively quiet years between 1770 and 1773 when the local and imperial issues which divided them seemed to subside for a time.[49]

During this quiet period, some observers felt that despite the tumultuous events of the past few years, the colony might yet end its in-ternal factionalism and return to a more harmonious relationship with the mother country. Prosperity seemed to be returning, and the Assembly was able to announce in October, 1772, that it would be able to retire all out-standing bills of credit whenever they fell due. The radicals bewailed the decline of patriotic fervor after the breakdown of non-importation. No more, one of them lamented, was any thing heard "about Liberty."

But by 1773, signs of a growing imperial crisis were apparent to all. Repercussions of the Gaspee affair aroused uneasy feelings among Trumbull and Fitch supporters alike, especially because of British pro-posals to try the case in England--a dangerous precedent to self-governing Connecticut. The radicals began perfecting their plans to organize an

aggressive popular movement for the emergency they felt was in the offing. As early as March, 1773, Samuel Holden Parsons of Lyme suggested to Sam Adams the calling of an inter-colonial assembly. That spring the lower house approved the Virginia resolves, and created a standing committee of correspondence with a majority of radical leaders, including Parsons and William Williams.[50] In less than a month the committee was already ferreting out suspected enemies of colonial liberties in Connecticut.[51]

At this point, however, the attention of the popular leaders was temporarily diverted from the developing colonial-imperial crisis by the final great explosion of the Susquehannah issue. Slowly but perceptibly the expansionist controversy had been rising to the boiling point. Failure to induce the colonial government to assume their claims in 1769 had not discouraged the proprietors. On the contrary, they had persistently pressed the project despite continued opposition within the colony and the violent skirmishes between their settlers in the Wyoming Valley and Pennsylvania's agents. When the home government refused to intervene in 1770 and 1771, on the grounds that the conflict was not properly an intercolonial question, Connecticut moved to assume the Company's claims as its own responsibility. In May, 1771, the Assembly announced that the disputed lands were "well" within the colony's boundaries as described in the charter. The legislature then appointed a committee to collect proof of the legality of the claim for the use of the colony's London agent, who was asked to secure the opinion of learned English lawyers on the matter.[52]

But without waiting for a reply from abroad, the Company petitioned the legislature to extend the colony's authority over settlers in the Wyoming Valley in 1772. The next year the colony finally received an opinion from abroad which did not oppose Connecticut's title. Almost immediately, the

Company's backers moved to have the colonial government throw its full support behind the claim. Trumbull frankly espoused the expansionist cause in October, and most of the deputies sided with him. A committee appointed to reach a last-minute agreement with Pennsylvania resulted in complete failure. Thereupon the legislature, in a special session in January, 1774, extended its jurisdiction to the Susquehannah settlements which were erected into a new township named, appropriately enough, Westmoreland, and annexed it to Litchfield County. Finally, a proclamation was issued prohibiting all further settlement without special permission from the Assembly.[53]

These measures stirred up a violent political storm. The old party opposed the Company for two major reasons: they feared the western claims would jeopardize the charter, and they identified the Susquehannah group with the radicals who had engineered the political revolution of 1766. Unable to control the legislature, the conservatives called a convention of town delegates at Middletown in March, 1774, to consider the emergency. Trying to organize a political upset to throw the expansionist party out of office, representatives of twenty-three towns drew up a remonstrance to be circulated among the towns, while some of the delegates prepared a list of an candidates "from the west" for governor, deputy governor, and council. Although it was the same technique they had used in 1766, the popular party excitedly denounced this political "plot." Tension mounted rapidly as the campaign continued to rage up to the very eve of the elections. On election day, the freemen completely rejected the conservative nominees and reelected the expansionist administration.[54]

The Trumbull party, now guaranteed control of the government for the critical years ahead, immediately requested the Privy Council to settle the boundaries between Pennsylvania and Connecticut claims. But there was

not much opportunity for the home government to intervene further in the dispute. Its authority was under attack throughout America, and the popular party in Connecticut, fresh from its triumph in the election, had already begun to subordinate the issue of western expansion to the more pressing matter of the colonial relationship with the mother country.[55]

As Connecticut's political parties were preparing for the struggle over the Susquehannah issue, the tea crisis clouded the political horizon. Although the newspapers reprinted propaganda from other colonies, excitement over the Susquehannah Company overshadowed interest in the East-India Company monopoly. In fact, radicals were upset by this relative lack of interest, and exhorted the people to preserve their rights.[56] But when the tea act was followed by the Coercive Acts in the spring of 1774, all America was aroused, and especially self-governing Connecticut. If an act of Parliament could alter a royal charter, the future seemed to hold little security.

As early as April, 1774, many towns were taking steps to defend their privileges, and Silas Deane found that the practice of calling special town meetings was "growing fast into fashion in the colony."[57] As propaganda in the press stimulated popular enthusiasm, town meetings were convened all over the colony during the spring and summer. In spirited resolutions, local voters condemned the Coercive Acts, supported Boston, called for an intercolonial assembly, declared their willingness to support non-importation and non-exportation programs, and set up committees of correspondence and inspection. Meanwhile, the Congregational ministry devoted itself to the special mission of awakening their more lethargic neighbors, especially in the west, to the meaning of the crisis.[58]

The deputies were as much alarmed as the people at large. That May the lower house adopted a long series of resolutions reaffirming the

the rights of the people of Connecticut as "Freeborn Englishmen." Though formally acknowledging loyalty to the crown, the deputies elaborated on the powers of the colony to govern and tax itself. At the same session, the lower house empowered its committee of correspondence to appoint representatives to the first Continental Congress.[59]

Some of the Assembly's constituents became even more concerned with the defense of colonial rights, and early in September a convention of towns in New London and Windham Counties recommended that both the town and colony governments take immediate steps to meet any military threat.[60] The lawmakers followed this counsel, and at the October session ordered towns to double their munition supplies and increased the number of militia training days.[61] Then, through late fall and early winter, the towns met to appoint committees of inspection for enforcing the Continental Association recommended to them by the lower house. Even the western towns, previously slow in responding to the patriotic movement, began creating committees. To supplement enforcement of the Association, popular leaders organized county conventions early in 1775, which drew up uniform regulations and planned to compel obedience in recalcitrant towns.

Then, on April 20, 1775, news reached Connecticut of the explosion at Lexington and Concord, and a feverish excitement spread through the entire colony. While farmers began marching off to the aid of Boston, the magistrates assembled in a hastily-called session at Hartford. The Assembly called out a fourth of the militia, laid a provisions embargo, authorized the printing of paper currency, and planned to procure munitions.[62] Thus the Revolutionary movement was transformed into a war for independence, although the break with the mother country was not formally announced for over a year.

When armed conflict began in spring, 1775, very little moderate op-

position remained in the Assembly. The conservative faction rapidly disintegrated after its defeat in March, 1774, and four months later Thomas Fitch, perennial old-party candidate, died. By 1776, the only political opposition facing the popular party was an impotent Loyalist faction. The once influential conservative group was effectively silenced between the passage of the Coercive Acts and the outbreak of the war by the vigorous measures of local committees of inspection, which used social and enonomic boycotts and the pressure of public opinion to bring the opposition around to their way of thinking. County conventions of delegates from town meetings or local committees aided the process, especially when Loyalist opposition flared up in the western counties early in 1775.

And more and more in 1774 and 1775, extra-legal associations took it upon themselves to silence the Tories, by use of techniques devised during the Stamp Act crisis. Several Woodbury Loyalists were carried off to the Litchfield jail when they refused to give up their arms on the demand of local "Sons of Liberty."[63] This old label was revived by many other local associations, as in the case of the patriots who forced the hasty exile of Hebron's vociferous rector, the Reverned Samuel Peters, in August, 1774.[64] Also typical, as in the crisis of 1765-66, was New Haven's "Committee of the Friends of constitutional Liberty," organized in the fall of 1774. After their patriotic project of silencing local Tories was denounced as tending "to the disturbance of the peace of ... /the/ town, and the great terror of his majesty's peaceable subjects," the committee published a spirited resolution defending the "unalienable right" of any number of men elected by their neighbors "or of their own meremotion" to assemble together any time they deemed proper for transacting any lawful business and inquiring into the conduct of any men unfriendly to American liberty.[65]

The friends of the king were not the only men who experienced misgivings about all this extra-legal activity. In October, 1774, Samuel Webb expressed a sentiment which must have been widely shared:

> Mobs, which I fancy you judge ruinous to all good government, will be opposed by every true Son of Liberty in this Colony. Other methods may be adopted more effectual to still our very few remaining enemies. A reason, and I think a very good one, is given, that all such riots should be stop'd in their first growth, viz., 'A day may come, and in probability soon will, unless a redress of our grievances can be obtained, that we may be as destitute of all Law and Civil Government as the Massachusetts is now; then, if mobs are allowed to take hold of persons and private property, dissensions will follow, and we soon should be, instead of a United, a broken body.' These are the principles our warmest friends adopt, and ... I think good.[66]

Titus Hosmer of Middletown was equally alarmed:

> Is it not enough to make our family shudder? Consider how our matters are situated, should Mobism take place instead of good Government among ourselves.[67]

At times it appeared that "mobism" would take the place of "good Government." In September,1774, Assistant Joseph Spencer of East Haddam reported the case of Doctor Beebe, a Tory who had been visited by a group of patriots whose zeal was high for liberty. Failing to give them satisfaction, the doctor was presented a coat of tar and feathers. Feeling himself "extremely abused," Beebe appealed to Spencer to take action against his assailants. Spencer, in turn, appealed to Governor Trumbull for advice. According to Spencer, it would be impossible to enforce the law against the violators of the peace unless he were backed up by force from "abroad."[68] Five months later, the New Milford town meeting, fearing "the horrible prospects of anarchy and confusion," announced it would not be "bound by any unconstitutional assemblies of men whatever,..."[69]

But soon the Tories recanted or learned to keep their political

heresies to themselves, and before long the popular agitation subsided. In fact popular interest declined so much that before long the Revolutionary leaders were complaining about their lethargic constituents who took little or no interest in the war effort. The pattern in Connecticut was typical of other colonies, most of which witnessed similar outbursts of popular activity during the transition period from colony to statehood. As provisional governments began drafting state constitutions, these discontented popular elements often tried to influence the formation of the new governments. But in Connecticut, the transition period was not marked by any sentiment for changing the old system. One writer did speculate in March, 1776, that all officials, including those of the judiciary and military, should be elected by the people: "No business that can be done by the people themselves should ever be trusted to their Delegates."[70] But apparently few others thought of altering the familiar colonial government, as it was outlined in the royal charter, in statutes, and in time-honored custom.

The process by which Connecticut passed from colony to state was a simple one. In May, 1776, the king's name was omitted from all legal documents, and new oaths for freemen and judicial officers were provided.[71] Then, in October, after the Declaration of Independence had been announced to the world, the General Assembly declared the colony a free and independent state, absolved from all allegiance to the crown. Furthermore, it was ordered that:

> the form of civil government in this State shall continue to be as established by Charter, received from Charles the second, King of England, so far as an adherence to the same will be consistent with an absolute independence of this State on the Crown of Great Britain; and that all officers, civil and military, heretofore appointed by this State continue in the execution of their several offices, and the laws of this State shall continue in force untill otherwise ordered:...[72]

In time the legality of this simple formula for establishing the basis for the new state government was challenged. But for the moment, Connecticut's farmers and magistrates were occupied with the more vital problems of defending the coast, recruiting troops, locating supplies, raising revenue, and reorganizing the old colonial government for administrative purposes. And the state's delegates in Congress, along with the representatives of the other twelve states, were busy formulating policy for fighting a war to establish the independence of the new nation they had just created.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER II.

1. Zeichner, Conn., 21-5. This chapter on the Revolutionary movement relies very heavily on Zeichner's excellent study.

2. Ibid., 27-9.

3. Ibid., 25-6.

4. Rising Lake Morrow, Connecticut Influences in Western Massachusetts and Vermont (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 58, New Haven, 1936), passim.

5. Edith Anna Bailey, Influences Toward Radicalism in Connecticut, 1754-1775 (Smith College Studies in History, vol. V, no. 4, 1920), 193-99; Zeichner, Conn., 29-31; Gipson, Ingersoll, 317-8.

6. Zeichner, Conn., 30-3; Gipson, Ingersoll, 318-9; Bailey, 199-205.

7. Zeichner, Conn., 33-5.

8. Ibid., 14-5. See also Margaret E. Martin, Merchants and Trade of the Connecticut River Valley, 1750-1820 (Smith College Studies in History, vol. XXIV, nos. 1-4, 1938-39), 19-23ff.

9. Zeichner, Conn., 30-8; Gipson, Ingersoll, 83ff; Martin, 30-2.

10. Zeichner, Conn., 38-40.

11. Ibid., 42-3; Bailey, 188-90; Gipson, Ingersoll, 198n. The Mohegan case involved the title of former Mohegan Indian lands claimed by both the Mason family and the colony, on the behalf of which Major John Mason had purchased the lands in 1660. The Mason heirs claimed that John Mason's transfer of the land to the colony had been faulty, and tried to gain possession by taking the case to the Privy Council. After considering the dispute for at least 68 years, the Council finally decided in favor of Connecticut in 1773.

12. Zeichner, Conn., 41, 45-6; Martin, 28-9; Gipson, Ingersoll, 112-5.

13. Quoted in Zeichner, Conn., 49.

14. Ibid.; Gipson, Ingersoll, 138-47.

15. Ibid., 153ff, 168ff; Zeichner, Conn., 49-51.

16. Benjamin Gale to Jared Ingersoll, 13 Jan. [1766], "A Selection from the Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers of Jared Ingersoll," ["Ingersoll Corres."] ed. Franklin B. Dexter (New Haven Historical Society Papers, vol. IX, 1918), 373.

17. Ibid., 343-8; Gipson, Ingersoll, 173-88; Zeichner, Conn., 52-4.

18. Gipson, Ingersoll, 188-92.

19. See for example, Conn. Cour., 30 Dec. 1765, 27 Jan., 3 Feb., 10 Feb., 24Feb., 31 Mar., 1766; Gipson, Ingersoll, 195ff.

20. William Gordon, The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America (4 vols., New York, 1788), I, 195-8.

21. Francis Bernard to Henry S. Conway, 19 Jan. 1766, The Fitch Papers: Correspondence and documents during Thomas Fitch's governorship of the Colony of Connecticut, 1754-1766... (2 vols., Connecticut Historical Society Collections, vols. XVII and XVIII, 1918-20), II, 385-6.

22. "Ingersoll Corres.", 343, 347-8.

23. "The Montressor Journals," ed. G. D. Scull (New York Historical Society Collections, 1881), 355.

24. Zeichner, Conn., 61-3; Gipson, Ingersoll, ch. 7.

25. Conn. Cour., 3 Feb. 1766.

26. Zeichner, Conn., 70-1; Alice Mary Baldwin, The Clergy of Connecticut in Revolutionary Days (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 56, New Haven, 1936), 22.

27. Conn. Cour., 31 Mar.1766.

28. Gipson, Ingersoll, 74-6.

29. Zeichner, Conn., 80.

30. Quoted in ibid., 84; Gipson, Ingersoll, 252-62.

31. Ibid., 266.

32. Lawrence Henry Gipson, Connecticut Taxation, 1750-1775 (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 10, New Haven, 1933), 29-38.

33. Zeichner, Conn., 81-2.

34. Ibid., 82-3; Gipson, Ingersoll, 277.

35. Ibid., 266-71; 276-89; Zeichner, Conn., 85-8; Arthur Meier Schlesinger, Colonial Merchants and the American Revolution, 1763-1776 (Columbia University Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. LXXVIII, no. 182, New York, 1918), 150-2, 196, 112.

36. Zeichner, Conn., 96-9.

37. Ibid., 99-100.

38. See, for example, Conn. Cour., 7 Apr. 1766.

39. CCR, XIII, 360.

40. Conn. Jour., 9 Aug. 1775.

41. Ibid., 22 Oct. 1773. See also, for example, 8, 15, 29 Oct. 1773; 5, 12 Nov. 1773; 17 Dec. 1773; 4, 11 Feb. 1774; 4 Mar. 1774; 1 Apr. 1774; 16, 23 Sept. 1774; Conn. Cour., 12 Sept. 1774; 7, 21, 28 Jan. 1774.

42. See Conn. Jour., 22 Oct. 1773.

43. CCR, XIV, 329.

44. Conn. Cour., 29 Aug. 1768. See also Benjamin Gale, Doct. Gale's Letter to J. W. Esquire, Containing a Narrative of the Principal Matters, ... (Hartford, 1769), 1-2.

45. Conn. Cour., 10 Nov. 1766.

46. Ibid., 18 July 1768. See also Conn. Jour., 12 Mar. 1773.

47. See Conn. Cour., 2 Mar. 1767, 2 June 1772, 19 Oct. 1767, 23 Jan. 1769, 27 Feb. 1769, 9 May 1768, and below, pp. 264-6.

48. Bailey, 247, 208-17; Zeichner, Conn., 103-4.

49. Ibid., chap. 6.

50. Ibid., 128-40.

51. CCR, XIV, 156; Zeichner, Conn., 141.

52. Ibid., 143-5.

53. CCR, XIV, 161-2, 217-9n; Zeichner, Conn., 146.

54. Ibid., 146-58.

55. Ibid., 158.

56. Ibid., 159-60.

57. Deane to S. H. Parsons, 13 Apr. 1774, "Correspondence of Silas Deane, Delegate to the First and Second Congress at Philadelphia, 1774-1776," Connecticut Historical Society Collections, vol. II (1870), /CHSC, II/, 129.

58. Samuel Sherwood, A Sermon, Containing Scriptural Instructions to Civil Rulers, ... (New Haven, /1774/), esp. xlv.

59. CCR, XIV, 347-50, 324.

60. CHSC, II, 161-2.

61. CCR, XIV, 327-9, 343.

62. Ibid., 415-6, 418-22, 432.

63. Conn. Jour., 6 Dec. 1775.

64. Peter Force, ed., American Archives... (4th and 5th ser., 9 vols., Washington, 1837-53),4th, I, 712.

65. Conn. Jour., 14 Oct. 1774.

66. To Silas Deane, 10 Oct. 1774, Correspondence and Journals of Samuel Blachley Webb, ed. Worthington Chauncey Ford (3 vols., New York, 1893-94), I, 41-2.

67. To Silas Deane, /4th Sept.?/ 1774, CHSC, II, 156.

68. Spencer to Trumbull, 14 Sept. 1774, Force, 4th, I, 787.

69. Ibid., 1270.

70. Ibid., V, 450-2.

71. CCR, XV, 281-3.

72. CSR, I, 3-4.

CHAPTER III.

CONNECTICUT AND THE CONTINENTAL CONGRESS, 1774-1784

With the calling of the first Continental Congress, a new field of activity was opened for Connecticut magistrates, most of whom had been concerned only with provincial matters in the past. After 1774, they were forced to decide on important issues in cooperation with their sister colonies, with a few of which Connecticut had already or was soon to develop sharp antagonisms. The new state was required to take a stand on the question of declaring independence and on the kind of central government to be set up. In addition, she was involved in the formulation of policy for achieving national independence, for making peace, and for disposing of western lands. And this experiment in interstate cooperation also created new obligations for Connecticut representatives—they were expected to find jobs for their constituents and to sooth the ruffled feelings of generals and even of Governor Trumbull and his sons when they felt slighted by the new government.

Between 1774 and early 1784, Connecticut was represented in the legislature of the new nation by fourteen delegates who actually attended sessions. In July and August, 1774, the committee of correspondence of the lower house chose the delegates who attended the first Congress—Eliphalet Dyer, Roger Sherman, and Silas Deane. Beginning in October, 1775, the General Assembly annually named a group of delegates, of whom three were to attend.[1] Then, in May, 1779, in response to pressure from its con-

stituents, the Assembly decided that henceforth delegates would be chosen by the freemen in the same way councilors were selected. Nominations were made at the September freeman meetings and the highest twelve candidates stood for election the next April. Freemen selected seven Congressmen from this list of twelve, and the results were tabulated at the May session of the Assembly. Not less than two or more than four were to attend at one time.[2]

Delegates were responsible to the General Assembly, and particularly to Governor Trumbull, as "head" of the legislature. The Governor conferred with potential delegates to decide who would relieve those currently in Philadelphia. Apparently it was understood that representatives would serve half-year terms,[3] but once a man arrived in Philadelphia, he usually remained until relieved, despite his pleadings for an alternate. Delegates desiring to return home might plead sickness, as they frequently did, or pressing duties at home. But the only effective remedy was the one seized upon by the impulsive Eliphalet Dyer:

> I have been urged, I have tarried, I have never heretofore left the State unrepresented, tho it has freequently been done by others, but I believe to good satisfaction; but I begin to be apprehensive that as long as I tarry no gent'n will come forward, for I believe no one is fond of being here, am therefore determined by leave of Providence to set out on my return in a very few days.[4]

True, no one was fond of long stays in Philadelphia, with its summer heat, scandalous inflation, and inevitable wrangles--no one, that is, save Silas Deane who relished the "busy scene of politics"[5] and doubtless would have remained on indefinitely, had he not been turned out for reasons connected with local politics. But the sole reason for reluctance to attend Congress was not the onerous nature of the duties required. Just as important were the heavy responsibilities of the delegates at home. All Con-

gressmen were typical of what one might expect of politicians from Connecticut. As representatives of the standing order, all filled several offices. General Oliver Ellsworth, Colonel Andrew Adams, and Colonel Jesse Root were commissioned in the state army and General Joseph Spencer in the Continental forces. Most served in the council or house; most were members at one time or another of the council of safety; most were probate, county, or superior court judges. William Williams at least, continued to participate actively in the politics of his home town. Roger Sherman, then, had an airtight excuse when, in July, 1780, he demanded to be relieved so he might return home to ride court circuit.[6]

By the time peace was ratified in early 1784, Connecticut had sent a total of fourteen delegates—Silas Deane, Eliphalet Dyer, Roger Sherman, Samuel and Benjamin Huntington, Oliver Wolcott, Richard Law, William Williams, Andrew Adams, Oliver Ellsworth, Titus Hosmer, Jesse Root, Joseph Spencer, and James Wadsworth. Longest in length of attendance was Roger Sherman, who, as a senior-ranking member of Congress, served a total of almost five calendar years during this period. Dyer served about three years; Wolcott almost three; Samuel Huntington, two; and Oliver Ellsworth, approximately one and a half. Others served only short periods—Titus Hosmer, Jesse Root, Joseph Spencer, James Wadsworth.[7]

As was typical of Connecticut politicians, most delegates came from leading towns of the colony—New London, Windham, New Haven, Hartford, Windsor, Wethersfield—while only three came from relatively unimportant communities. Several represented the old, politically-experienced families of the colonial aristocracy. Law and Wolcott were sons of governors; the Huntingtons were one of the most politically-active families in Con-

connecticut; and Silas Deane was allied to the influential Saltonstall family through a brilliant marriage. The conspicuous exception was Roger Sherman, an immigrant from Massachusetts who began life as a poor cordwainer. These delegates were connected by family ties. Oliver Ellsworth was the husband of Abigail Wolcott, daughter of one of the most prominent clans in the colony and cousin of Deputy-Governor Griswold.[8] The Huntingtons were cousins, and Eliphalet Dyer was the father-in-law of Joseph Trumbull, who was the brother-in-law of William Williams.

Of the fourteen delegates, eleven were lawyers by profession, and one a merchant. Three of the attorneys were also engaged in commerce. Some of the lawyer delegates were especially distinguished—notably, Hosmer and Ellsworth. Seven were educated in Yale, two in Princeton, and one in Harvard. Sherman and Samuel Huntington were self-taught.

The delegates fulfilled other requirements for success in Connecticut politics—they were supporters of the established church. Williams was particularly zealous in this respect, while Root, Adams, and Sherman were also well-versed in theology. Most had received experience in local and then in colony politics before the war. Only Samuel Huntington had little previous experience in this approved training school. Sherman was especially well-schooled in local and provincial politics—already a member of the council, he had gathered up a string of offices unusual even for a Connecticut politician.

But though well-versed in the ways of Connecticut political life, most delegates went to Philadelphia with little previous direct contact with life beyond their colony. Dyer was the most cosmopolitan of the lot. As representative of the Susquehannah Company, he had reveled in the gay life of London in the '60's. But Sherman, for example, had not been

beyond his native Massachusetts and his adopted state, while Samuel Huntington had travelled little, except to Boston and Providence to argue cases. And even Silas Deane, with his many business contacts and pride in his sophistication, expressed surprise at the sights he saw outside his native colony. Deane, coming from a section of America with a reputation for its radical democracy, and from a colony sometimes designated as the most democratic of all New England, was obviously apprehensive about the "powdered folks" from the aristocratic South.[9] But he soon found many of them highly congenial. In time, Connecticut delegates made friendships with men from other colonies. This experience in international relations, for it was just that in many respects, was a worthwhile one. As constituents followed the reports and heard the stories of delegates, the remaining isolation of the colony probably broke down even more.

Connecticut sent few really outstanding delegates to Congress. The one who gained the most notoriety was of course Deane, while Roger Sherman gained the most respect. John Adams left sketches of his friend, this "old Puritan, as honest as an angel and as firm in the cause of American independence as Mount Atlas;..."[10] But Sherman did not stand out because of polished manners. According to Adams:

> Sherman's air is the reverse of grace; there cannot be a more striking contrast to beautiful action, than the motions of his hands; generally he stands upright, with his hands before him, the fingers of his left hand clenched into a fist, and the wrist of it grasped with his right. But he has a clear head and sound judgment; but when he moves a hand in any thing like action, Hogarth's genius could not have invented a motion more opposite to grace;—it is stiffness and awkwardness itself, rigid as starched lined or buckram; awkward as a junior bachelor or a sophomore.[11]

Connecticut, unlike the Southern colonies, sent no orators to Congress. Sherman, according to Adams, spoke often and long, but heavily and clumsily.[12] The "warm, impetuous, and persevering" Colonel Dyer, as he

once described himself,[13] was most noted for this lack of speaking ability. According to John Adams, Dyer, though honest and well-meaning, was "long-winded and round-about, obscure and cloudy, very talkative and very tedious,..."[14] In February, 1776, Thomas Nelson, Jr., remarked to Jefferson: "You would be surprised to see with how much dispatch we have done business since Dyer and Gaddesden left us."[15] Jesse Root, too, despite his other abilities, was described as a poor speaker.[16] But apparently Wolcott was somewhat more talented in this direction.[17]

It was the mild-mannered and rather colorless Samuel Huntington, for several months President of Congress, who was typical of what one would expect in an envoy from "the land of steady habits":

> His Excellency Samuel Huntington President is a man of a mild Steady and firm Conduct and of Sound and methodical Judgment tho not a man of many words or very Shining abilities. But upon the whole is better Suted to Preside than any other member now in Congress. In his Dress, and Maners, he is very plain, very gentleman/l_/y and truely republican. He is from Connecticut.[18]

* * * * * * * * *

These representatives from Connecticut were forced to take a stand on a number of major problems facing the central government during the war years. These issues included the decision on independence, formation of the national constitution, cession of western lands, and strengthening the central government. The delegates also became involved in their state's lingering controversy with Pennsylvania over the Susquehannah claims.

The first Congress met in early September, 1774, and although Representative Deane's letters spoke of harmony,[19] its proceedings were

far from tranquil. The debates and "out of door" activity at Carpenter's Hall were the setting for a struggle between the radical and conservative members of the revolutionary party. The radicals were those members, led by John Adams, who through actions and then open statements opposed reconciliation with the mother country. By various means in the first and second Congresses, they steered the colonies toward independence. The conservative opposition, led by Galloway and Dickinson, wished to retain the British connection in some form or other. Failing that, and deciding to become revolutionists, the conservatives wished to retain the political and economic structure of the colonial period in their new independent status.[20]

The Connecticut delegation, at least in respect to the desire to sever ties with the British, which for their colony had been weak ones at best, sided with Adams and the radical wing. As Adams and the other radical leaders steered Congress toward independence in fact, if not in name, Connecticut's delegates sided with them. They favored the Association and from the beginning met with the radicals after working hours.[21] Connecticut hesitated not at all in accepting the theories necessary to justify this course of action. As early as 1772, Roger Sherman had stated that the colonial legislatures were distinct from Great Britain and possessed with complete legislative power, free of British restraints.[22] He supported Adams in the debates of the committee formed to draft the statement of rights and grievances: "There is no other legislative [sic] over the Colonies but their respective assemblies."[23] Unlike Galloway and Dickinson, Sherman found little difficulty in accepting the independence of colonial assemblies and the law of nature as a justification for action. This was a matter of tradition with Connecticut, where the Fundamental Orders, based on the compact theory of government, were still revered.

By the time of the second Congress in May, 1775, armed conflict had broken out, and Connecticut militia men were eagerly flocking to the support of Massachusetts, while the Assembly had already begun making preparations for war. The same three delegates,* after a "march in state for two hundred miles,"[24] arrived in Philadelphia to find, to their pleasure, that Joseph Galloway, "justly despised and Contemned by all" was no longer one of their number. Thus they had hopeful prospects of a "firm Union."[25]

In the second Congress, the radicals again pushed forward their program for independence. A debate took place in October and November, 1775, over the instructions to the New Hampshire delegates. Congress recommended that in the absence of royal government, they set up a government based on the consent of the people. Sherman and Dyer sided with Adams, as did John Rutledge, Richard Henry Lee, and Christopher Gadsden. Sherman served on the committee which worked out the recommendation, and through the long struggle, which included debates about confederation, foreign alliances, raising troops, and encouraging manufacturing, he voted with Adams.[26] Oliver Wolcott also favored the radical program. He hailed one of the triumphs of the radical wing—the resolve of 10 May 1776, by which Congress invited revolutions in colonies still in conservative control:

> A Revolution in Government, you will perceive, is about to take Effect. May God grant a happy Establishment of it, and securety [sic] to the Rights of the People. If this Recommendation takes effect which undouptedly [sic] it will, There will be an instance Real not implyed or Ideal of a Government founded in Compacet [sic], Express and Clear Made in its Principles by the People at large.[27]

Wolcott did not share the apprehensions of some delegates that this doctrine,

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*In January, 1776, Deane and Dyer were replaced by Wolcott and Samuel Huntington.

when seized upon, might be the opening wedge for more sweeping changes than were intended.

The Connecticut delegates, pushing so eagerly for independence in fact, did not hesitate to seize upon it in name as well. The Port Bill, the fishing-restriction act, the piracy bill implicitly, according to Wolcott, cast the colonies entirely out of the king's protection. "It behoves us therefore to take care of ourselves." A total severance of the tie, he stated in February, 1776, "has got to be a good deal of a popular expectation. I do not perceive but little intimidation, and our union I hope is firm." By April, he observed that a final separation was unavoidable.[28]

As early as February, 1775, the inevitability of independence was mentioned in the Connecticut Journal, and the next fall, Deane frankly stated that there was no alternative to liberty save death. By February, 1776, delegates Sherman and Wolcott took an open stand for independence by approving the censure of Dr. William Smith, who imprudently declared in a public oration that Congress favored continuing a "Dependency on Great Britain which Doctrine this Congress cannot now approve."[29] Thus, there was little doubt as to how Connecticut would line up on the issue of independence.

After Lee's resolve of 7 June 1776, brought the fundamental issue into the open at last, the Connecticut Assembly moved quickly. In mid-June, it authorized the delegates to adopt independence, promote alliances, and begin work on confederation. Roger Sherman served on the committee which drafted the document that culminated the triumph of the radicals. As early as the 11th of July, this "declaration of independency" was ready for sale in the office of the Connecticut Journal. The Assembly at once declared the state independent, and officially supported the stand of

Congress through the war. The state government had little or no faith in the abortive attempts at reconciliation.[30]

The major issue in Connecticut's prewar politics and diplomacy, the Susquehannah dispute, came to be viewed in a different light when she assumed her role as one of the united colonies. The danger of armed conflict between Pennsylvania and Connecticut threatened colonial unity and the prosecution of the war. In fact, one of the worries of the conservatives was that removal of the crown's restraining influence would result in civil war. And their apprehensions seemed justified. By July, 1775, Congress feared that blood would be shed in the Wyoming Valley. In September and again in December, armed conflict broke out, and a battle between forces sent out by the Pennsylvania land speculators and the Connecticut claimants resulted in a victory for the New Englanders. By mid-summer, the Connecticut delegates were pleading with the settlers on behalf of Congress to refrain from action which might endanger the common cause.[31] Dyer sent a wordy letter to friends in Wyoming, pointing out the unfavorable light in which the conflict made Connecticut appear. "...[A]jarr between two Colonies may be of all most fatal Consequence to the Whole"; a "little driving or Imprudence now in that country may blow all up into a flame."[32]

Then, in October, 1775, the Connecticut delegates proposed that temporary lines be drawn up to divide jurisdiction between the contending colonies. But the proposal apparently never came before Congress. So the debates continued through the winter of 1775, as Pennsylvania advocated her own temporary jurisdiction over the entire area and Connecticut proposed that each exercise temporary control over its respective possessions. In time, Pennsylvania stated explicitly that she would not abide by the

determinations of Congress unless she were given the exclusive jurisdiction. But on 20 December 1775, Congress decided on joint control until the case could be legally decided and ordered all seized property restored. But Pennsylvanian settlers in the disputed territory did not prove amenable, and a few days later they gave Congress "much offense" by announcing that they would not obey the recommendations.[33]

Dyer and Deane were members of the Susquehannah Company and Sherman was a firm supporter of the expansionist faction. But all three delegates joined in urging a halt in the conflict. Deane, formerly such an earnest disciple of expansion, took the most firm stand. He was appalled at the continuing violence as well as "indiscreet zeal" of Colonel Dyer who hurt himself among persons interested in Susquehannah lands by "disputing on the Connecticut claim in all Companies." Deane, as well as Sherman,

> pursued quite a different plan. for my own part, I [Deane] avoided the dispute wholly and when forced upon it express'd my warmest wishes for a friendly Settlement. by this means I stood with The most dispassionate of the other party, when we left Philadelphia...

Probably Deane's prudence was dictated in large measure by a desire of ingratiating himself with the mercantile interests in other colonies. Significantly, Robert Morris was one of the land speculators with an interest in the disputed territory.[34] Finally, in 1778, Pennsylvania proposed to settle this source of interstate contention, but Connecticut preferred to wait until after ratification of the Articles of Confederation, and there the matter rested for a time.[35]

One might expect to find that Connecticut favored a weak central government for the new nation. She sided with the radical group in Congress which favored a confederation with sovereignty lodged in the states, and in view of her traditional independence, she might well have hesitated to replace the light yoke of imperial control with a heavy one of a strong national government. On the other hand, Connecticut was in the control of an aristocracy, and the colonial aristocracies generally favored a strong central government. Unfortunately, the journals of Congress do not indicate how her delegates sided on the votes which decided the locus of sovereignty when the Articles of Confederation were drafted.

From the beginning, Connecticut delegates realized the necessity of some type of permanent union. There was never any question, but that a confederation should be formed. As early as May, 1775, Deane wrote home for a copy of the constitution of the New England Confederation of 1642, and Roger Sherman served on the committee of June, 1776, which drafted the original Dickinson proposal for the Articles, the draft which gave sovereignty to the national government. But no record remains of Sherman's stand on specific proposals in the draft. Sherman and Franklin both made drafts of constitutions, of which Sherman's was the better liked, but very little was finally adopted from either. It is apparent that Sherman was not as hesitant as some other delegates about granting powers to Congress: in February, 1776, he favored taking the power of nominating army officers out of the hands of the assemblies and granting it to Congress.[36]

The Connecticut delegates reported their irritation at the endless delays in drafting the Articles. As Sam Adams observed: "A Thousand

and [one] little Maters" prevented action. They included the New York-Vermont issue and the uproar created by Connecticut's former representative, Silas Deane, an ambassador of the new nation after his own state dispensed with his services.[37]

On a few of the major issues over the provisions of the new constitution, Connecticut's position is clear. As one of the smaller states, she favored voting by states, rather than by population, as the larger states advocated. By October, 1777, William Williams reported that this question had been settled satisfactorily for Connecticut, though originally she had feared being "in effect swallowed up and annihilated." But the matter of apportioning state contributions for the support of the central government remained. Here, Connecticut aligned with her New England neighbors in favoring contributions based on population, while the Southern colonies held out for the use of land and improvements. And New England quite naturally wanted to include Negroes in determining population for tax purposes. But on this issue Roger Sherman, at least, was willing to compromise with the South. He suggested that, temporarily, Negroes under the age of ten be excluded. But the Connecticut stand was defeated; the land and improvements rule was incorporated into the Articles.[38]

On 28 November 1777, William Williams reported that the long-awaited constitution had been returned from the printers, and in high hopes Congress submitted the Articles to the states for ratification. Connecticut immediately proceeded with this important business. In December, the governor and council of safety ordered copies printed and distributed to the town selectmen. In special meetings called to consider the proposal, town voters debated the constitution, some of them article by article. Most approved the draft, though a few took issue with some clauses, mostly the

taxation scheme. In January, 1778, a special session of the Assembly nearly completed ratification. At Trumbull's suggestion, the item was given primary consideration on the agenda of the February session, which authorized the delegates to ratify. If possible, they were to secure three amendments: that population be substituted for land values in apportioning contributions; that no standing armies be maintained during peacetime; and that no officers be granted pay after termination of service.[39]

But Congressional ratification was delayed for a long period, especially because of the controversial issue of how to dispose of western lands. Connecticut, by virtue of her claims to land beyond New York to the Mississippi, was one of the "landed states" with an interest in the disposal of western claims. The landless states had already tried to give control of these lands to the national government in the Articles, but the landed states had blocked the measure. Thereupon, the Maryland legislature, with the support of other landless states, refused ratification until control were lodged in Congress. For this reason, ratification was held up for almost three and a half years.[40]

Connecticut became involved in this struggle at once. In October, 1778, Sherman and Ellsworth suggested that their Assembly grant to Rhode Island, New Jersey, Maryland, and Delaware lands located in the Connecticut claims beyond the area in dispute with Pennsylvania. The cessions, to be used by those states for paying their land bounties to troops, would, as the delegates pointed out, enhance the value of the remainder of Connecticut's holdings. The Assembly made no move in this direction, but Trumbull was particularly anxious that the Articles be ratified before the withdrawal of the British. If delayed until after peace, he feared that settlement would "breed internal differences." Finally, in April, 1779,

the Assembly authorized its delegates to ratify with eleven other states, if Maryland were permitted to enter later if she so desired.[41]

But Congress was unable and unwilling to ratify without the unanimous consent of all thirteen, and Maryland held fast to her demands about western lands. By November, 1779, Connecticut was reported to be backing down from her refusal to give up control of her claims. The next October, in response to a request from Congress, she agreed to cede her rights to the soil of unappropriated lands between the Susquehannah claims and the Mississippi. The cession was to be in proportion to the grants of other states toward a national domain, while the area was to remain under Connecticut jurisdiction and to be surveyed in such a way as to promote settlement and cultivation "according to the true spirit and principles of a republican State."[42]

After cessions by other landed states, ratification of the constitution was completed 1 March 1781. Delegates and other public officials congratulated President Huntington and "partook of a Collation prepaired at his House for the purpose." The President then sent a circular letter announcing the news to the states.[43]

But Connecticut's promised land cessions did not materialize. Delay resulted from the bitter half-pay issue, on which the state took a defiant stand against the wishes of a majority of the other states. In 1778, Washington recommended half pay for life for all officers after the war. According to Connecticut representatives, this was the "most painfull and disagreeable question that hath ever been agitated in Congress." Their strenuous opposition was a factor resulting in a compromise providing half pay for seven years. But in October, 1780, Congress yielded to the demands of the army, again over the opposition of Connecticut delegates who had been

instructed to fight the measure—and promised the officers half pay for life. Three years later, however, the issue was again reopened, and a commutation act gave full pay for five years, in lieu of the 1780 grant. Connecticut opposed the officers' pay measures as being "totally inconsistent with free States, repugnant to principles upon which this great controversy was begun and by which it must and ought to be defended,..."[44] In the debate of 1782, Jesse Root spelled out the Connecticut stand more clearly:

> /T/he genius of their people would not brook the paying of annual pensions, and they could not bear to see men strutting about their streets in the port of masters who had a right to demand of the people a part of their annual labor and toil to support them in idleness. That they chose rather to pay their officers at once after the war and then see them descend into the class of citizens.[45]

By this time—1783—the freemen of Connecticut were not as united on the commutation question as Root indicated the year before. Governor Trumbull and the council favored the grant, while the lower house opposed any further concessions to the officers and also tried to block the grant of independent revenue to Congress. This internal dispute was indicated when, in January, 1783, the Assembly ordered state delegates to submit a list of all American civil and military officials, including all those with half-pay grants. Next, it held up the cession of state western claims indefinitely, apparently hoping that this move would force the other states to back down on the pay issue. In October, 1783, a ban was placed on further western settlement without Assembly approval. But in January, 1784, the legislature backed down in part, and authorized Sherman and James Wadsworth to deed Connecticut claims to the national government, save for the "Western Reserve" along Lake Erie, which would be retained for the benefit of her officers and soldiers. Again that year the commutation dispute figured in Connecticut's stand on national issues, when she delayed passing an impost grant to Congress because her wishes on the pay issue were still blocked.

Not until 1786 and 1800 were the western claims finally ceded to the central government.[46]

Connecticut had agreed that the Wyoming issue should be settled after ratification of the Articles, and in November, 1781, she was notified by Congress that her agents should prepare for a hearing the following June. In January, 1782, the Assembly vainly moved to postpone the case until the close of the war, ostensibly because pertinent data was lodged in English courts and that the hearing would detract from the war effort. But Pennsylvania insisted on settling the long-standing quarrel, so the legislature appointed Dyer and Jesse Root as agents, along with William Samuel Johnson, who now emerged from his self-imposed political eclipse. The legislature supplied £600 for expenses, and called on the proprietors for an additional £800.[47]

The Congressional commission, appointed by virtue of the ninth Article of Confederation, met at Trenton on 12 November 1782, with five commissioners from neutral states. The agents for the contending parties argued their cases, and on 30 December 1782, a unanimous decision against the Connecticut claim was handed down. No reasons were given.[48]

The delegates from Westmoreland gave up their seats in Connecticut's house of representatives on 16 January 1783, the day the decision was announced in the Connecticut Journal. After "Westmoreland" in the roll of the house, appears:

> Annihilated and out of sight;—
> If what the Court have done, is right.[49]

But the Assembly hoped to prove that "what the Court have done" was not right. In October, the legislature ordered the commissioners to investi-

gate reports of evidence which had been concealed or suppressed. Although this proved fruitless, the state did undertake relief measures for her ex-citizens who were being ejected from their Susquehannah claims by men with rival titles from the Penns. After Connecticut settlers refused offers of leases from the rivals, Pennsylvania troops were sent into the area and another Pennamite-Yankee War broke out. Connecticut next applied to Congress for a trial of the settlers' rights to the soil, and the national government agreed to appoint commissioners for the project, but the matter was never tried.

Meanwhile, Connecticut leaders began to lose interest in the Susquehannah Company and the settlers. John Franklin, the emerging radical leader of the Connecticut settlers, planned Company policy from 1784 on. He conceived and attempted to carry out a movement for separate statehood, a strictly local move for autonomy, in which Ethan Allen figured. Finally, in 1799, Pennsylvania passed a compromise act which largely confirmed the claims of individual New England settlers, and the ancient dispute was finally settled.[50]

Although it is uncertain how strong a central government Connecticut wished to have set up in the beginning, it is clear that her delegates supported efforts of the nationalists after about 1780 to strengthen the system. This program was attempted through constitutional interpretation, reorganization of the government, and the granting of independent revenues to Congress. But in their attempts to push this program, the Connecticut representatives met strong resistance in their Assembly's lower house.

There is evidence that throughout the war, Connecticut delegates were more nationalist-minded than the home government—they often deplored what they interpreted as the narrow outlook of the Assembly, their fellow country-

men, and even of the governor at times. In December, 1775, for example, Deane, Dyer, and Sherman informed Trumbull that they doubted the propriety of charging Congress for the expenses of holding state Assemblies, paying delegates, and reimbursing post riders. No other colony had taken such a step. In 1779, Sherman, always trying to extricate Congress from its financial straits, respectfully replied to Trumbull's orders to get Connecticut's monthly tax quota lessened by remarking that he had heard of no complaints from any state but his own. The following year, Ellsworth, in answer to Jeremiah Wadsworth's plea for funds, observed:

> You would have less difficulty in obtaining money if Congress had it to give you. they are as much embarrassed for want of money as you are or can be.[51]

Connecticut representatives commented more and more on the deplorable conditions in Congress from 1778 on. Business came to a virtual standstill when the delegates again became embroiled in the Deane-Lee wrangle. Increasingly concerned with the dangerous state of continental finance, Congress hopefully seized on the plan of March, 1780, as a remedy. Worst of all, according to Hosmer, was the "idleness and captiousness of some gentlemen, maugre the wishes and endeavours of an honest and industrious majority" who insisted on delaying tactics. He wanted advice from Trumbull on how to retrieve Congress from "the unhappy lethargy (shall I call it phrenzy?) into which we have fallen."[52]

About 1780, during Huntington's administration, the nationalist group which wanted increased power for the central government gained more influence in Congress.[53] As the leadership of the Lee-Adams Junto faded, Ellsworth reported a greater unanimity than had hitherto prevailed.[54] Evidence of the conservative reaction in Congress is to be found in the increasing acceptance of the principles of the commercial faction headed

by Robert Morris and represented by such men as Gouverneur Morris, William Duer, James Wilson, and the exiled Silas Deane. They advocated the right of merchants to seek private ends under wartime conditions, without the economic restrictions imposed by many of the state legislatures.[55]

A similar conservative reaction was taking place within Connecticut, as the Assembly began repealing state commercial restrictions and granting the merchants relief from taxes imposed by the agrarian interests. And Connecticut's delegates subscribed wholeheartedly to the program to strengthen the powers of Congress through reorganization and the grant of adequate revenue. These delegates were usually members of the upper house of the Assembly, which with Governor Trumbull favored the program of the commercial interests both at home and in Congress. But their stand aroused strenuous opposition among the agrarian interests represented in the lower house.[56]

The move to strengthen the confederation through constitutional interpretation began only four days after adoption of the Articles. Jesse Root, Connecticut's delegate to the Boston Convention which proposed nationalist measures, and Wolcott, another proponent of a strong central government, backed the move. According to the Articles, a vote of nine states was necessary to carry certain items, while other measures required only a majority vote. The nationalists argued that it was intended that nine should constitute a quorum for business, and that a majority vote of the nine, i. e., five, was sufficient to determine any matters except those enumerated as requiring a larger vote. Finally, however, Wolcott was won over by the arguments of Burke of North Carolina that assent of seven, a majority of the whole, was necessary for deciding routine matters. The next day, Congress agreed to Burke's proposition.[57]

Jesse Root was the most vocal of the Connecticut advocates of a stronger government. In December, 1780, he informed Trumbull that:

> The system of government over these States as at present exercised is extremely defective. The sovereign power of war and peace, having no permanent funds in its possession, nor the means of establishing any, must feel itself weak and prevent or defeat almost every measure however necessary and render the execution languid, tardy and oft times wholly abortive. The wealth of the States constitutes the great fund on which we must depend for credit abroad and for resources at home; and while these are drawn forth at the volition of each State, by recommendatory requisitions only, it is in the power of any State to defeat the most important measure. ... [I]t is as necessary that Congress should exercise the powers of coercion over the particular States for the general purposes of the confederacy, as it is that the State should exercise such power over its particular citizens for the weal of the State; and this power is so far from infringing upon the rights or sovereignty of the particular States that it is as necessary for the preservation of them as the union itself.[58]

He advocated the commercial policy of the Morris interests:

> [T]o remove ... all fetters and embarrasments on trade, except with the enemy, omit to force upon any person paper bills for money, and to take measures to encourage industry and economy, and to revive the confidence of the people in the justice of their rulers, I think is the only natural and wise method to extricate ourselves from our present embarrassments into which we are bro't in such measure by unnatural expedients.[59]

A major part of the nationalist program was the move for a grant of independent revenue by the states permitting Congress to levy an impost duty. In February, 1781, Wolcott, Root, and Samuel Huntington strenuously urged that Connecticut authorize this proposal, but the Assembly responded with a grant of only three-years' duration—a reflection of the hostility of the lower house. Each delegate then sent a letter to the governor expressing his dismay at the action. If import duties were not levied for the national benefit, Wolcott pointed out, individual states would levy them. Since Connecticut had relatively little direct foreign trade, her consumers would pay the duty to treasuries of neighboring states, in the form of hidden taxes. Meanwhile, her tax payers would be forced to fill

their national tax quotas by other means.[60]

In the spring of 1782, as the clamor of the army and public creditors for pay grew louder, Congress sent representatives to the state legislatures to push the impost grant. After Jesse Root addressed his own Assembly, the Connecticut lawmakers authorized a Congressional impost in May. The grant permitted the appointment of collectors and the framing of rules by Congress only if the regulations were consistent with the Connecticut constitution "and the Rights of a free People." Further contingent clauses were stipulated by the cautious Assembly: proceeds were to be appropriated for the payment of national war debts only; the grant would take effect only when all states had passed similar enabling acts; it would continue only as long as national debts remained unpaid; and no revenue might be applied to pensions or half pay. According to Dyer and Benjamin Huntington, the grant seemed to meet the "general approbation" of Congress. But the fact that the legislature had partially capitulated did not matter—Rhode Island's opposition prevented the unanimous vote needed to put the program into operation.[61]

The other part of the nationalist program called for the establishment of strong executive departments to replace the decentralized committee system—a move which Wolcott and Root supported. The former reported with favor the hints of great reductions in expenses from the efforts of Financier Morris. He also favored the new Bank of North America. In May, 1782, Root reported that "business in Congress is much helped by the establishment of distinct Executive departments."[62]

Congress again tried to push an impost grant through the state legislatures in 1783, and once again the Connecticut representatives urged, through Governor Trumbull, that it be adopted. In fact, Ellsworth felt

that the entire political system needed overhauling. Commenting on Congress's forced flight to Princeton in July, he said:

> But, Sir,/Trumbull/ it will soon be of very little consequence where Congress go, if they are not made respectable as well as responsible, which can never be done without giving them a power to perform engagements as well as make them. It was indeed intended to have given them this power in the confederation, by declaring their contracts and requisitions for the common defence sacredly binding on the States; but in practice it amounts to nothing. Most of the States recognize those contracts with the requisitions so far only as suits their particular opinion and convenience;...

The states were

> not duly reflecting on the calamities of a disunion and anarchy, or their rapid approach to such a state. There must, Sir, be a revenue somehow established that can be relied on and applied for national purposes as the exigencies arise, independant of the will or views of a single State, or it will be imposible to support the national faith or national existance. The powers of Congress must be defined, but their means must be adequate to the purposes of their institution. It is possible there may be abuse and misapplications; still it is better to hazard something than to hazard all.[63]

But for a time Connecticut proved unwilling to hazard anything. Bitter opposition in the lower house against commutation and the previous impost proposals had reached the boiling point, and before the spring elections of 1784, Connecticut became involved in the most heated campaign in at least a decade.[64] Despite urgings from the Huntingtons, who noted the benefits which would accrue to Connecticut consumers from a uniform national impost, the lower house blocked the measure. Finally, in May, 1784, after a larger pro-nationalist group was returned to the Assembly, the impost grant was authorized. But still the legislature did not break down completely. The grant was to last for twenty-five years only, and that long providing revenues were applied solely to discharging the national debt and that rules did not conflict with the state's constitution and "internal Police." The measure would go into effect as soon as all the other states agreed to it—which they never did.[65]

* * * * * * * *

The stand taken by Connecticut on national issues during the Revolution was determined in part by the fact that she had been a self-governing colony with few ties to the empire; that her territory extended to the Mississippi; that she was one of the smaller states in population; that her institutions were traditionally democratic, at least in comparison with those of the Southern colonies. These factors influenced her stand on independence; on the disposal of western lands; on the method of voting in Congress; on the officers' pay issue. But many of her votes were cast for measures by virtue of the fact that she was one of the New England, or according to contemporary usage, the "eastern" states.

Many of the New Englanders who held positions in the central government were personal friends and cooperated extensively—Elbridge Gerry and Joseph Trumbull, John Adams and Roger Sherman, Oliver Wolcott and James Lovell. When Governor Trumbull tried to push reimbursement for his son's commissary accounts through Congress, he relied on Sam Adams as well as his own delegation.[66] The Connecticut interests also received support from an unexpected quarter—a Georgia delegate who originally hailed from their state.[67]

Other sections commented much on the combination of New England states. Burke spoke apprehensively of their attempts "to derive to themselves every possible advantage from the present war at the expense of the rest."[68] Indeed, there is evidence of "out of door" activity of eastern delegates in formulating policy and deciding on nominees to back for lush posts or salary increases. When trying to secure a pay raise for his

brother-in-law Joseph Trumbull, William Williams showed the proposal to Elbridge Gerry. The latter thought it best not to move without a consultation "and finding our Strength, when I will attempt. we have a Club once a week,..." Three days later, Williams reported: "The affair you mention is not yet moved and our Club meets this Even^{g}. I intend to sound them, and prepare the Matter as well as soon may be."[69]

The New Englanders joined forces in removing General Schuyler of New York and promoted General Gates to fill the vanancy. On the completion of this project, Williams remarked with satisfaction to his father-in-law, the governor: "Schuyler I dare say is removed forever." Williams, who gave strong evidence of having a well-developed persecution complex, was constantly aware of opposition to New England by other sections. Once he even proposed that New England take her own measures

> to drive Burgoyne into the Lakes, without waiting for Congress... can it be that N. E. will be long driven and distresd by 6000 men. surely we can eat them up at a Meal. O That They wo^{d} rouse in earnest the work wo^{d} be short and easy.[70]

The Connecticut-New York enmity was especially strong. The wounds were constantly reopened by such disputes as the "plundering" of Trumbull's privateers in Long Island Sound; the Bigelow clothing case, which involved an attack on Trumbull and General Parsons by New York; and Joseph Trumbull's commissary department difficulties which involved General Schuyler.[71]

The New England states also lined up against New York, one of their chief antagonists in Congress, in furthering the claims of that nebulous entity which called itself "Vermont." According to Madison, New England's backing of the Vermont claim to statehood was rooted in ancient prejudices against New York, the interest of her citizens in Vermont lands,

and the hope of additional weight in Congress. Roger Sherman of Connecticut was a particularly avid patron of Vermont. From the point of view of New York, Sherman's mere espousal of the cause was bad enough. But they were absolutely appalled by the grounds which Sherman used. Dr. Thomas Young wrote an "incendiary publication" in which he justified the right of Vermonters to set up an independent government, by citing the Congressional resolves of 10 and 15 May 1776, which invited the people of royal colonies to overthrow existing governments. This doctrine, according to Young, applied equally well to the situation in Vermont. Sherman unsuccessfully sponsored the Young resolve in Congress. The New Yorkers noted with satisfaction that Dr. Young died in the midst of the debates and that they managed to have "this wicked production censured and exposed." Congress pronounced the Young heresy a gross perversion of its original resolution. Just as the conservative revolutionists had feared, revolutionary doctrine was being channeled for purposes which they at least had never intended. The New York delegates then warned the council of safety that Sherman who had

> all along acted openly as their /the Vermonters'/ Advocate and Patron, and in the last Debate plead their Cause with a Zeal and Passion which he never discovered in any other Instance, ... is already set out on his Journey to the Eastward. What may be his Views with respect to our Dispute, we know not; But to his Enmity and officiousness you ought not to be strangers.[72]

The controversy continued intermittently through the war and Connecticut continued to support the cause of Vermont, though the new state was not admitted into the union until 1791.

* * * * * * * *

Much of the time of Connecticut delegates was taken up not by grave questions of national import, but instead by the never-ending task of securing jobs for the people back home and trying to assuage the wounded feelings of constituents who had been insulted by Congress. Citizens of the little colony flocked to Philadelphia in 1774, all evidently hoping for positions. Silas Deane was besieged with requests to secure patronage, to which he responded zealously. In fact, he was always willing to do his part for his constituents, solicited or not. After discussion that Congress might remove to Connecticut to be nearer the scene of conflict, Deane hurried off a letter with the news. He promised that he would give "timely notice" to citizens of Hartford and Wethersfield so they might take the fullest advantage of a prospective flood of government officials. Deane also used his official position to aid Connecticut friends and relatives. Other delegates too, especially in cooperation with other New Englanders, were active in securing civil and military posts.[73]

The obligation of smoothing out relations between their constituents and Congress was less pleasant. The most difficult of these wrangles was the Connecticut officers' controversy of 1775. It happened that in the Connecticut militia, Generals David Wooster and Joseph Spencer outranked Israel Putnam. But Putnam, his fame enhanced by a small engagement won near East Boston, became the "Hero of the day." As such, he was unanimously appointed major general by Congress, thus outranking Brigadier Generals Wooster and Spencer in the Continental Army but still below them in the state militia. The two disappointed officers took

"umbrage," Spencer deserting his troops and Wooster threatening to resign.

Connecticut representatives took various personal positions on the issue. Deane, enemy of Wooster, had supported Putnam's promotion. But Wooster, son-in-law of President Clap of Yale, was a particular friend of that old Puritan Roger Sherman, while Spencer was a fellow councilor of Dyer and Sherman. The latter two recommended that Congress respect the order in which the three men stood in the Connecticut militia, but all three delegates combined forces in trying to straighten out the matter. They apologized for the hasty action of their associates, and deplored the existence of petty quarrels during the emergency. But nevertheless, Dyer was just a little disappointed when Spencer returned to his post. If the General had been so good as to resign, Dyer sighed, "I had designed to have taken his birth my self, as I believe I might /have/had the offer."[74]

The most exasperating controversy, or rather series of controversies, in which the delegates became entangled concerned the most important family in the state, that of Governor Trumbull. Some of them became not a little irked at the petty actions and demands of his excellency and his sons, as they were obliged to clutter up the proceedings of Congress with time-consuming delays while important national issues were shelved.

In 1775, Deane and Dyer worked diligently to secure the commissary-general post for Joseph Trumbull, eldest son of the Governor, at Joseph's request. Disgusted by the inevitable intrigue and difficulties of his post and the shocking lack of Congressional support, Joseph resigned, refusing to accept a new position in the reorganized department. He then sent letters to Congress denying charges which Congress had never heard or made. Trumbull's friends then secured him a position on the War Board

and urged in vain that he accept, for the public good as he was an able administrator.

One reason for the ex-commissary's refusal to accept the new post resulted from the rashness of William Williams, who threw Trumbull and his father, the governor, into a rage by insinuating that Congress doubted Joseph's integrity. Williams' grounds: the whispered remark of one anonymous informer. Dyer chided his son-in-law for taking any stock in Williams' statements:

> I should have thot that both the Governor and You had been long enough acquainted with Coll. Williams I mean the suddeness of his Temper the warmth of his Imagination, the strong Impression sometimes a little matter makes on his mind, (tho' of an honest good heart) to lay so great a Stress upon his painting[.]

But Trumbull continued to sulk, refused to take the War Board post, and soon after died, following a bout with the jaundice. For the next four years, the Connecticut and Massachusetts delegates, and even President Laurens were harrassed by Governor Trumbull to secure a settlement of his son's accounts.[75]

Meanwhile, Connecticut delegates were ordered to smooth out difficulties encountered by the second Trumbull son, Jonathan, Jr., paymaster for the northern department, a post secured for him by the delegates. Enraged when Congress addressed him by an incorrect title, Jonathan, Jr. sent offensive letters to Philadelphia. Laurens was forced to take time out from busy sessions in spring 1778, to settle the matter. In the process, Secretary Thompson became incensed at aspersions that he was not keeping the official records properly. Oliver Wolcott assured young Trumbull , reasonably enough, that

> it never was intended to address you improperly. I suppose that Committees who have reported on Subjects relative to your office

> thro' mere Inadvertence and Ignorance of your proper address, have given your office an improper Discription.... I really beleive that Nothing was ever intended in the address, injurious.[76]

Young Trumbull's actions were especially irksome because two years before he had flown into a rage at Congress over an even more petty matter. And in 1777, he had offended Wolcott and especially Roger Sherman by charging the latter with treating him with neglect and disesteem because Sherman did not promptly send him resolutions describing his duties. Finally, Jonathan, Jr. resigned his post and the delegates performed their expected duty of finding him an appointment on the Treasury Board. But he could not make up his mind whether or not to accept the new post, as it might be beneath his dignity. In the meantime, Congress waited impatiently. Finally, Samuel Huntington wrote:

> You Justly mention difficulties and Embarrassments, but my dear Sir let me ask are there any difficulties Existing equal to what you or I expected when this Mighty Controversy begun. [sic] I hope Sir soon to hear of your acceptance and wish for the pleasure to hear it from your own mouth.[77]

The fourth and youngest Trumbull son, John, who also experienced his "disappointments and mortifications" made sure that the delegates were aware of his unhappiness. John was given the post of deputy adjutant general for the Northern Army in 1776, through efforts of Connecticut representatives and their Massachusetts allies. The following year, John became aware of technical irregularities in his commission, so he sent Congress a high-handed demand for redress, at which certain members became "highly piqu'd." The New England delegates promised that should "Jack" rephrase the letter, they would try to iron out the matter. But this time they were out of luck--Congress had become so irked that they refused to give him a proper commission, on the instigation of "old Doc-

tor Witherspoon of high Scotch feeling." At the prompting of the governor, Connecticut delegates and President Laurens promised to secure young John a new appointment. But their bid for a secretaryship under John Adams was defeated.[78]

Fortunately, for the peace of mind of Connecticut representatives, David Trumbull did not become involved in disputes with Congress. But there remained the problem of the irascible governor himself. His excellency kept them constantly on the alert to find jobs for his sons and to redress their grievances. But even worse, he too fancied himself the object of an intentional personal insult by Congress. Connecticut's copy of a circular letter of 1778 was unintentionally sent by Laurens to the speaker of the lower house, instead of to Trumbull, as "head" of the Assembly. The Governor interpreted this action as a direct personal affront and sought redress. Joseph also joined his father in an attempt to avenge the affront to the family's honor. The delegates and Laurens tried to sooth the ruffled feelings of the two men. In vain, Dyer pointed out "that a meer unthought of mistake and Accident should /not/ give ... the Governor ... so much Sollicitude,..." Congress was again forced to take time off to deal with the delicate sensibilities of the Trumbulls.[79]

The whole series of episodes especially incensed Oliver Wolcott. He vented his steam in a private letter to his wife:

> Mr. /Jonathan, Jr./ Trumbull who has Wrote some pretty offensive Letters to Congress because he has not been treated with more particular Marks of Respect one would imagine did not much care about holding the office /of pay master general/ But as it yeilds him a Salary of 125 Dollars per month without his personally attending to it at all, I presume he will condescend to hold it, tho' I am very sure that such a sincure pay must be too much by farr below the Merits of any one of that Family. Their claims on the Head of

Merit I beleive have rendered them a little ridiculous. But this to you only. I am as still as a Mouse and I hope you will not doubt my Prudence.[80]

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At last the long years of fighting came to an end. On 25 October 1781, Roger Sherman and Richard Law were able to transmit the official account of Cornwallis' surrender to their governor. They had, they said, happy presages for the complete reduction of the British forces and the establishment of an honorable peace.[81] Congress had already considered the matter of a peace settlement. During the debates, Connecticut had lined up with her sister states of New England in standing firm for the fishing "rights" ultimatum, and this "long struggle over cod and mackeral" was finally settled to her satisfaction. But negotiations did not run as smoothly as Connecticut hoped. In October, 1783, the Assembly resolved unanimously that no truce should be made with Britain without the consent of France.[82]

During the latter part of the war, Connecticut was increasingly unrepresented in Congress. This fact was a crucial one because other states as well were not sending adequate representatives. By June, 1783, Congress was forced to appeal to Connecticut and four other states for delegates so the quorum of nine would be met. Finally, in late July, the Huntingtons arrived, and Congress was able to proceed with the important business awaiting its attention. But the Huntingtons were forced to return home in a few months, and when the treaty of peace arrived in November, Connecticut was again unrepresented. Congress became alarmed as to whether or not it could complete ratification in time for the docu-

ment to arrive in Europe by 3 March 1784, as prescribed. Connecticut gave little assistance in meeting the deadline. Not until January, 1784, did Roger Sherman and James Wadsworth arrive to sign the treaty. The draft did not reach Europe within the specified time limit, but the technicality was overlooked. However, it was little to Connecticut's credit that the treaty-making labors did not turn out in vain.[83]

* * * * * * * * *

The new nation born in the first Continental Congress now assumed a recognized place in the world. As a member of this confederation, Connecticut had advanced from a tiny, self-governing colony in the British Empire to a sovereign state in the new national organization. During the war, she had taken part in formulating policy and cooperating with her sister states to achieve the desired goal of independence. But on the floors of Congress, her delegates had not played a particularly distinguished role, and in fact the state was unrepresented at many times during the war. And her controversy with Pennsylvania had threatened to disrupt the union, though to her credit she agreed to a stalemate until peace. But some of her delegates, especially Sherman, Ellsworth, and Wolcott, had worked faithfully and earnestly in committees to forward the war effort. They continued to act as respected members of Congress in the years which followed, as the new state lined up officially with the nationalist group in support of a stronger central government.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER III.

1. Force, 4th, I, 554-5, 895; CCR, XIV, 324, XV, 136-7. The council of safety appointed William Williams to replace Oliver Wolcott in July, 1776. CCR, XV, 475-6. In December, 1775, it was enacted that the Assembly should henceforth appoint delegates. CCR, XV, 199.

2. CSR, II, 264. In May, 1780, the first group of delegates was chosen by this method. In April, 1779, it was decided that one, instead of two delegates might represent the state until ratification of the Articles. From then on, two were required. CSR, II, 234-5.

3. See especially, Oliver Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 14 Apr. 1778, in Edmund Cody Burnett, ed., Letters of Members of the Continental Congress /Burnett/ (8 vols., Washington, 1921-1936), III, 167.

4. Eliphalet Dyer to Gov. Trumbull, 21 May 1783, ibid., VII, 171.

5. Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, 3 June 1775, ibid., I, 111.

6. Roger Sherman to Gov. Trumbull, 22 July 1780, ibid., V, 287. Conclusions on the delegates themselves, unless specifically cited, are taken from the following sources: Dictionary of American Biography.... ed. by Allen Johnson and Dumas Malone (21 vols., New York, 1928-1944); Franklin B. Dexter, Biographical Sketches of the Graduates of Yale College.... (6 vols., New York, 1885-1912), II; John Sanderson, Biography of the Signers to the Declaration of Independence (2nd ed., 5 vols., Philadelphia, 1828), II; Roger Sherman Boardman, Roger Sherman, Signer and Statesman (Philadelphia, 1938); William Garrott Brown, "The Early Life of Oliver Ellsworth," AHR, X (1905), 534-64; George C. Groece, Jr., "Eliphalet Dyer: Connecticut Revolutionist," in Richard B. Morris, ed., The Era of the American Revolution: Studies Inscribed to Evarts Boutell Greene (New York, 1939), 290-304; Albert E. Van Dusen, "Samuel Huntington, A Leader of Revolutionary Connecticut," Connecticut Historical Society Bulletin, XIX (1954), 38-62; CCR; CSR.

7. Information on length of service is taken from the invaluable tabulations in each volume of Burnett's Letters.

8. A. Böhmer Rudd, comp., Wolcott Genealogy... (Washington, 1950), 55-6.

9. Boardman, Sherman, 118; Van Dusen, "Samuel Huntington," 40, 44; Burnett, I, 4-5; CHSC, II, 127-368, passim.

10. John and Abigail Adams, Familiar Letters of John Adams and His Wife Abigail Adams, During the Revolution.... ed. by Charles Francis Adams (New York, 1876), 251.

11. John Adams, Diary, 15 Sept. 1775, Burnett, I, 195.

12. John Adams, Diary, 10 Oct. 1774, ibid., 67.

13. Eliphalet Dyer to Gov. Trumbull, 19 Oct. 1782, ibid, VI, 514.

14. John Adams, Diary, 15 Sept. 1775, ibid., I, 195.

15. Thomas Nelson, Jr., to Jefferson, 4 Feb. 1776, ibid., 339.

16. Thomas Rodney, Diary, 10 Mar.1781, ibid., VI, 20.

17. Ibid., 19.

18. Ibid.

19. Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, 1-3 Sept. 1774, Burnett, I, 4-5; and 23 Sept. 1774, ibid., 80-1.

20. See Merrill Jensen, The Articles of Confederation: An Interpretation of the Social-Constitutional History of the American Revolution, 1774-1781 (2nd ed., Madison, Wis., 1948), xii. The discussion of the early Congresses follows that presented in The Articles.

21. See Deane to Mrs. Deane, 5-6 Sept. 1774, Burnett, I, 11; Connecticut Delegates to Gov. Trumbull, 10 Oct. 1774, ibid., 69-71; John Adams, The Works of John Adams,... ed. by Charles Francis Adams (10 vols., Boston, 1850-56), II, 393, 381-2, 386; John Adams, Diary, 14 Sept. 1774, Burnett, I, 30.

22. Boardman, Sherman, 117.

23. Adams, Works, II, 371.

24. Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, 12 May 1775, CHSC,II, 228.

25. Eliphalet Dyer to Joseph Trumbull, 18 May 1775, Burnett, I, 93-4.

26. Adams, Works, III, 18, 20-2, II, 503-6.

27. Oliver Wolcott to Samuel Lyman, 16 May 1776, Burnett, I, 449; Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 16 May 1776, ibid., and 11 June 1776, ibid., 484.

28. Wolcott to Samuel Lyman, 19 Feb. 1776,ibid., 355-6; Wolcott to Lyman, 16 Mar. 1776, ibid., 397; Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 17 Apr. 1776, ibid., 427.

29. Conn. Jour., 2 Feb. 1775; Deane to Mrs. Deane, [24] Sept. 1775, CHSC, II, 307.

Richard Smith, Diary, 21 Feb. 1776, Burnett, I, 359. The Rev. Dr. Smith was "peculiarly inimical" to Connecticut because he was also a "Wioming Claimer." See Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 26 Feb. 1776, ibid., 399. He had also collaborated with Ingersoll in attacking Connecticut claims to the Susquehannah territory.

30. CCR, XV, 416, 414-6; Conn. Jour., 10 July 1776; Roger Sherman to Joseph Trumbull, 6 July 1775, Burnett, I, 154; William Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 7 Sept. 1776, ibid., 77-8; Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 13 Sept. 1776, ibid., II, 85-6; Samuel Huntington to Matthew Griswold, Eliphalet Dyer, and William Pitkin, 7 Sept. 1776, ibid., 76-7; Roger Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 30 July 1778, ibid., III, 355; Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 12 June 1778, ibid., 228n2, and 20 June 1778, ibid., 310. An exception was of course Deane who turned apostate, but with much justification.

31. CCR, XV, 179; Carter Braxton to Landon Carter, 14 Apr. 1776, Burnett, I, 421; Dyer, Sherman, and Deane to Zebulon Butler and Others, 2 Aug. 1775, ibid., 186-7; Conn. Jour., 24 Jan. 1776, 21 Feb. 1776, 27 Mar. 1776; Boardman, Sherman, 156; Julian P. Boyd, "Connecticut's Experiment in Expansion: The Susquehanna Company, 1753-1803," Journal of Economic and Business History, IV, 56, 63-4.

32. Dyer to William Judd, 23 July 1775, Burnett, I, 172-3.

33. "The Connecticut Delegates, Proposed Resolutions," Oct. 1775, ibid., 231-3 & n2; Richard Smith, Diary, 20 Dec. 1775, ibid., 281; Richard Smith Diary, 18 Dec. 1775, ibid., 279; Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774-1789 (Library of Congress ed., 34 vols., Washington, 1904-1937), III, 435, 439-40, 453; Burnett, I, 290; Roger Sherman to Zebulon Butler, 19 Jan. 1776, ibid., 320; Boardman, Sherman, 156.

34. Deane to Thomas Mumford, 15 Oct. 1775, Burnett, I, 229-30; Boyd, "Connecticut's Experiment," 63-4.

35. R.S. Boardman, Sherman, 158; Journals of Congress, X, 261; CSR, II, 463.

36. Deane to Mrs. Deane, 12 May 1775, CHSC, II, 229; Titus Hosmer to Deane, 28 May 1775, ibid., 242; Deane to Gov. Trumbull, 16 Aug. 1774, Force, 4th, I, 710; Conn. Jour., 8 May 1776; Boardman, Sherman, 170; James Duane, Notes of Debates on Enlistments, 22 Feb. 1776, Burnett, I, 360.

37. Regarding delay in drafting Articles, see for example, William Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 7 Aug. 1776, ibid., II, 41.
Samuel Adams to Richard Henry Lee, 26 June 1777, ibid., 388-9.

38. William Williams to Gov. Trumbull, 11 Oct. 1777, ibid., 517; Williams to Trumbull, 5 July 1777, ibid., 399-400; Nathaniel Folsom to President Weare of N. H., 27 Oct. 1777, ibid., 535; Sherman to Richard Henry Lee, 3 Nov. 1777, ibid., 541.

39. Williams to Trumbull, 28 Nov. 1777, ibid., 574; CSR, I, 521n, 467, 532-3; See also Thomas Burke to Gov. Caswell of N. C., 12 Mar. 1778, ibid., III, 128; and John Henry , Jr., to Nicholas Thomas, 17 Mar. 1778, ibid., 132-3.
See local histories for information of town-meeting decisions.

40. Jensen, Articles, 150-9, 190-2.

41. Sherman and Ellsworth to Gov. Trumbull, 15 Oct. 1778, Trumbull Papers, III, 291; Sherman and Ellsworth to Trumbull, 15 Oct.1778, Burnett, III, 450; Trumbull to Conn. Delegates, 8 Dec. 1778, Trumbull Papers, III, 320; CSR, II, 231-2.

42. Delegates of N. C. to Gov. Caswell, 4 Nov. 1779, Burnett, IV, 507-8; CSR, II, 177-8; Daniel of St. Thomas Jenifer to Gov. Johnson of Md., 24 May 1779, Burnett, IV, 232.

43. Conn. Delegates to Trumbull, 9 Feb. 1781, ibid., V, 566; ibid, VI, 1-2.

44. S. Huntington, Wolcott, and Sherman to Trumbull, 18 May 1778, ibid., III, 255-6; Journals of Congress, XI, 502; James Lovell to William Whipple, 25 May 1778, ibid., III, 261-2; S. Huntington to Trumbull, 26 Oct. 1780, ibid., V, 429; Debate, 30 & 31 July 1782, ibid., 398, 405-7; Boardman, Sherman, 174-5; Generals McDougall and Ogden to Gen. Knox, 6 Feb. 1783, Burnett, V, 34-5n3; William Floyd to Gov. George Clinton, 12 Mar. 1783, ibid., 72; McDougall to Knox, 15 Mar. 1783, ibid., 72-3n2. Connecticut approved the five-year measure.

45. Debate, 31 July 1782, ibid., 407.

46. CSR, V, 23-4, 209, 277-8, 444-5; Abiel Foster to Josiah Bartlett, 21 Feb. 1784, Burnett, VII, 450; Samuel Dick to Thomas Sinnickson, 18 Mar. 1784, ibid., 473; ibid., 572; Boardman, Sherman, 203-4.

47. CSR, II, 463, V, 18-9, 27, 292, 334.

48. Journals of Congress, XXIV, 6-32.

49. CSR, V, 11&n.

50. Ibid., 219-20, 120-2, 205-6, 208-9; Sherman to John Franklin, 21 Feb. 1784, Burnett, VII, 453; Boyd, "Connecticut's Experiment," 64-6; Boardman, Sherman, 159.

51. Conn. Delegates to Trumbull, 5 Dec. 1774, CHSC, II, 328-9; Sherman to Trumbull, 20 Dec. 1779, Burnett, IV, 541-2; Ellsworth to Wadsworth, 15 Apr. 1780, ibid., V, 113. See also Ellsworth and Sherman to Trumbull, 23 Mar.1780, ibid., V, 92-3; CSR, V, 278-9.

52. Titus Hosmer to Trumbull, 31 Aug. 1778, ibid., III, 394-6.

53. See Merrill Jensen, The New Nation: A History of the United States During the Confederation, 1781-1789 (New York, 1950), 43-67.

54. Ellsworth to Trumbull, 14 Jan. 1780, Burnett, V, 9.

55. See Robert Abraham East, Business Enterprise in the American Revolutionary Era (Columbia University Studies in History, no. 439, New York,

1938), 195-209.

56. For repeal of commercial restrictions in Connecticut, see below, Chapter 6; and for the internal phase of the dispute over the powers which should be granted Congress, see below, Chapter 4.

57. Thomas Rodney, Diary, 5 Mar.1781, Burnett, VI, 7-9.

58. Root to Trumbull, 27 Dec. 1780, ibid., V, 504.

59. Root to Trumbull, 8 Jan. 1781, ibid., 520.

60. Conn. Delegates (S. Huntington, Wolcott, Root) to Trumbull, 9 Feb. 1781, ibid., 566-7; Root to Trumbull, 16 Mar. 1781, ibid, VI, 29; S. Huntington to Trumbull, 24 Mar. 1781, ibid., 33; Wolcott to Trumbull, 24 Mar. 1781, 34-5. See also Wolcott to Samuel Lyman, 3 Apr. 1781, ibid., 44.

61. Ibid., VI, xiv-xvi; CSR, IV, 153-4; Conn. Delegates (Dyer, B. Huntington) to Trumbull, 17 June 1782, Burnett, VI, 372.

62. Wolcott to Andrew Adams, 2 Jan. 1782, ibid., 284-5; Wolcott to Trumbull, 8 Jan. 1782,ibid., 286; Root to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 17 May 1782, ibid., 352. For Connecticut's approval of Bank of North America, see Journals of Congress, XX, 546-7.

63. Ellsworth to Trumbull, 10 July 1783, Burnett, VII, 220.

64. See below, chapter 4.

65. B. and S. Huntington to Trumbull, 2 Sept. 1783, ibid., 284; Samuel Dick to Thomas Sinnickson, 18 Mar. 1784, ibid., 473; CSR, V, 326-7.

66. There are frequent references to meetings of New England delegates, including Connecticuters. See, for example, Force, 4th, I, 711; Burnett, I, 205; John Adams,Diary,ibid., 81; ibid., III, 494. See also Trumbull Papers, III, 273-8.

67. See Thomas Burke, Abstract of Debates, 24 Feb. 1777, Burnett, II, 275, 371; Richard Henry Lee to Gov. of Va., 26 May 1777, ibid., 373-4.

68. Burke to Gov. of N. C., 10 (16?) Feb. 1777, ibid., 257.

69. William Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 7 Oct. 1776,ibid., 117-8; Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 10 Oct. 1776, ibid., 122; Elbridge Gerry to Joseph Trumbull, 22 Oct. 1776, ibid., 127.

70. Williams to Gov. Trumbull, 2 Aug. 1777, ibid., 436; Williams to Trumbull, 6 Aug. 1777, ibid., 441.

71. Trumbull Papers, IV, 248-51, 182, 187, 214; Andrew Adams to Horatio Gates, 29 Aug. 1778, Burnett, III, 389-90 & n4; Joseph Trumbull to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 17 May 1777, ibid., III, 364, n2; William Duer to Philip Schuyler, 19 June 1777, ibid., 386; James Duane to Philip Schuyler, 19 June 1777, ibid., 383; Duane to Robert R. Livingston, 19 June, 1777, ibid., 381-2.

72. Madison, Observations, on Vermont and Territorial Claims, ibid., VI, 340-1.

James Duane to Robert R. Livingston, 28 June 1777, ibid., II, 389-90; N. Y. Delegates to Council of Safety, 2 July 1777, ibid., 396-7; William Duer to Robert R. Livingston, 9 July 1777, ibid., 547; Duane to Livingston, 1 July 1777,ibid., 395; Journals of Congress, VIII, 509-12.

73. See Deane to Mrs. Deane, 8 Sept. 1774, CHSC, II, 166-70; Deane to Mrs. Deane, 1-3 Sept. 1774, Burnett, I, 4; Gurdon Saltonstall to Deane, 8 May 1775, CHSC, II, 224-5, and also 343; Samuel Holden Parsons to Deane, 28 Feb. 1775, ibid., 205; Deane to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 10 Sept. 1775, Burnett, I, 191; Deane to Mrs. Deane, 16 June, 1775, ibid., 127; Deane to Thomas Mumford, 15 Oct. 1775, ibid., 230; Deane to Mrs. Deane, 13 Jan. 1776, ibid., 310; Van Dusen, "Samuel Huntington," 45; William Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 10 Aug. 1776, Burnett, II, 46-7.

74. Samuel B. Webb to Deane, 11 June 1775, CHSC, II, 285; Deane to Mrs. Deane, /15?/July 1775, ibid., 288; Deane to Mrs. Deane, 15 July 1775, Burnett, I, 164; Roger Sherman to Wooster, 23 June 1775, ibid., 142; Wooster to Sherman, 7 July 1775, ibid., 142n3; Dyer and Sherman to Gov. Trumbull, 26 June 1775, ibid., 143-4; Sherman to William Williams, 28 July 1775, ibid., 179; Deane to Mrs. Deane, 20 July 1775, ibid., 166-7; Dyer to Joseph Trumbull, 21 and 28 July 1775, ibid., 168, 181; Boardman, Sherman, 133.

75. Joseph Trumbull to Silas Deane, 6 July 1775, CHSC, II,7-8; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 21 July 1775, Burnett, I, 168; Journals of Congress, II, 190; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 16 Dec. 1775, ibid., 278-9; Journals of Congress, VIII,598, 620; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 8 Dec. 1777, Burnett, II, 584; William Williams to Jos. Trumbull, 28 Nov. 1777, ibid., 573; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, June 1777, ibid., 392; and 28 Nov. 1777, ibid., 575-6; and 15 Dec. 1777, ibid., 588; Trumbull Papers, III, 273-8; Burnett, III, 480n2; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 8 Feb. 1778, ibid., 77.

76. The question involved: Was he "pay master general" or "deputy pay-master general" for the "Northern Department" or for the "N.Y. Department."? After much learned debate, it was decided that he was "pay master in the northern department."
Williams to Jos. Trumbull, 13 Sept. 1776, ibid.,II, 85; Laurens to Jona. Trumbull, Jr., 12 Mar. 1778, ibid., III, 126-7 & n5; Wolcott to Jona. Trumbull, Jr., 18 May 1778, ibid., 253.

77. James Duane to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 5 Oct. 1777, ibid., II, 589; Journals of Congress, VII, 715-8; Sherman to Gov. Trumbull, 20 Mar. 1778, Burnett, II, 305-6; Sherman to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 30 July 1778, ibid., III, 355; S. Huntington to Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., 3 Jan. 1780, ibid., V, 1 & n2.

78. William Williams to Joseph Trumbull, 13 Sept. 1776, ibid., II, 85; Elbridge Gerry to Jos. Trumbull, 12 Sept. 1776, ibid., 84; James Lovell to John Trumbull, 22 Mar. 1777, ibid., 308-9 & n8; Joseph Trumbull to John Trumbull, 6 May 1777, ibid., 347n3; Jos. Trumbull to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 17 May 1777, ibid., 364n2; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 15 Dec. 1777, ibid., 589; Laurens to Jonathan Trumbull, [Jr.], 5 Jan. 1778, ibid., III, 14; Conn. Delegates to Gov. Trumbull, 25 Sept. 1779, ibid.,437; Laurens to Gov. Trumbull, 26 Sept. 1779,ibid.; John Fell Diary, 29 Sept. 1779, ibid., 462.

79. James Lovell to Jos. Trumbull, 27 Jan. 1778, ibid., 53-4.

80. Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 14 Apr. 1778, ibid., 167; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 8 Feb. 1778, ibid., 77-8; Laurens to Gov. Trumbull, 9 Feb. 1778, ibid., 79; Dyer to William Williams, 17 Feb. 1778, ibid., 88; Dyer to Jos. Trumbull, 15 Dec. 1777,ibid., II, 589.

81. Sherman and Law to Gov. Trumbull, 25 Oct. 1781, ibid., VI, 250-1.

82. James Lovell to John Adams, 27 Sept. 1779, ibid., IV, 446; Henry Laurens, Proposed Resolution, 12 or 13 May 1779, ibid., 210; also 211&n2, 237; CSR, IV, 289-90.

83. See Burnett, VII, 178, 210; B. & S. Huntington to Gov. Trumbull, 30 July 1783,ibid., 243, and 2 Sept. 1783, ibid., 284; Trumbull Papers, IV, 445; President of Congress to Gov. of Conn., 23 Nov. 1783, Burnett, VII, 377; Sherman and Wadsworth to Speaker of Conn. House of Representatives, 15 Jan. 1784,ibid., 418.

CHAPTER IV.

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS: 1775-1784

In addition to the difficulties involved in working out joint policy with the other states in the national legislature, Connecticut's magistrates were faced with a very large number of domestic problems, including the fundamental one of reorganizing and coordinating the old colonial system for carrying on the war effort. The task was made easier by the fact that at the beginning of the war for independence, the Trumbull administration faced almost no political opposition. But as the war progressed, the unity of the popular party began to disintegrate in response to conflicting opinions about economic policy and the extent of the powers which should be granted the national government. This developing political dissension among the freemen was accompanied by demands for change in the operation of the old colonial system which had been carried over into statehood.

I. Organization of the State Government for the War:

Although aided by the fact that the old system of government was carried over into statehood without change and that the same personnel continued to fill public office, Connecticut's political leaders were forced to reorganize and coordinate the existing political machinery for fighting a war. They found at once that the structure and operation of the old colonial system presented definite disadvantages when they tried to organize for a sustained conflict with one of the world's greatest military powers. Most obvious were the lack of adequate personnel, in

fact the absence of almost any permanent officials, on the central level, and the inexperience in dealing with a major crisis of this type. Of course the system had proved adequate for fighting the limited colonial wars of the past. But lacking even a permanent capital, this government which consisted of a legislature which convened only occasionally, and a governor, secretary, and treasurer, could scarcely do its part in fighting the war for independence without substantial changes.

Despite these handicaps, the old colonial government did possess certain advantages, both in its structure and operation, which in part offset the weaknesses. Unhampered by any fixed constitution, the government was fairly flexible, and its structure could be altered at the will of the legislature. The General Assembly, its authority almost unchecked, had traditionally regulated the economic and personal lives of its constituents. Hence, there was no question of the right of the legislature to impose essential wartime restrictions, no matter how much opposition they aroused. Even the unwritten law prescribing long tenure in office and plural office holding was not entirely disadvantageous. Of course this conservative practice tended to check innovation and placed too-heavy duties on a few shoulders for really efficient administration. But, on the other hand, this system maintained in office the representatives of prominent colonial families with a long tradition of public service and wide experience resulting from many years of exacting political apprenticeship on the local level. Deputies and assistants were willing to accept responsible and burdensome administrative duties, often with little reimbursement. And they worked long and faithfully in performing the obligations they undertook. This conservative system also helped prevent a rapid turnover in government personnel which might

have disrupted the continuity of wartime policy.

But the key strength in the colonial system was the long-established and well-developed political system functioning on the local level. Town and county governments operated under general rules laid down by the Assembly, and in the case of the counties, officials were selected by the legislature. State officials could at any time prescribe duties for these local officers. Often these functions were not performed satisfactorily, but the practice aided state officials with the very limited administrative personnel at their disposal on the central level.

One of the most important methods used to cope with increased wartime business was that of holding extra sessions of the General Assembly.[1] From March, 1775, through October, 1783, thirty-seven sessions were held, seventeen regular and twenty special meetings. At times, special sessions met on a later date by adjournment; others were called by Governor Trumbull. These meetings ranged in duration from only nine days to over five weeks. Longer sessions were broken up with temporary adjournments.

Of these thirty-seven sessions, twenty-nine were held at Hartford and only seven at New Haven, the twin capital. Another special session was convened at Middletown. In October, 1778, the Assembly met at New Haven and then adjourned to Hartford because of the danger of British raids on the coast. From that time on, Trumbull was allowed to convene the Assembly at Hartford, and until October, 1783, no meetings were held in the western capital. Wartime offices, including those of the continental loan office and the state secretary and treasurer were set up in Hartford.[2] Located in the interior, Hartford was relatively safe from British attack and so became a center of continental stores and the

hub of much wartime economic activity, while New Haven, on the other hand, suffered a commercial decline.

The Assembly continued to assign duties to legislative committees, some of them joint bodies and others representing only the lower house. Supervising war prisoners, investigating possibilities of lead production, assessing confiscated property, auditing accounts--all called for the appointment of committees. Special groups with authority to summon witnesses were ordered to conduct hearings, as in the case of charges of inferior goods being supplied by war contractors and questioning United States commissary officials on the recommendation of Congress.[3]

As in the past, deputies and assistants were burdened with petitions from individuals seeking special privileges and exemptions from the operation of the law. Typical were those of soldiers who requested back pay or reimbursement for medical expenses, or those of towns or individuals praying for tax abatements or exemptions. One memorialist even asked for replacement of a six-pound soldiers' note which "being in the pocket of a Pair of Breeches, was put into a wash Tub and Washed to Peices [sic]..." His wish was granted,[4] as was that of Jonathan Arnold who unfortunately bore "the Sir Name of the Infamous Benedict Arnold." General von Steuben, "pitying the Misfortune of any Persons friendly to the American Cause doomed to bear the Same Name with a notorious Traytor," offered Arnold two dollars per month if he assumed the name "Steuben."[5]

Confronted with this endless stream of petitions, legislators could not deal efficiently with the more vital matters which demanded their constant attention. First in October, 1775,[6] and then throughout the emergency, the Assembly held up hearings on private business

from session to session. Eventually, the legislature shifted part of its burdens to lower courts. In 1778 and 1782, equity cases, first those involving sums up to £800, and later, up to £1600, were turned over to the superior and county courts. In both instances, the Assembly refused to hear appeals from the lower court decisions.[7] In 1782 and 1783, the Assembly also assigned to probate and county court judges the task of authorizing sale of real estate for paying debts of deceased and incompetent persons.[8] In May, 1784, after the close of the war, the legislature transferred the duty of acting as a court of last resort to a new state supreme court of errors which exercised appellate jurisdiction over superior court decisions. The new court consisted of the deputy governor and the upper house of the legislature. Superior court judges were then made ineligible for holding other posts in the state government.[9]

But even by meeting more often and by lessening its judicial burdens, the Assembly could not hope to formulate policy for every emergency or make day-to-day decisions demanded by the crisis. The governor was relied on to perform needed executive duties, but of course the Assembly disliked relying on the judgment of one individual. In 1774 and 1775, some executive functions were carried out by the committee of correspondence of the lower house. When the Assembly was not sitting, the committee conducted negotiations with revolutionary leaders in other colonies and even appointed delegates to the first Continental Congress.[10] In the very beginning of active resistance to the crown, the upper house, acting in its advisory capacity, served as an aid to the executive. In October, 1774, the Assembly asked Trumbull to convene the council for advice when he planned to call special legislative sessions. At the few council meetings held, fast days were proclaimed and some

defense measures set up.[11] The council continued to meet during the war to appoint sheriffs, and once to consider charges that William Samuel Johnson had communicated with the enemy.[12]

But the legislative council, with its membership scattered throughout the state, was difficult to convene when the Assembly was not in session. There was an obvious need for a more manageable executive body to aid the governor in meeting the ever-increasing day-to-day business. So, in May, 1775, the Assembly appointed a special nine-man "council of safety" to assist Trumbull in supervising colonial defense when the legislature was not meeting.[13] This first council of safety consisted of Deputy-Governor Griswold, three assistants, and three current and two former deputies, all of them residents of New London and Windham Counties, and so readily available for consultation with the governor at his home in Lebanon. The council, eventually enlarged to a total of twenty-two, was reappointed yearly. In time, its personnel was distributed more equitably among the counties of the state.[14] Once the system became better organized, Trumbull was ordered to convene the entire council to consider important questions, but a quorum of five was always sufficient for routine business.

The governor and his council of safety were delegated broad powers for setting up state defense measures and promoting state cooperation with continental forces. In addition, the Assembly often assigned them special duties, such as setting up and staffing an army hospital or planning for domestic manufacture of salt.[15] Very often they were given a wide latitude of discretion in carrying out instructions. In 1778, they were ordered to set up the terms under which state-commissioned privateers would operate,[16] and throughout much of the war they weighed the merits

of petitions asking for exemptions from the embargo regulations.

Both the Assembly and governor and council recognized the supremacy of the legislature in making and administering policy. In August, 1775, the governor and council questioned the Assembly's wisdom in deciding to fit out armed vessels. But after a lengthy debate, they decided that they must equip the brig, whether or not they approved of the policy.[17] The Assembly was careful to remind them of the source of their power. In 1776, when ordering them to appoint staff officers and fill vacant military posts, the legislators noted that

> This power and authority being thus delegated and referred in consideration of the extraordinary and peculiar circumstances of the case, and not to be drawn into precedent in the future.[18]

The governor and council of safety often deferred important matters for the consideration of the next Assembly. But during the emergencies the executive body had to initiate policy on its own. However the Assembly later gave its tacit endorsement by following up the resolutions of the governor and council with more comprehensive legislation. This was the case when the legislature made further rules clarifying the governor and council's orders that towns care for soldiers' families.[19]

Although sessions were held in the capitals during Assembly meetings, Trumbull convened most council sessions at the "War Office" in his store at Lebanon. In some respects the town of Lebanon became Connecticut's temporary wartime capital. Messengers, military and naval officers, engineers, contractors, and important figures like Washington and Rochambeau came in for consultation.[20] In many hundreds of meetings from spring, 1775, until fall, 1783, some of them lasting late into the evening, the governor and council of safety transacted a wide variety of public business—interviewing Congressmen; filling military vacancies and state

and national commissary posts; listening to pleas of towns for more adequate coastal defenses; considering requests for trading outside the state; allocating war supplies; filling requests for troops and provisions for the continental army; setting up programs to fill troop quotas; consulting with state and continental military commanders about troop movements; and conducting hearings into alleged misconduct of officeholders.

Although one member was assigned to record minutes, the governor and entire council often performed tedious clerical duties, such as sending out orders to the towns.[21] In the early war years, three of Trumbull's sons aided their father in meeting his enormous volume of correspondence.[22] Finally, in 1778, the governor, after repeated urging by the council, hired "a young gentleman of liberal education and proper accomplishment" as a clerk, at state expense.[23] The state also reimbursed councilors for each day's service and regularly supplemented Trumbull's small salary in consideration of his "extraordinary services."[24]

In addition to this temporary body to which powers were delegated, the legislature also set up one other new administrative body—the committee of the pay table. Created in May, 1775, this committee bonded commissaries and army paymasters and adjusted all bills for wartime expenditures before orders for payment were drawn on the treasurer.[25] Committee members were allowed daily wages and travel expenses, and in 1777, were authorized to employ one or two clerks.[26] As originally set up, the committee was in fact only another legislative committee, consisting of an assistant and three deputies. But subsequent personnel was drawn in from the outside. In 1777, two merchants were placed on the body, and throughout the war, merchants and attorneys not members of the Assembly formed a majority of the board. The agency acquired a

permanence not characteristic of legislative committees or the council of safety as the members were not recommissioned each year. Like so many other state officials, the pay table members worked in Hartford, where most of them resided, whether merchants, lawyers, or deputies.[27]

But this pay table committee, as a newly-created organ of the wartime government run by non-government officials, was unique. Most administrative duties were assigned to men who filled posts already established in the old colonial system. For example, the superior court was handed the admiralty jurisdiction formerly exercised by the royal government and heard cases involving treason against the state.[28] Secretary Wyllys and Treasurer Lawrence, both of whom continued to occupy their old posts, soon found the scope and amount of their work vastly increased. They were granted extra pay and, like the governor and pay table committee, allowed to hire much-needed clerks.[29]

Most wartime duties assigned existing units of government went to those operating on the local level. It was through the existence of these well-organized local governments that the state was able to administer wartime measures with any degree of success. This reliance was especially marked at the beginning of the war. True, the negligence of heavily-burdened local officers in carrying out orders often resulted in costly delays in supplying troops, raising money, and furnishing supplies. But had these local officials not been available, or had the Assembly and governor and council of safety lacked authority to assign them duties, the war effort would have lagged even more than it did.

Connecticut counties proved convenient administrative units for the state government. In 1776, for example, the governor and council

of safety appointed six commissaries, each to purchase clothing in his respective county.[30] At various times, men were assigned in each county to inspect gunpowder, to auction off confiscated Tory property, or to settle town conflicts over filling troop quotas.[31] County judicial officers, especially county courts and clerks, probate judges, and attorneys, were involved in administering and selling Loyalist estates, while county jails were used for confining war prisoners and Tories. Direct orders were given county officers, as when the governor and council of safety recommended that the Hartford County Court erect a fence around the jail, the expenses to be shared by the state and county governments.[32] Sheriffs, now also admiralty court marshals,[33] were constantly given instructions by state officials to impress supplies, guard and exercise war prisoners, take bonds from paroled Loyalists, or distribute regulations to militia officers.[34]

Regular administrative and judicial duties of the local "civil authority"—justices of the peace and assistants residing in a particular town or county—were considerably expanded. "The authority" was ordered, for example, to act with selectmen in appointing barracks masters, to issue impressment warrants, to check militia payrolls, and to adjust accounts for munitions towns supplied their soldiers before presentation to the pay table committee.[35] In addition to such uniform assignments,"the authority" in some towns, especially those along the coast, received many specific orders from the legislature and governor and council. For instance, a military detachment sent to Lyme in 1775, was placed under the direction of the deputy governor and local "authority."[36] New Haven's "authority" was once ordered to take paroles of war prisoners

returning to Long Island.[37] Sometimes these officers were given discretion by the Assembly, as when they were allowed to lift the embargoes temporarily for out-of-state trade.[38]

The seventy-odd Connecticut towns were assigned heavy duties throughout the war. In fact, the state turned to the towns for administrative assistance and emergency aid in handling almost every wartime problem, whether in raising, feeding, and clothing troops; confining Loyalists; caring for war prisoners; combating inflation; preventing trade with the enemy; or setting up coastal defenses. All the important officers elected by the town meeting were assigned new functions by the state. Informing officers were ordered to watch for breaches of wartime legislation, especially military desertion laws.[39] Town treasurers, for example recorded names of Tories whose guns were confiscated by the state.[40] These officials were sometimes reimbursed by the state for extra duties; in other cases Congress paid them, as when the towns were ordered to gather clothing to meet congressional requisitions in 1779.[41] Then again, the towns themselves might be ordered to reimburse officers, as when selectmen and town clerks inventoried local grain supplies for the state in 1780.[42]

As the most important town officers, the selectmen were assigned the most new duties by the state. Sometimes general legislation placed uniform duties on all selectmen, as when they were ordered to take town censuses, to furnish enlistees with ammunition, or to inform the judiciary about local property of political refugees.[43] Very often, selectmen were relied on to provide relief during emergencies, as when ordered to collect blankets for the Connecticut Line in 1776,or to act as tem-

porary saltpetre inspectors.[44] The Assembly and governor and council of safety constantly sent specific instructions to the selectmen of one or more towns, as for binding out children of a Tory refugee, equipping soldiers with axes, or provisioning coast guards.[45]

In turn, the unprecedented scope of business forced town meetings to assign comprehensive new duties to their selectmen, especially those in larger coastal and river towns. Town voters gave selectmen such chores as erecting magazines, hiring guards for local defense, distributing state salt, rounding up and returning deserters to camp, mounting guns, bringing in cannon, and gathering up clothing to meet state requisitions.[46] Sometimes overworked selectmen apportioned duties among themselves, as in East Windsor, where one of the group took charge of ammunition and another of forwarding commissariat supplies.[47] In other towns, the selectmen of each society supervised the war effort in their "departments."[48] Quite understandably, the towns of New Haven and Waterbury, each consisting of several parishes, sought Assembly permission to elect more than the legal maximum of seven selectmen early in the war.[49]

Local committees of inspection set up in 1774 and 1775, to enforce the Association were also used by the colonial and state governments, as well as the towns, for administrative purposes. In December, 1775, all committees were ordered to act with the town selectmen and "authority" in investigating and disarming local citizens failing to support the patriot cause. Towns without committees might be investigated by those of adjoining towns in the same county.[50] Specific orders were issued to certain committees by the Assembly and governor and council

of safety, especially in connection with early efforts to silence political opposition. Some were asked to take bonds from Tory prisoners returning home or to care for Loyalists confined to particular towns or societies.[51] So complete was the authority of the state government that the governor and council of safety once designated two men on Windham's committee who were to care for Tories sent into the town's first society.[52] Inspection committees were also used to expedite local defense measures, to care for British war prisoners, and for refugees who poured in from Long Island.[53] Such orders often served as stopgap measures until more effective policy could be worked out. Later on, particularly after the Loyalist problem was brought under control, towns did not regularly keep up these committees.

The traditional practice of loading down one man with a great many offices and duties continued throughout the war. The custom often hampered efficient wartime administration, as has been noted in connection with the delegates to Congress who found themselves torn between duties in Philadelphia and tasks required of them at home. Assigning such comprehensive duties to legislative committees caused difficulties. In February, 1776, Sheriff Williams complained of his dilemna in trying to care for war prisoners when four of his fellow committee members were absent in the army or away "on other public business."[54] Reports often had to be postponed for long periods because of the pressure of other duties on committee members.

The burdens of the judicial officers, particularly the judges of the superior court, were especially heavy. The scope of their jurisdiction was broadened to include Tory and admiralty cases, and of course

the Assembly transferred part of its judicial duties to this high court. Furthermore, the judges were all saddled with other tasks. Chief Justice Griswold acted as deputy governor and sat on the council of safety throughout the war, while Judges Dyer, Sherman, Pitkin, and Samuel Huntington were always elected assistants. Dyer often served on the council of safety, as did Pitkin from 1777 on, while Sherman was appointed four times and Huntington once. Dyer, Sherman, and Huntington often served in Congress. Two of them were frequently absent in Philadelphia simultaneously, and often someone was gone almost all of the year.

Very often the two houses of the Assembly disagreed on policy, so each made sure it was adequately represented on the council of safety. Hence an even greater burden was placed on the legislators, especially the twelve assistants, already weighted down with judicial, military, committee, and Congressional business. From 1777 on, Griswold and six or seven assistants were regularly named to the council. The other members were almost invariably deputies, either current members of the lower house or men who quite regularly served there. The ratio of deputies to assistants was generally about two to one.

Inevitably, under this tight political system, wartime decisions were made by a few men,most of them personally interested in the policies they made and enforced. These officials, especially those on the council of safety, as representatives of the state's most prominent families, were bound together by a network of ties through blood, marriage, business association, and friendship. The close connection between their personal and official careers was especially noticeable on the council of safety. For example, William Pitkin, Nathaniel Wales, and Jedidiah Elderkin, operators of state-licensed mills, supplied much of Connecti-

cut's gunpowder needs, while Jabez Perkins was one of the active state commissaries. Assistant Jabez Huntington, patriarch of Norwich's most prominent political and mercantile family, filled war supply contracts, as did his sons, especially Andrew and Joshua. Thomas Mumford, a leading New London County merchant, sat on the council of safety, as did John Chester, a merchant himself and a relative of the Huntingtons, Webbs, and of the Deanes, who were one of the most enterprising commercial families in the state.

II. Characteristics of Wartime Political Life:

The tremendous increase in governmental activity and the resulting need for men to act as advisors to the governor, as Congressmen, and as committee workers presented opportunities for many able men to gain public attention during the war. By filling these posts many new men rose to political prominence and received Connecticut's traditional merit award—nomination to the upper house. After 1779, they might also be recognized by nomination to Congress by the freemen. The traditional rules which prescribed a gradual advance up the slate of council nominees to fourteenth place, at which time one might expect election to the upper house, were not always followed, as they were in more settled times before the Revolutionary crisis and in the post-war years. New politicians, most of them comparatively young,[55] were very often promoted at an unseemly fast pace. Most extraordinary of these rapid advances in state politics was that of the dignified Samuel Huntington, able lawyer and judge, who represented his state as President of Congress. Huntington served only a two-year apprenticeship in the lower house, but was very

active in the Revolutionary movement and from a prominent family. Becoming tremendously popular with the voters at once, he was placed eighteenth in the list of 1773,[56] fifteenth in 1774, and was elected to the council in 1775. In the 1775 nominations, Huntington received 3,337 votes,[57] second highest of any assistant, and was placed sixth on the list, and the following year fourth. In 1784, he was elected lieutenant governor and two years later governor.

No one else matched this extraordinary career, but a very large number of men performed their assigned roles on the public stage with credit and so were placed in one or both nomination lists in due time. The usual pattern was as follows: deputies, also holders of judicial commissions, became influential in the lower house, were placed on the council of safety and/or sent to Congress by the Assembly—all this as grooming for higher office. The careers of Jesse Root, Jedidiah Strong, Benjamin Huntington, and Andrew Adams were all typical of the pattern. The "cool, steady and judicious"[58] Huntington, like his kinsman Samuel a representative of Norwich's most prominent family, became clerk of the lower house and member of the council of safety in 1776, and then speaker of the house in 1778. The following year, this highly-respected attorney was placed twentieth in the nominations for the council and eleventh on the Congressional slate. In the next lists, those of 1780, he was placed fifteenth for the council and seventh for Congress, and was elected to both stations the following spring. Other deputies of less important families who followed the pattern were Joseph Platt Cook of Danbury, Samuel Mott of Preston, John Canfield of Sharon, Stephen Mix Mitchell of Wethersfield, and Charles Church Chandler of Woodbury. As in Mit-

chell's case, this wartime activity was a springboard for a prominent postwar career in Connecticut politics.[59]

Far more liberties were taken in juggling names about on the nominating lists, and the order in which names were officially announced to the voters was a more reliable vane of the direction political winds were blowing than either before or after the war. The rise of Samuel Huntington's name from eighteenth to fourth place between 1773 and 1776 would not have occurred in more settled times, when he would have been required to wait his turn until old councilors died or resigned. But the fact that so many young deputies were rewarded with council positions did not indicate a real change in the operation of Connecticut's political system. These new men owed their advances in large part to well-timed resignations or deaths of councilors during the war. The death of Shubael Conant, councilor since 1760, in September, 1775, was followed by that of Ebenezer Silliman of Fairfield in October. Elisha Sheldon, assistant since 1761, resigned in October, 1778, because of declining health, and died within a year. In the fall of 1775, young James Abraham Hillhouse of New Haven died, after only two years' service. Jabez Huntington was seized with a nervous disorder during the war which forced his resignation in May, 1780. Three months later, the ranks of the upper house were again cut down, by the death of Titus Hosmer, the brilliant young lawyer from Middletown.

The reorganization of the state judiciary at the close of the war removed even more veterans from the council. In 1784, the Assembly ruled that no superior court judge could simultaneously hold the posts of governor, lieutenant governor, assistant, deputy, or Congressman.[60]

Hence, Judges Pitkin, Sherman, Law, and Ellsworth resigned from the upper house the following year in order to remain on the superior court bench. The legislature assigned John Treadwell and Jonathan Sturges, young deputies who had already placed in the Congressional and council nominations, to fill the vacancies.[61]

Also important in speeding up the pace with which new blood entered the council was the political fight of 1783 and 1784, when some men were dropped from the list.[62] Another important factor was the partial or total eclipse of some political careers during the war. William Samuel Johnson, the popular Anglican councilor from Stratford, went into voluntary political exile at the outbreak of the war, rather than offer resistance to the crown. Johnson's total vote in the elections of spring, 1775, normally between 3,000 and 3,500, fell to only 2,582. In the fall he received only 991 votes, barely enough to maintain him in nomination, though his name was placed in its traditional spot as senior assistant. After December, 1775, Johnson withdrew from the council altogether, and was not reelected in 1776.[63]

Johnson retired to Stratford and as he tried to give no offense during the war, was generally allowed considerable freedom of movement within the colony. A short-lived crisis did develop in summer, 1779, during the British raid on Stratford, when Johnson was requested to intercede with Tryon to save the town. Rumors that he had communicated with the enemy resulted in confinement, but the governor and his advisors decided to release their old associate.[64] Upon taking the state oath of allegiance, Johnson resumed his large prewar law practice, and after peace, once more took up his influential place in state politics.

As early as 1784, the Assembly sent him as special delegate to Congress to argue in the Susquehannah hearing.[65] Though placed last on the list of twelve Congressional nominees that October, he was elected in the spring, and the next fall, 1785, was placed first. Ample testimony of Johnson's complete reacceptance was given when the legislature restored his rank of senior councilor in May, 1786, when the election results were announced.

The political fortunes of other Connecticut leaders were affected by the whims of the voters. General Joseph Spencer, the officer who created a scene when superseded by General Putnam in 1775, failed to place in the nominations of 1777, probably as a result of sharp criticism following his military failures of that year. But Spencer was soon forgiven, for the freemen kept him out of the council but one year. The rapid rise of Lebanon's William Williams, son-in-law of Trumbull, was also temporarily checked during the war. Placing twentieth in the list of 1774 and fifteenth in 1775, Williams was elected to the council in 1776, and the following spring was made third-ranking councilor. But this recognition marked the zenith of his popularity with fellow legislators and the voters. In subsequent lists he was ranked considerably lower—fourteenth in 1777, thirteenth in 1778, fifteenth in 1782, eleventh in 1783, and ninth in 1784. The freemen refused to return him to the council from 1780 through 1783, even though he was placed thirteenth on the list in two of these elections and so by the traditional rules of the game should have been elected. The reasons for the violent fluctuations in Williams' political career are not clear. But narrow in his outlook, bigoted in his religious beliefs, prejudiced and opinionated

to an extreme, Williams was clearly unpopular with many persons,[66] and Thomas Mumford reported with satisfaction to his friend Silas Deane in 1778, that "Squire Prig Runs Low in Votes & Esteem."[67]

Williams' calculated efforts were an important factor in ruining the career of one of Connecticut's most promising young politicians—Silas Deane—who had done much to line up support for the first Congress, which he attended along with Dyer and Sherman. For some reason, a deep personal animosity developed between Deane and Williams,[68] each of whom apparently headed a faction within the popular party. Their differences reached a climax in October, 1775, when a large majority of the Assembly supported a plan to remove Deane and Dyer as representatives in Congress. The action was justified by a sudden and unprecedented concern for the principle of rotation in public office—it was "dangerous to trust so great a power as you /Deane and Dyer/ now have, for a long time in the hands of one Set of Men,..."[69]

Deane's merchant friend Thomas Mumford of Groton and his other supporters in the Assembly tried to line up support for the Congressman's reappointment, but Deane's"true friends" informed him that "the junto" led by Williams "had levied their artilery & strongly fortified against you by securing a large majority of the present members in favor of <u>both</u> Col. Dyer & you being recalled."[70] Deane attacked "those party people ... agitated and stirred on by that little malevolent prig in buckram /Williams?/ who is secure from my serious resentment in consequence of the supreme contempt I have ever, and still hold him in."[71] Williams' "junto" was strengthened by support from deputies of Fairfield and New Haven Counties, including "the Class or Club at Munson's"[72]—a group of

Whigs in New Haven. Deane also had very little respect for New Haven's Roger Sherman,[73] and in fact tried to block his original appointment to Congress.[74] As fellow Congressmen, Deane and Sherman were at odds about the Putnam-Spencer-Wooster embroglio,[75] and Sherman subsequently aligned himself with the Adams-Lee junto which led the attack on Deane's integrity as a government agent.[76]

Although he tried to feign outward indifference at the Assembly's action,[77] Deane was deeply hurt by this censure and thought of demanding a public hearing:

> My enemies' designs have been, by superseding me, in my absence, tacitly to censure me, and leave, by implication, a stigma on my character which they know a public hearing must not only clear up, but tumble them into the pit they have (like moles as they are) been digging for me.[78]

But Deane's great personal abilities had already been noted in other circles, and he soon transferred his attention to national interests. Even before his dismissal, he had begun to lose some of his interest in Connecticut politics,[79] and very soon after was completely engrossed in his international ventures, furthering the interests of the new nation and perhaps, as was charged, those of his own purse.

III. The Breakup of the Popular Party:

Even the reputation of Jonathan Trumbull, one of the most popular figures in Connecticut politics, emerged from the war badly damaged. Trumbull was once extremely popular with the voters for his vigorous support of the Susquehannah Company and for his reputation as the only colonial governor who supported the patriot cause. But by the time he announced his resignation in 1783 , the freemen had three times refused

to give Trumbull a vote of confidence. The mounting opposition to the governor was the most striking manifestation of a wartime split which developed in the ranks of the popular party over several important issues. Despite the unified front it presented against the British and in support of western expansion, cleavages in the party organization were apparent at least by the time of the Deane-Williams feud. And very soon the freemen began to take opposing stands on several vital issues which came to a focus toward the close of the war.

The breakup of the popular party stemmed in large measure from conflicting economic interests[80] among the voters—interests they held in part as a result of economic developments during the war. As voters took sides on various issues, two groups with opposing economic interests and objectives were discernible. One group—"the landed interest"—represented the old agrarian element which had always dominated town and freeman elections. Support for the agrarian point of view was found in the lower house of the Assembly and much of the support came from interior towns and possibly from mechanics of the commercial towns. Governor Trumbull and the upper house backed measures favored by the other segment of voters—"the trading interest"—which hoped to realize the old dream of freeing Connecticut from its economic bondage to neighboring importers, particularly through favorable government legislation. These conflicting agrarian and commercial interests were reflected in the debates over several interrelated issues at the close of the war—taxation policy,[81] encouragement of trade and incorporation of cities, policy toward returning Loyalists, rewards for continental officers, and granting impost powers to Congress.

Evidences of these conflicting interests can be traced throughout the war. The farmers forced through the restrictive economic measures such as embargoes and price regulations, which were generally opposed by men who favored freedom of action for merchants—men like Governor Trumbull, Jeremiah Wadsworth, Silas Deane, and Jesse Root.[82] An indication of the increasing strength of the commercial interests during the war was found in the reaction to these abortive measures which took place in Connecticut and other states, as well as in Congress, around 1780. Protests against unpatriotic farmers who hoarded produce for speculative purposes met countercharges that Connecticut merchants were making scandalous profits from wartime opportunities. Disagreement also developed over proper taxation policy. Merchants complained of discriminatory legislation when taxed in proportion to their high wartime profits. The farmers, they charged, paid only a land tax, based on old fixed rates, despite high prices which permitted large profits from agricultural production.[83]

The political fortunes of Governor Trumbull, himself a trader, albeit an insolvent one, suffered from the widespread distrust of merchants which developed during the war. For several years, it was generally whispered about the state that Trumbull was profiting from trade with the enemy. The reports of Connecticut officers returning from British prisons gave foundation to the rumor. They told of large trunks and packages of merchandise on New York wharves and in British ships labelled for consignment to Trumbull.[84] The effect of the accumulation of rumors was so damning that it resulted in Trumbull's failure to win a majority of the gubernatorial votes in both 1780 and 1781.[85] Although the General Assembly placed him in office both times, the experience was humiliating for a man whose votes had often not even been counted in the past, "his

majority ... /had/been so exceedingly apparent."[86] Unable to ignore the rumors any longer, Trumbull asked for an official investigation of the charges in January, 1782. The joint legislative committee which tracked down the rumors labelled them entirely without foundation and completely vindicated the governor.[87] That spring Trumbull was once more placed in office by the votes of the freemen.

But Trumbull's return to the good graces of the voters was short-lived, for the next winter he was involved in a much more serious political crisis. The spark which touched off the explosive situation was struck in January, 1783, when the Assembly received a petition from Richard Smith, a proscribed Massachusetts Loyalist, whose iron works in Salisbury had been put into wartime production by Connecticut. Claiming involuntary detainment in England during the war, Smith asked permission to reside in the state and to land a shipment of British merchandise for trading purposes.[88] The council favored a grant of full citizenship and the trading privileges. At first the lower house dissented, but later the deputies concurred with the council's stand.[89]

This decision touched off a violent reaction in New England. Because Smith, a former resident of Massachusetts, had been proscribed by that state, radicals in Massachusetts and Rhode Island sent in protests. Towns all over Connecticut convened to draft spirited resolutions in which they objected to the Assembly's action.[90] They protested its lack of faith in the laws of a neighboring state, the breach in trading-with-the-enemy acts by permitting the importation of British goods, and the injustice of allowing Smith to collect prewar debts without restriction. Pronouncing him an enemy to American rights, Cheshire townsmen refused

to have further dealings with the refugee.[91] Although it refused to reconsider the decision, the legislature was finally compelled to set up a committee to justify itself to the authors of a deluge of protests.

By January 31, 1783, rumors had begun to circulate that Smith had given Governor Trumbull a bribe of 100 guineas for exerting his influence in behalf of the petition. Again the Assembly investigated charges against the governor, and once pronounced them groundless.[92] But "Smithite" and "Anti-Smithite" factions developed and by March some observors felt that the uproar "must jolt some folks out of the Saddle." New Haven leaders plotted a replacement of Trumbull with Oliver Wolcott, and backed Samuel Huntington or Richard Law for the second post in the government.[93] So strong was Trumbull's opposition that again that spring he failed to receive a majority of the freemen's ballots, although he was voted in by the legislature.[94]

The episode became more involved on February 1st, when Smith's sloop Polly and part of his goods were captured by a privateer commissioned by Congress and taken to Rhode Island. As the seizure had taken place outside Connecticut jurisdiction, her law protecting his property was ignored. Smith promptly responded by fitting out a brigatine and after a series of minor adventures recaptured his goods and brought them into New London. When Trumbull turned down the Rhode Island governor's request for a return of the vessel and goods for trial, he was charged with using his position to protect Smith, an open enemy of Massachusetts. At first this interstate dispute was confined to narrow, legal principles concerning Connecticut's jurisdiction, as opposed to that of Congress. But by April 25, a writer in the Connecticut Gazette defended the Polly's capture on the broader ground of Smith's political sympathies, and the entire question of postwar policy toward the Loyalists soon became bound up in the

Smith controversy.[95]

The stern measures taken by the legislature and by local committees in 1774 and 1775, for silencing Tory opposition had been shortlived. Although the attitude of the legislature changed from time to time, in response to American military prospects and to activities of the Tories, in general the state maintained a conciliatory policy toward her political minority throughout the war. Legislation was often deterrent, rather than punitive in intent and many acknowledged or suspected Tories took advantage of liberal statutes to renounce allegiance to the crown. And although general confiscation measures were passed, no Connecticut Loyalist was attainted or proscribed, as was the case in Massachusetts.[96]

So lenient was the official Tory policy that some felt their state was not giving its whole-souled support to the patriot cause. In fact, by spring, 1777, patriotic fervor had declined so much that the legislators hesitated to enact an oath of allegiance for all office holders. Conservatives justified their action by arguing that the Separatists could not in good faith take an oath which implied their acceptance of the principle of state-supported religion. Anti-Tories were skeptical of this sudden concern for the welfare of the religious minority. They declared that the Assembly was in control of secret Tories who refused to take decisive action because they feared the momentary collapse of the American cause. The charges appeared warranted when a new bill eliminating these religious objections was also turned down.[97]

The failure to adopt a test oath indicated the conservative reaction which took place in Connecticut very early and generally continued throughout the war.[98] In 1777, three very prominent men—Erastus Wolcott, William Hillhouse, and Thomas Seymour—were widely accused of se-

curing protections from General Howe.[99] The truth of the charge was never determined, but the trio continued in office, apparently retaining the confidence of the people generally. It was also significant that the tenure of Secretary George Wyllys was not interrupted by the war, although he was in active sympathy with the Loyalist element.[100] And the ease with which William Samuel Johnson resumed his old place in Connecticut politics, despite his obvious sympathy for the king, has been noted.

General public opinion in conservative New Haven was especially sympathetic to the Loyalists.[101] Jared Ingersoll was assured by Dyer and Sherman that he might return home from Philadelphia without difficulty, and though an avowed enemy of independence, Ingersoll by no means found a hostile atmosphere in New Haven. When he died in 1781, his funeral was largely attended and his obituary made no mention of his political sentiments.[102] After the battle of Saratoga, the town generated some enthusiasm for the war, but such lethargy had set in by the time of Tryon's raid of July, 1779, that only one-third of the men in town were willing to resist the British by force of arms. Ezra Stiles was shocked, as were other observers in the state, at the refusal of the Connecticut people to take vigorous action in the cause of freedom.[103]

This lenient policy toward the Tories and the willingness to overlook or pardon signs of adherence to the king during the war foreshadowed the future. At the very moment Richard Smith's petition was presented, the Connecticut legislature was trying to determine what position to take toward the Loyalist refugees beginning to flock back from behind the enemy lines. Towns were growing alarmed, and on January 15, 1783, Norwalk petitioned the Assembly to prevent their return. Radi-

cals apparently controlled a legislative committee appointed to consider the case of Smith and other Tories, for its report marked the high point of anti-Loyalist sentiment. The committee favored prohibiting the return of refugees. Tories who remained in the state would not be permitted to vote or hold office for seven years, and not even then without the consent of three-fourths of their town's inhabitants.[104]

By the time of the next Assembly meeting in May, the Smith controversy had become a heated issue, and public debates were turning from the specific question of admitting this one merchant to a consideration of overall state policy toward the Tories. Alarmists were advising voters to resist insidious designs of the Tories to capture the state's political machinery, while conservatives minimized the dangers. The spring Assembly was apparently in control of conservatives, in so far as the Loyalist question was concerned, because the harsh committee report of January was turned down. Instead, the Assembly repealed most wartime Loyalist legislation and no further discriminatory acts were passed. The lawmakers seemed to forget the past entirely and unofficially they approved the naming of Samuel Seabury as Episcopal Bishop of Connecticut. The desires of the most radical elements were put into effect in some towns by local regulations, and committees were set up to screen refugees, but apparently this local opposition soon died out in most cases.[105]

The decision to place no obstacles in the paths of returning Loyalists was thus consistent with previous policy. Economic considerations were also a very important factor in determining policy. Many people had visions of commercial benefits which could result from ad-

mitting prosperous Tories. They hoped to use Loyalist capital and know-how to build up the independent commerce which generations of merchants had dreamed about. Otherwise, with a reestablishment of New York's trade after the war, Connecticut traders foresaw a return to "the kind of slavery which we formerly laboured under to the neighbouring trading towns."[106]

In an attempt to line up farmer support, they stressed the European connections of the Loyalists, which would assure Connecticut a ready overseas market for her agricultural surpluses.[107]

The story of New Haven's decision to encourage the settlement of Loyalists provides the best case study.[108] Men who favored a vigorous promotion of postwar commerce finally secured a lifting of the local ban against the return of local refugees and even encouraged settlement of those from other states. A petition was circulated in the spring which would have invited about 120 Tory families barred from return to New York City to settle in New Haven. The group contained forty merchants who reportedly offered to bring two-third's of New York's mercantile property to New Haven.[109] The appeal of these arguments in New Haven was indicated by the first city election results in 1784, when Stiles reported an "Endeavor silently to bring the Tories into an Equality & Supremacy among the Whigs." A coalition of conservative Whigs plus Loyalists was but two votes short of a majority.[110]

The repercussions of the Smith affair had just begun to subside when the freemen were again split by new issues. The new controversies were touched off when Congress decided to reconsider the officers' pay question in 1783, and eventually voted to commute the previous grant of half pay for seven years to full pay for five years. Connecticut, of

course, had always violently opposed any special benefit for continental officers, and in 1782, had, it will be remembered, authorized a national impost duty only on condition that none of this revenue be used for paying officers.[111] But in 1783, Governor Trumbull, along with the councilors and delegates in Congress, favored commutation, and once more the chief executive came into a collision with his constituents.[112] The issue touched off a vigorous protest movement in the summer of 1783. Towns assembled to condemn the measure on its own merits. In addition, they raised the issue of constitutionality, alleging that Congress was encroaching on states' rights to an extent unwarranted by the Articles.[113] The resolves of Simsbury passed in a special July town meeting were typical:

> That as one great Cause of our late War is well known to be ye exorbitant and unreasonable Pensions granted to particular persons, so it must be Supposed for the Hon^ble^ Continental Congress to grant Such Pensions will be Dangerous alarming & unconstitutional.

Furthermore, if commutation were granted, contrary to their "just Expectation," and other towns agreed with their stand, they would refuse to pay their taxes.[114] Committees of correspondence were set up, and in September representatives of twenty-eight towns assembled in a Middletown Convention for joint protest measures.[115]

Then, with a renewal of the request for national impost grants in the summer of 1783,[116] the commutation fight merged into a larger question involving the relations of the state and national governments. The impost question accented even more sharply the alignments which had developed over the commutation and commercial policy issues. The revenue request was backed by Trumbull and the commercial elements and opposed by farmers and mechanics.[117] Merchants favored strengthening the central government as a matter of principle and expediency. Trumbull,

a spokesman for the commercial interests, is credited with the authorship of a series of six articles in the Connecticut Gazette, beginning March 26, 1784,[118] in which he urged a grant of the revenue request. The governor claimed that Connecticut annually imported $350,000 worth of goods, only one-eighth of which came through her own ports. The balance came through states which had already or would soon levy imposts for the benefit of their own treasuries, unless Congress could set up a national impost. Under a state duty system, Connecticut would pay the impost to other states through hidden taxes included in the purchase price of imported goods.

That summer the commercial interests began organizing to push the adoption of their policies. At first, local meetings of merchants, apparently originating in New Haven, were held to consult on how best to "promote Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures within this State, objects of the greatest importance at the present period." Then delegates of merchants from five counties convened in Middletown on August 26. They requested that laws regulating trade be revised and that proper inspection regulations be made for merchandise retailed and exported. The merchants also urged that "suitable encouragement be given to such branches of our trade, as will keep the circulating money from going out of the State." In addition, the Assembly was petitioned to replace the state excise tax with an impost duty. This excise tax had been passed in January, 1783, to raise funds for paying the interest on public securities—probably an attempt of the agrarian interests to show that the national impost duty was unnecessary. The measure levied a five per-cent sales tax on certain goods sold within the state and laid specific rates

on the sale of foreign wines, brandies, rum, snuff, and tea and chocolate.[119]

The impost grant favored by the governor and council aroused spirited opposition. Farmers and mechanics replied that as consumers they would pay the tax, rather than the merchants, through higher retail prices. They were already in arms over the disproportionate tax burdens carried by the "common people"—a situation they claimed was inducing immigration from the state. Their constitutional objections to the commutation grant were also applied to the impost proposition, as the two questions merged. Opposition was also raised against the Society of Cincinnati, said to be establishing an aristocracy in republican America, and against the high salary Congress was paying Robert Morris. Equally dangerous was the national government's creation of "a train of secretaries, clerks and attendants, figuring in all the pomp and parade of European habits and manners."[120]

The intensity of the opposition was strikingly demonstrated in October, 1783, when Trumbull announced his decision to retire from all further public service the following May. In his farewell address, the governor expounded his program for a stronger national government and urged Assembly support. The lower house reacted by refusing to endorse a joint resolution thanking the governor for his long years of devoted service to the state. The deputies argued that the resolution as originally drafted would imply their concurrence with the governor's stand in favor of commutation and the impost grant. An amended resolution was finally drawn up in which the alleged endorsement of Trumbull's views on the national government was struck out.[121]

The impost and commutation questions shook the state from one end

to the other, as conservatives voiced fears of impending anarchy. Again the towns mobilized for action through special meetings and committees of correspondence. The Middletown Convention of towns, originated in the popular aversion to commutation, continued to hold sessions from time to time by adjournment. The lower house received a petition from the Convention which remonstrated against the policies of Congress and the unconstitutional powers being assumed by the national government. Without the concurrence of the governor or council, the deputies sent the protest on to Congress.[122]

Before the spring elections of 1784, another issue further intensified the political differences in Connecticut—the incorporation of cities.[123] The inadequacies of the old township system for promoting commercial prosperity had been recognized before the war, and as early as 1771, New Haven had considered the possibility of municipal incorporation. Merchants needed police protection, street repairs, and wharf construction which town meetings were not willing to finance through public funds. The large towns like New London, Hartford, and New Haven were essentially agricultural communities, and the farmers in outlying parishes could and did block the efforts of those residing in the compact mercantile communities within township boundaries to obtain funds for needed expenditures.[124]

The incorporation issue was revived in the fall of 1783, when commercial groups in New London, Norwich, New Haven, Hartford, and Middletown began a campaign to secure a more enterprising system of local government. They expected that postwar commercial development would be stimulated by municipal governments run by the merchants. The agitation over the impost question exerted an influence on the movement. In his propa-

gard a for the merchant interests, Trumbull devoted one newspaper article to the municipal incorporation issue. Incorporation, he argued, would extend benefits on both the local and state levels. The opposition of farmers and mechanics sprang from "unreasonable jealousy or from ignorance." In reality, these economic interests would benefit from the resulting stimulation of commerce, because it would alleviate part of their tax burdens.[125]

In all five towns, a contest developed between the business interests and the farmers who had always controlled elections.[126] Hartford farmers remonstrated that the old government provided a suitable framework for future needs and argued that two governments within the same territory would clash. Hartford merchants, who had profited from wartime trade, replied that a city government would be "the means of uniting the Efforts and Wealth of the commercial Part of the State in such useful and liberal plans of Trade as may rescue it from its dependence on our sister States and be an increasing emolument to our own."[127] The cause was aided in Hartford when much of the agrarian opposition was removed by the incorporation of all territory east of the Connecticut as East Hartford in December.[128]

In January, 1784, the General Assembly granted incorporation privileges to two cities, New Haven and New London, and then in May to Hartford, Middletown, and Norwich. The governments of these five cities—the oldest municipalities in New England—were almost identical and bore strong resemblance to the old town structures. All provided for annual city freeman meetings for electing a court of common council, consisting of four aldermen, a maximum of twenty councilors, and a mayor who held of-

fice during the pleasure of the Assembly. The freemen, who also chose a clerk, treasurer, and two sheriffs, met to levy city taxes and to approve all by-laws of the court of common council.[129]

With so many important issues involved, the campaign leading up to the spring elections of 1784 became the most heated in at least a decade. The intensity of the feelings aroused was indicated by the nominating list of 1783.[130] Deputy-Governor Griswold was not given the top place on the slate, as he traditionally should have, after Trumbull's resignation. In fact, Griswold was not even placed in nomination. Instead, Assistant Jabez Hamlin of Middletown headed the list, while assistants Dyer, Adams, and Davenport were dropped. The last places were filled by deputies Increase Mosely, Dyer Throop, Samuel Mott, and Charles Church Chandler, men placed in nomination for the first time, and three of whom had not even served on the council of safety. New names also appeared on the nominating list for Congress[131]--deputies John Treadwell, Joseph Platt Cook, William Hillhouse, Jonathan Sturges, Throop, and Chandler. In the April election, the votes of the freemen were so split that no one received a majority for governor. The 6853 ballots were divided as follows: 2192 for Griswold, 1689 for William Pitkin, 1177 for Samuel Huntington, 1053 for Oliver Wolcott, and 742 scattered. Samuel Huntington, who received 2752 votes, was elected lieutenant governor, and in May, the legislature confirmed Griswold as chief executive.[132]

Apparently neither side won a substantial victory in the election, for the legislation passed at the May, 1784, session gave benefits to both the agrarian and trading interests, though the merchants

gained the most. On May 20, 1784, the new house of representatives authorized a national impost duty by a vote of ninety-three to forty-two.[133] The same session approved the other three municipal charters and passed an act "for encouraging and promoting the Commerce" of Connecticut, by setting up New London and New Haven as free cities and free ports for seven years. Citizens of other states and foreign powers who took up residence in those cities with the consent of the inhabitants or the civil "authority" and selectmen were extended the same legal protection as regular state citizens. In addition, they might take the freeman oath and so become bona fide citizens of the state. Liberal tax exemptions were offered native and foreign importers who resided in or set up businesses in these cities.[134]

But the merchants were unable to force repeal of the state excise tax law which the landed interests had passed the previous January. However they did succeed in modifying its provisions. The specific taxes on enumerated luxury goods, including wines and West-India goods, were lowered, while the uniform five per-cent tax on other goods was reduced to two and one-half per cent. In addition, all articles of the growth and manufacture of Connecticut or any other state of the union were exempted from taxation.[135]

In addition to preventing the complete repeal of the excise tax, the farmers pushed through a suspension of the collection of all taxes except those necessary for the support of the state government. Their pleas for tax relief were also met by a law exempting all neat cattle under two years of age from the list and lowering the official valuation placed on certain other cattle.[136]

Both sides, then, gained something, although the tally on the merchant side of the ledger overbalanced that of the farmer's. And so the campaign of 1784 was closed, and for a time,at least, elections aroused comparatively little interest in the state.

IV. Interest in Political and Social Reform:

During the war the interest of the freemen was aroused by important issues other those concerning Connecticut's future economic development and the relationship of the state and national governments. The slight interest in social and political reform shown during the Revolutionary movement increased somewhat during the war for independence. The prewar debate over freeing the Negro continued, and, as in the past, abolitionist sentiment was motivated in part by economic considerations. But under the influence of the clergy and other liberals, the proposal was backed more and more as a matter of principle. Traffic in human souls by men who appealed to natural rights doctrines was denounced as inconsistent and hypocritical.[137] Yale students debated the issue, and the Assembly even received a petition from Negroes begging permission to "rejoice with your Honors in the Participation of that inestimable blessing FREEDOM."[138]

The proposals for abolition made definite headway during the war. By 1777, the earlier ban on slave importations was followed up by an act permitting masters to free slaves under proper local supervision.[139] This act resulted in some masters sending their ex-slaves into the army as substitutes.[140] All through the war, abolitionist proposals were kept alive, in large part through the campaign of Aaron Cleveland, a Norwich

hatmaker and one-time leader of the Sons of Liberty, who made speeches and wrote essays, poems, and sermons on all the political and religious issues of the day.[141] In June, 1779, this professional liberal drafted an abolition bill which passed the lower house forty-six to forty-two,[142] but was apparently blocked by the council. In 1784, Connecticut's first emancipation act provided for the gradual abolition of slavery. Negro children born after that year would become free at twenty-five; and in 1797, the period of servitude was reduced to twenty-one years. Finally, in 1848, complete emancipation was adopted.[143]

The position of religious minority groups was also improved during the war. By 1777, the weakening of conservative Congregationalism, the rising secular spirit, and the stimulation of political liberalism and natural rights theories finally brought the Separatist Congregationalists exemption from taxes for the established churches.[144] Anyone could benefit from the law if he could prove support of his own church—the same privilege previously extended Anglicans, Quakers, and Baptists. Persons taking advantage of the exemptions could not vote in society meetings, save for making rules and levying taxes for local schools.[145]

These concessions, however, failed to satisfy dissenters, who wanted full religious liberty, not mere toleration. They pointed to the example of other states where new governments were adopting this principle.[146] Their long petition and pamphlet warfare against the union of church and state finally forced the Assembly to retreat another step. The revised law code of 1784, made no reference to the Saybrook Platform of 1743, previously the only legal basis for Congregational organization. Dissenting churches were given management of their own financial affairs

under no greater government control than established congregations. But despite these compromises, the union of church and state and the tax-supported clergy were retained.[147]

Growing discontent with the aristocratic operation of Connecticut's government became far more vocal during the war years. Town meetings, freeman meetings, and county conventions conducted a campaign to remove the veil of secrecy which had always shrouded proceedings of the legislature. Claiming a right as citizens to keep a watchful eye on their rulers, especially when such important issues were being decided, the people demanded open doors and free admission to lower house debates and publication of the votes of assistants and deputies alike. Vigorous support was given to the demand that freemen, not their representatives, should select state delegates to Congress,[148] and in time the Assembly gave in. Observers called attention to the practice of apportioning the various functions of government among distinct personnel which other ex-colonies were adopting.[149] Sharp criticism was levied against Connecticut's intrenched system of plural office holding, under which the Assembly confined all offices of honor and trust to its own members:

> Are there none among you all, fit to hold any office under your assembly, but the members of the assembly?—So we should be ready to judge, if we consider only the appointments which are made. Are there delegates to Congress to be appointed? Not a freeman in the state is fit for the place, unless he be a member of the assembly. Are there general officers to be appointed for the militia? The chief recommendation is a seat in the assembly. Or field officers for the established army? The being members of assembly /sic/ , in a wonderful manner communicates both courage and military skill. Or are judges to be appointed for the superior court? In order to this post/sic/, a man must not barely be a member of the assembly, but of the upper house. Or is a judge wanted for a county court? He must be sought for among the members of the assembly.—And scarcely can a man become qualified for a common justice of the peace, till he is sent to the assembly. But when once he joins that wonderful body, he instaneously becomes another man.... And I am bold to say, let a man of

> ever so ordinary capacity and slender abilities, be sent to the assembly, he is immediately induced with the most extraordinary abilities, qualifying him for every office both civil and military.[150]

The only systematic program of political reform during the war for independence was initiated in Norwich and backed by such important men as Benjamin and Jonathan Huntington, Dr. Theophilus Rogers, Dr. Elisha Tracy, Aaron Cleveland, and Nathaniel Niles.[151] Proposals originating from time to time in town meetings focused much attention on devising a more equitable state taxation system, especially an abrogation of the uniform poll tax which placed unjust burdens on the poor.[152] As first outlined in town instructions to its deputies in 1778, reform proposals included publication of Assembly debates and a demand that profane swearing be punished with disability to hold public office.[153] Apparently the town extended the points in its program later that year, when it urged that freemen elect their Congressmen and that states be supplied with information about individual voting and decisions in Congress.[154] And very significantly, the town favored an extension of the suffrage:

> ... all who pay taxes and are of sober life and conversation, ought to have a voice in all public communities, where their monies and properties are disposed of for public uses.[155]

After committees had been sent out to determine the viewpoints of neighboring towns, Norwich circulated its views, or at least those on tax reform, to every town in the state.[156] Three years later, in 1781, town instructions urged an even more basic political reform—that a regular state constitution be formed.[157]

Results of such demands for political reform during the war for independence must have been disappointing to liberals with far-reaching proposals like those in Norwich. But at least one important advance was

made in the movement for wider political participation—the direct election of Congressmen in 1779. Quite probably dissatisfaction with plural office holding was a factor in the judicial reorganization of 1784,[158] which barred multiple office holding by superior court judges and set up a new court of last resort. But more likely the change resulted primarily from the fact that the Assembly's judicial duties had become so unmanageable during the war. The rule that superior court judges might not hold other state offices might be interpreted as a victory for the principle of separation of powers, but at best the victory was a hollow one, for at the same time the lieutenant governor* and council were designated a new court of last resort. The conservative council, instead of the General Assembly as a whole, thus became the highest judicial authority in Connecticut.

Probably more proposed reforms would have been carried out during the war had it not been for the damper placed by the upper house on innovation. Even when the deputies planned to preserve manuscript journals of the lower house for their own future reference, the assistants at first vetoed the suggestion.[159] How much more shocked they must have been at the presumptuous freemen who suggested that debates and votes be published. But although few changes were made in the structure and operation of the government during the war, more people had become convinced that such changes were in order. The last chapter in the affair was yet to be written.

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*At the close of the war, the deputy governor began to be called the "lieutenant governor."

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER IV.

1. For Assembly sessions, see CCR and CSR.

2. See CSR, I, 19, and also III, 256.

3. Ibid., II, 473-7.

4. Ibid., V, 67.

5. Ibid., 71-2.

6. CCR, XV, 82.

7. CSR, II, 133, IV, 288.

8. Ibid., 288-9, V, 117.

9. Ibid., 323-4.

10. See Force, 4th, I, 895, 554-5, 554n, II, 618-9, 811, 877-8.

11. See CCR, XIV, 386, 386-7n, XV, 100n; Force, 4th, I, 1177; Conn. Jour., 22 July 1774.

12. See CSR, I, 81, II, 374-5, and p. 127 of this thesis.

13. CCR, XV, 39.
For reappointments to the council, see:
1776: CCR, XV, 315; CSR, I, 11.
1777: CSR, I, 253, 257, 537.
1778: CSR, II, 18.
1779: CSR, II, 287, 292.
1780: CSR, III, 36, 37, 38, 321.
1781: CSR, III, 388-9, IV, 26.
1782: CSR, IV, 174, 178, 292.
Very complete records of their sessions are found in the CCR and CSR.

14. But the council still tended to be dominated by easterners because men living near Lebanon could attend more regularly.

15. CSR, I, 26, 243.

16. Ibid., II, 136.

17. CCR, XV, 110.

18. CSR, I, 73.

19. Ibid., 193-4, II, 135.

20. See Isaac W. Stuart, The Life of Jonathan Trumbull, Sen., Governor of Conn. (Boston, 1859), 177-83.

21. See, for example, CSR, III, 301-2.

22. Ibid., V, 103.

23. Ibid.,, II, 96.

24. See, for example, CCR, XV, 398, XIV, 431-2.

25. For appointments, see ibid., 431-2, XV, 413; CSR, I, 11, 258, II, 19, 417, III, 41. See also, CCR, XV, 36, 41; CSR, II, 191, 291, III, 189, I, 250.

26. Ibid., 258.

27. John Chenevard, James Church, and William Ellery were Hartford merchants. Thomas Seymour and Benjamin Payne were Hartford deputies, while William Pitkin was an assistant from Hartford. Samuel Lyman was a Hartford attorney while Eleazer Wales, sometime physician and minister, was prominent in Hartford civil affairs. The writer is unsure only of Fenn Wadsworth, but as the Wadsworth were one of Hartford's most prominent families, he probably lived there also. Only three appointees were definitely not from Hartford, and they served only a short time, in the very beginning of the war.

28. CSR, II, 404.

29. Ibid., 197, 306, 361, III, 124.

30. CCR, XIV, 483-4.

31. CSR, I, 8, III, 469, IV, 5-6.

32. CCR, XV, 485-6.

33. CSR, I, 169.

34. For example, ibid., 161-2, 171, 538-9, 534, 457-8, II, 95; CCR, XV, 490, 504-5.

35. For example, ibid., 16, 36-7; CSR, I, 471-2.

36. CCR, XV, 123.

37. CSR, I, 339.

38. Ibid., II, 158-9.

39. For example, CCR, XV, 194, 196.

40. Ibid., 420.

41. CSR, II, 278.

42. Ibid., III, 52-3.

43. Ibid., I, 194; CCR, XV, 16, 411.

44. CSR, I, 71, 9.

45. Ibid., 347, III, 133, 319.

46. The local histories illustrate the tremendous increase in town business. See especially, Allen, Enfield, II, for selectmen accounts which show their increased duties.

47. Henry R. Stiles, The History and Genealogies of Ancient Windsor, Connecticut.... (2 vols., Hartford, 1891-92), I, 640.

48. A very large amount of town wartime business was handled through the local administrative unit, the Congregational society. See chapter V. for illustrations.

49. CCR, XV, 215;CSR, I, 551.

50. CCR, XV, 193.

51. For example, CSR, I, 171.

52. Ibid., 189.

53. For example, CCR, XV, 146, 464, 522; CSR, I, 174, 57-8.

54. CCR, XV, 242.

55. The ages of some of these new political figures who became prominent during the war were as follows in 1775: Oliver Ellsworth, 30; Andrew Adams, 35; Benjamin Huntington, 39; Joseph Platt Cook, 45; John Canfield, 35; Stephen Mix Mitchell, 32; Pierpont Edwards, 25; Dyer Throop, 37; Jonathan Sturges, 35; Titus Hosmer, 38; Silas Deane, 38; Samuel Huntington, 44; Richard Law, 42; William Williams, 44. Many of the older politians were a generation older, as is shown by a comparison of their ages in 1775: Jonathan Trumbull, 65; Matthew Griswold, 61; Shubael Conant, 64; Eliphalet Dyer, 54; Roger Sherman, 54; Elisha Sheldon, 66; Ebenezer Silliman, 69; Jabez Hamlin, 66; Jabez Huntington, 56; Abraham Davenport, 59 or 60; William Pitkin, 50; William Samuel Johnson, 48; Joseph Spencer, 61; Oliver Wolcott, 49; George Wyllys, 65.

56. The reader will recall that nominations were made in September freeman meetings and the 20 highest names arranged in an official list by the October Assembly, then voted on in the April freeman meetings. Names were arranged not according to the relative number of nomination votes, but at the discretion of the outgoing Assembly. Hence the ranking of the names served as an indication of the attitude of the fellow legislators toward a candidate. The governor and deputy governor

were almost invariably selected from the top two names, though officially they might be named from any freeman in the colony, even if not previously placed in nomination. The assistants, on the other hand, had to be selected from the list, and usually were those who placed in spots 3 through 14.

The "list of 1775," then, would be voted on in the elections of 1776. Lists are found in the CCR and CSR as follows:

1773: CCR, XIV, 184.
1774: CCR, XIV, 384.
1775: CCR, XV, 173-4.
1776: CSR, I, 39-40.
1777: CSR, I, 447.
1778: CSR, II, 160.
1779: CSR, III, 6.
1780: CSR, III, 173.
1781: CSR, IV, 61.
1782: CSR, V, 80.
1783: CSR, V, 183.
1784: CSR, V, 471.

Spring election results are found at the beginning of each Assembly session for May of that year in the CCR and CSR.

Starting in 1779, the freemen also nominated 12 freemen for Congress, and in April they chose 7 from the list. Congressional nomination lists are found as follows:

1779: CSR, II, 462.
1780: CSR, III, 174.
1781: CSR, IV, 61.
1782: CSR, V, 80.
1783: CSR, V, 313.
1784: CSR, V, 471.

Election results are found at the beginning of each May Assembly session in the CSR.

57. CCR, XV, 173-4.

58. Eliphalet Dyer to Jonathan Trumbull, 19 Oct. 1782, Burnett, VI, 514.

59. Information about these new men comes from Dexter's Biographies and the DAB. See also indexes of CCR and CSR.

60. CSR, V, 323-5.

61. Ibid., VI, 5.

62. See p. 144 of this thesis.

63. George C. Groece, William Samuel Johnson, A Maker of the Constitution (New York, 1937), 100-6.

64. CSR, II, 374-6.

65. Groece, Johnson, 106-19.

66. Williams' character traits are reflected in his letters in Burnett, for example, II, 48,401. He disliked Southerners and residents of

the Middle Colonies, especially Marylanders and Pennsylvanians. In fact, he distrusted anyone not coming from New England. He was especially suspicious of Frenchmen. For the opinion of a fellow politician on Williams, see Oliver Wolcott to Mrs. Wolcott, 24 Nov. 1776, Burnett, II, 163-4.

67. 4 June 1778, The Deane Papers. Correspondence Between Silas Deane, His Brothers and Their Business and Political Associates, 1771-1795 /Deane Bros. Corres./ (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, vol. XXIII, 1930), 130.

68. See Deane to Mrs. Deane, /2 Oct. 1774/, CHSC, II, 310.

69. John Trumbull to Deane, 20 Oct. 1775, The Deane Papers (5 vols., New York Historical Society Collections, 1886-1890), I, 87.

70. Mumford to Deane, 10 Jan. 1776, ibid., V, 551. See also John Trumbull to Deane, 20 Oct. 1775, ibid., I, 86.

71. Deane to Mrs. Deane, 21 Jan. 1776, CHSC, II, 351.

72. Mumford to Deane, 10 Jan. 1776, Deane Papers, V, 551.

73. Deane was always belittling Sherman in his private letters. See for example, Burnett, I, 324; CHSC, II, 145, 146.

74. Zeichner, Conn., 344n81. Zeichner has a brief discussion of the issue.

75. See pp. 96-7 of this thesis.

76. See Deane to John Hancock, 14 Sept. 1778, Deane Papers, II, 482.

77. See Deane to Mrs. Deane, 26 Nov. 1775, ibid., I,93.

78. Deane to Mrs. Deane, 15 Dec. 1775, ibid., 94-5.

79. See Deane to Mrs. Deane, 22 Sept. 1775, ibid., 80. He was placed in nomination in 1775, as he continued to be through 1778. The editor of The Deane Papers attributes the cause of his dismissal to the lack of interest he was already showing for state politics, but the Williams feud was probably a more important factor. See Deane Papers, I, x.

80. This subject has been almost totally neglected and needs exploration. Manuscripts should be consulted and a study should be made of changes in membership in the lower house during these years, along with a study of the economic interests of deputies and assistants. The conclusions presented here about the conflict leading up to the election of 1784 are tentative in nature.

81. This very important issue is discussed in chapter 6 of this thesis.

82. See Silas to Barnabas Deane, 2 Dec. 1779, Deane Papers, IV, 112-3, for an illustration.

83. See, for example, Conn. Cour., 4 May 1779.

84. Ibid., 2 Apr. 1782.

85. In 1779, Trumbull headed the list as always, but he received only 3598 votes in spring, 1780, vs. 3668 votes scattered among other men. To be elected, the governor was required to have a majority of the total votes cast. In the lower house, the votes were: Trumbull, 106; Griswold, 3; Pitkin, 3; Oliver Wolcott, 2; Richard Law, 1. CSR, III, 6n.

    See also Manning Merrill to S. B. Webb, 15 May 1780, Webb. Corres., II, 261, for reference to a rival of Trumbull—"old Marshall" whose "Candle is near out—as he is one of our new lighted gentry, but there was near 300 fools that Voted for Him for Gov.r." The reference is unclear.

    In 1781, when Trumbull again received no majority, the lower house voted as follows: Trumbull, 104; Pitkin, 7; Wolcott,5; Samuel Huntington, 5; Law, 1. CSR, III, 371.

86. Conn. Cour., 2 Apr. 1782. The reports of British goods labelled for Trumbull were explained as having been planted by the British in order to divide the people of Connecticut. In fact, the planting of all the rumors was attributed to British and Tories.

87. Ibid., 26 Mar. 1782.

88. This discussion of the Smith affair follows that given in Oscar Zeichner, "The Rehabilitation of Loyalists in Connecticut," New England Quarterly, XI (1938), 311-4. See also CSR, V, 37.

89. Irving E. Manchester, The History of Colebrook (Winsted, Conn., 1935), 41. See also pp. 36-41.

90. John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 21 Mar. 1783, Huntington Papers: Correspondence of the Brothers Joshua and Jedediah Huntington During the Period of the American Revolution (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, vol. XXII, 1923), 170.

91. Conn. Jour., 20 Mar. 1783.

92. CSR, V, 29; Manchester, Colebrook, 41.

93. John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 21 Mar. 1783, Huntington Papers, 170-1; Thomas Mumford to Joshua Huntington, 1 Feb. 1783, ibid., 167.

94. See [Joseph Webb] to S. B. Webb, 9 May 1783, Webb Corres., III, 14. The vote of the lower house was 96 to 22. See CSR, V, 110.

95. Zeichner, "Loyalists," 312-3.

96. These conclusions were reached by Zeichner and Peck. See ibid., 310-1; and Epaphroditus Peck, The Loyalists of Connecticut (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 31, New Haven, 1934), 22. The writer agrees with their interpretations.

97. Conn. Jour., 19 and 26 Mar. and 4 Apr. 1777.

98. See discussion in Gipson, Ingersoll, 350-2ff.

99. Conn. Jour., 2 Apr. 1777.

100. Dexter, Biographies, I, 400.

101. See Gipson, Ingersoll, 355-74, and Conn. Jour., 2 Apr. 1777.

102. Ibid., 30 Aug. 1781.

103. Ezra Stiles, The Literary Diary of Ezra Stiles, ed. by Franklin B. Dexter (3 vols., New Haven, 1901), (5 July 1779), II, 355.

104. Zeichner, "Loyalists," 315-6.

105. Ibid., 316-21; Conn. Jour., 3 and 17 Apr. 1783.

106. Ibid., 8 May 1783.

107. Zeichner, "Loyalists," 318.

108. See ibid., 324-30.

109. Stiles, Diary (1 May 1783), III, 70.

110. Ibid., (13 Feb. 1784), 111-2; Conn. Jour., 8 and 15 May 1783.

111. See chapter 3 of this thesis.

112. See Stuart, Trumbull, 594-8. Stuart's discussion, the only one available, is very illuminating, although he is biased in favor of Trumbull's side of the argument.

113. See, for example, Goodwin, East Hartford, 87; C. Bancroft Gillespie, A Century of Meriden... (Meriden, Conn., 1906), 304; Boyd, Winchester, 154; William Chauncey Fowler, History of Durham, Connecticut ... (Hartford, 1866), 144-5; Daniel W. Teller, The History of Ridgefield, Conn.... (Danbury, 1878), 53.

114. Lucius I. Barber, A Record and Documentary History of Simsbury (Simsbury, 1931), 325.

115. Stuart, Trumbull, 597, and Conn. Jour., 10 Sept. 1783.

116. See chapter 3 of this thesis. The only outline of the events is that in Stuart's Trumbull, 632-44, which is followed here.

117. See ibid., 632, 640.

118. Love, Hartford, 346-7; Stuart, Trumbull, 638-9.

119. Conn. Jour., 9 and 23 July 1783, 3 Sept. 1783; CSR, V, 15-9.

120. See especially Conn. Jour., 10 Dec. 1782, 7 Apr. 1784, and also 11 Feb., 31 Mar., 10 Mar. 1784; Barber, Simsbury, 325; Love, Hartford, 345-6. For discussion of the taxation issue, see chapter 6 of this thesis.

121. Stuart, Trumbull, 603-10.

122. Ibid., 634, 632-3, and Conn. Jour., 7 Apr. 1784.

123. See Love, Hartford, 344-52. Love's excellent interpretative analysis of the incorporation issue has been followed here. He concentrates on the controversy in Hartford, but ties it in with the other issues involved.

124. See, for example, Rachel M. Hartley, The History of Hamden, Connecticut, 89-90.

125. Love, Hartford, 346-7.

126. Ibid., 348.

127. Ibid., 350.

128. Ibid., 348.

129. CSR, V, 257-77, 343-73.

130. Ibid., 313.

131. Ibid.

132. Stiles, Diary (13 May 1784), III, 120, 121.

133. Stuart, Trumbull, 644.

134. CSR, V, 325-6.

135. Ibid., 338-9.

136. Ibid., 375-6, 340-1.

137. See the excellent discussion in Mary H. Mitchell's "Slavery in Connecticut and Especially in New Haven," New Haven Historical Society Papers, X (1934), 301-5. See also, Phillips, Groton, 65-6; Allen, Enfield, I, 452; Julius Gay, "Farmington in the War of the Revolution," in Farmington Papers (Hartford, 1929), 84.

138. Stiles, Diary (7 Dec. 1779), III, 395; Schenck, Fairfield, II, 385.

139. CSR, I, 415-6.

140. W. C. Sharpe, Seymour and Vicinity.... (Seymour, Conn., 1878), 48; Henry R. Stiles, The History of Ancient Wethersfield, Connecticut.... (2 vols., New York, 1904), I, 701.

141. Caulkins, Norwich, 510, 363.

142. John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 11 June 1779, Huntington Papers,141.

143. Mitchell, "Slavery," 290-1.

144. Stiles, Diary (28 Feb. 1780, 11 July 1780, 10 June 1783), II, 416, 445, III, 74; Paul Wakeman Coons, The Achievement of Religious Liberty in Connecticut (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 60, New Haven, 1936), 18-21.

145. CSR, I, 232-3; Maria L. Greene, The Development of Religious Liberty in Connecticut (Boston, 1905), 327-8.

146. Conn. Jour., 30 Oct. 1776.

147. Coons, Religious Liberty, 21-2.

148. See Conn. Jour., 29 May 1776, 9 Sept. 1778, 15 Mar. 1780; Conn. Cour., 8 July 1776, 15 Sept. 1777; Wilcoxson, Stratford, 522-3; Auren Roys, A Brief History of the Town of Norfolk, From 1738 To 1844:... (New York, 1847), 21.

149. Conn. Jour., 23 Oct. 1776.

150. Ibid., 26 Mar. 1779. See also Conn. Cour., 14 Sept. 1779, for a discussion of the evils of multiple office holding and long tenure in office. The writer wondered "whether it is good policy to appoint the same men to several offices incompatible with [each] other; either because it is impossible they should discharge them all, or because it will make the same men in one department accountable to themselves in another...." He also favored rotation in office for Congressmen.

151. Caulkins, Norwich, 395-6.

152. For tax reform agitation, see chapter 6 of this thesis.

153. Caulkins, Norwich, 395.

154. See Wilcoxson, Stratford, 522-3. He prints resolves originating with Norwich which were adopted by Stratford in 1778, apparently copied verbatim from those of Norwich. They do not agree with Caulkins' version of the resolves, however. Those given by Wilcoxson list points not covered in Caulkins' list.

155. Caulkins, Norwich, 395. In 1781, the same proposal was made. Ibid., 396.

156. Ibid., 395.

157. Ibid., 396.

158. See Samuel H. Parsons to W. S. Johnson, 21 May 1783, for an indication of opposition by at least some of the councilors to this change. Charles S. Hall, ed., Life and Letters of Samuel Holden Parsons (Binghamton, New York, 1905), 464-5.

159. CSR, II, 293-4 &n.

CHAPTER V.

WARTIME PROBLEMS

Much of the attention of officials at every level in the government was directed toward formulating and administering policies for meeting a large number of problems encountered during the war for independence. The state had to raise and pay an army; to recruit the services of farm and forge for feeding and equipping continental and state troops; to guard against the constant threat of invasion; to assimilate as best it could floods of war prisoners and out-of-state Tories. From the battle of Lexington until well after the end of hostilities, Connecticut's magistrates wrestled with these difficult problems with varying degrees of success.

The decision for war created demands for items hitherto unneeded in large quantities or customarily imported from abroad. With West-Indian supplies uncertain and the New York trade legally cut off, Connecticut had to find new sources for war materials, West-Indian goods, paper, salt, and other essentials for civilians and soldiers. As a result, the government launched a program of encouraging domestic production of supplies, while individuals met shortages by devising their own substitutes.

Most crucial was the need for war materials, especially gunpowder. With British ammunition sources cut off and town stores depleted by September, 1775, the Assembly began a frantic attempt to import powder,[1]

but by winter, it realized that domestic manufacture must be encouraged. In December, the legislature granted a bounty of thirty pounds to the first two men who would erect powder mills.[2] When acceptable explosives were turned over to the state, the manufacturer received a certificate entitling him to nine dollars per hundred weight.[3] At first, all powder was placed at the disposal of the governor and council of safety,[4] but as supplies became more plentiful, private individuals were allowed to make purchases.[5]

Three of the several mills licensed by the government accounted for most of the powder produced. All in operation by the summer of 1776, these three major plants were those of the Pitkins in Hartford, of Elderkin and Wales in Windham, and of Doolittle in New Haven.[6] By 1776, the Windham mill was the scene of such bustling activity that an enterprising citizen found it profitable to erect a tavern nearby.[7]

Many problems were encountered in the powder program. Threats of sabotage by Tories and war prisoners necessitated the placing of government guards around the Hartford and Windham mills. Later, the Windham plant exploded, as did another in Glassenbury, where six lives were lost.[8] Then, in 1779, a large quantity of Doolittle's powder was condemned for inferior quality.[9] One speculator, hoping to realize double his purchase price through resale, chaffed at this news: "Doelittle deserves to be hung ... Dam the luck!"[10] But despite these upsets, the powder-manufacturing program was one of the most successful experiments promoted during the war.[11]

Part of this success stemmed from the relatively simple process of making saltpeter, an ingredient in the explosives. Newspaper articles initiated farmers into the mystery of making this product from their domes-

tic and barnyard wastes, and inexpensive lessons on easy cash terms were advertised.[12] In May, 1775, a government bounty of four shillings per pound made the manufacture of saltpeter an easy way of raising cash. Initially the product was inspected by appointees of the selectmen, who were also ordered to set up saltpeter works when no private operations were undertaken in their towns.[13] But after the unskilled local inspectors sent inferior casks to the powder mills, a reinspection system was put into operation at each mill.[14] Soon saltpeter was being produced in such large quantities[15] that the bounty was lowered to two shillings per pound in December, 1775, to one shilling in October, 1776, and then not renewed.[16]

Domestic sulphur production for use in ammunition making proved less successful. A legislative committee sent out to prospect for sulphur mines in 1775, met with little success,[17] and a bounty of one shilling for each pound of sulphur produced in the state failed to stimulate manufacture.[18] A solution of this critical shortage seemed in sight when in May, 1776, Thomas Bidwell of Pennsylvania offered to produce sulphur for the government if it furnished the necessary equipment and agreed to purchase his entire output for two years. But the Assembly, unable to find the necessary apparatus, released Bidwell from his contract a year later.[19] The shortages were alleviated in part by sulphur imports from the West Indies during the war.[20]

At the outbreak of the war, the legislature appointed committees to scout for lead mines, but with little success. Some lead was produced in a mine at Union, and in the fall of 1775, a mine at Middletown owned by a British officer was seized and put into production. But high hopes placed in the Middletown venture failed to materialize, and the Assembly was forced to discontinue the unprofitable operation early in 1778.[21]

In an effort to alleviate the shortages, attempts were made to remelt used lead. In 1776, the legislature ordered selectmen to purchase lead weights, implements, and old shot, with the use of impressment warrants if necessary. But many of the busy selectmen neglected to comply with the order, and six months later those who failed to collect lead and cast it into bullets were threatened with a fine.[22]

In so far as possible, the Assembly urged towns and individuals to provide their own firearms, but the necessity of official promotion of manufacturing was soon realized. In May, 1775, the lawmakers tried to stimulate home manufacture of arms and gunlocks by a five-shilling and six-shilling bounty respectively, and promised that the state would buy all satisfactory products at reasonable prices over and above the premium. However, results were disappointing, and in 1776, an additional premium was promised for arms passing the inspection of a legislative committee. Again, production did not meet expectations.[23] In part, this failure stemmed from unskilled and negligent gun and lock smiths who tried to take advantage of the bounty. So poor in quality were many of the products that a special investigatory committee was appointed in 1777, to conduct hearings into alleged frauds.[24] Though the business of filling these war contracts proved profitable, local artisans were hampered by being repeatedly called into the militia. The Assembly then acted favorably on petitions for temporary deferments of men engaged in various wartime industries.[25] They kept other local artisans busy repairing arms and producing cartouch boxes, bayonet belts, anchors, gun carriages, nails, and other equipment for the state.[26]

Larger arms and cannon were required for home defense, for outfitting privateers, and for supplying the continental army. To produce these articles, the Assembly expended large sums in rebuilding and putting

into blast Richard Smith's iron furnace at Salisbury in 1776.[27] Soon Connecticut's magistrates realized they were sorely deficient in technical knowhow necessary to begin casting cannon, so early in 1776, they interviewed experienced founders and molders from Massachusetts. So essential were their services that the thrifty governor and council of safety were obliged to hire them at their own price.[28] The governor and his advisers first placed these workers under the jurisdiction of a manager who operated the Salisbury Furnace for the state, but eventually the entire enterprise was leased to private operators.[29] Under this private management, the furnace began casting items for domestic consumption, including kitchen utensils and potash kettles, in addition to cannon and shot.[30] The iron for these operations was produced in Richard Smith's works in nearby Colebrook which the state also leased to a private individual.[31]

When the furnace was under state operation, the governor and council of safety devoted countless hours to seeing that it operated smoothly. They had to ensure adequate provisions, wood, and pasturage for teams; to erect bridges for moving heavy cannon through the Connecticut hills; to station guards around the site; to extend draft exemptions to the large force of workers; and not least of all, to send in the prodigious quantities of rum necessary to keep the thirsty men contented.[32] And even after private leasing, the government was obliged to keep a close check on the operation, especially in 1780, when William Whiting reported that Joshua Porter, whom he had underbid as lessee, was threatening to blow up the furnace. At that time the governor and council were forced to send Andrew Adams, the Litchfield County attorney, to Salisbury "to preserve the Peace and prevent any Violence..."[33]

The state also intervened to meet shortages of food and other supplies required by the housewife and the commissariat, but private ingenuity played a large share in solving these problems. The most serious of these scarcities was salt, essential as a preservative for beef and pork, a principal staple in the eighteenth-century diet. West-Indian imports by privateers and by ships eluding British patrols were wholly inadequate to meet the demand, and suggestions for using saltpeter as a preservative and reusing old brine were merely stop-gap measures. So, early in the war, the state promised liberal bounties for salt manufactured from sea water. Although towns, societies, and individuals responded to the offer, domestic production did not begin to meet the demand. Scarcities resulted in such exorbitant prices that town meetings and committees of inspection resorted to rationing and price control regulations.[34]

In 1777, the governor and council of safety became so alarmed at the situation that they allowed the casting of salt pans to interfere with operations at Salisbury.[35] By that time, the government had decided to regulate the sale and distribution of all the salt it could procure through imports from Massachusetts or from shipments entering local ports.[36] Salt was distributed to the towns, which then sold it locally, with proceeds going to soldiers' families and the needy. Methods of distribution varied. One town ordered local parishes to sell salt in proportion to each individual's standing on the tax list, up to one-half bushel, while Ridgefield alloted one quart per person in each patriotic household.[37]

Almost equally serious in the eyes of thirsty Connecticut soldiers and civilians was the scarcity and high price of West Indian rum.[38] This natural shortage was accompanied by a wartime ban on the distilling of spirituous liquors from grain. The Assembly also halted the distilling of

brandy from cider, with the explanation that the poor should not be deprived of cider in the absence of rum.[39] Faced with clamoring soldiers and foundry workers who demanded their "refreshments," the state leased at least one stillhouse in the fall of 1777, and from time to time, Andrew Huntington was hired to distill rum from molasses brought into the state.[40]

Thus the state supplied its own needs, while the civilians soon coped with private liquor shortages in their own way. No government bounties proved necessary to alleviate this particular crisis—individual initiative soon discovered that crushed corn stalks could be distilled into molasses and rum. In 1777, a Middletown distillery reported production of 1,000 gallons of good liquor from about 12,000 gallons of "Stalk Juice."[41] "An amazing Discovery!" exclaimed Ezra Stiles, "a Supply of 1 Bb. to a family with ease. The whole Continental Import[a] from the W. Indies never equald this." Corn stalks, this ardent patriot was certain, would provide an ample supply of molasses, spirits, and perhaps even sugar in the future.[42]

Other ventures in home manufacturing were discussed and launched during the war. Some, especially would-be mulberry tree growers, advocated domestic silk production.[43] One writer even printed directions for home manufacture of opium, for medicinal purposes.[44] Another, with an eye to the future as well as immediate wartime needs, urged large-scale production of linen, especially inland, where towns could well profit from manufacturing.[45] After paper imports for domestic needs and cartridges were curtailed, new paper mills were set up—the principal ones located at Hartford and New Haven. Droughts in summer, frozen streams in winter,

and scarcity of rags sometimes created shortages,[46] but these new industries soon became so vital that when the Hartford mill burned in 1778, the Assembly quickly authorized a lottery to raise funds for rebuilding.[47] Although the legislature turned down a request for an interest-free loan, one manufacturer established a stocking and pin business on his own in 1775.[48] The request for a similar loan to encourage the manufacture of wire was granted that year, though its results are not recorded.[49]

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Entry into the war also required setting up a system for supplying food and equipment for the state army, and in part, for Connecticut's regiments in the continental army. Then, after February, 1780, the state government was given the entire burden of feeding and clothing the Connecticut Line.

To meet the spontaneous siege of Boston in April, 1775, the Assembly laid the first of its provisions embargoes and named Joseph Trumbull, son of the governor, as state commissary general. Trumbull was given nine assistants who scouted the colony for supplies of pork, beef, bread, flour, beer, meal, butter, peas, beans, rum, and other provisions stipulated for soldiers' fare. Trumbull's system became rather well-coordinated, and upon the organization of the American commissariat, he was appointed continental commissary general.

In his new post, Trumbull continued to use accustomed purchasing channels in his native state: men like Christopher Leffingwell, Thomas Mumford, Jeremiah Wadsworth, Henry Champion, Jonathan Fitch, and others of his old associates. In fact, his organization was so completely in the

hands of Connecticut men that the state was criticized for prospering unduly from the war. After Trumbull's resignation from the national post, Jeremiah Wadsworth of Hartford served as commissary general of purchases from 1778 through 1779. Wadsworth continued to use Henry Champion as assistant in the district which included Connecticut, as did Ephriam Blaine when he succeeded Wadsworth and began administering the system of specific supplies.[50] Connecticut, then, supplied much of the personnel and provisions for the continental commissariat.

In addition, the state was obliged to establish a system for supplying her own troops and for meeting levies from Congress. In so far as possible, the state relied heavily on local governments to provide for the militia. For example, selectmen were ordered to furnish camp equipment and utensils in an amount proportionate to their local taxable property. When towns furnished militia supplies, accounts were adjusted through the committee of the pay table.[51] These local officials were also relied on for emergency measures, such as furnishing supplies and quarters for French troops marching through the state in 1781.[52]

The Assembly was the ultimate authority in charge of the state commissariat, but the governor and council of safety made most of the appointments and many of the regulations. Following Joseph Trumbull's appointment to the continental post, the legislature named Jeremiah Wadsworth as its commissary of supplies, and gave him six purchasers, one for each county.[53] Other personnel in the department included the many issuing commissaries of supplies throughout the state, and the purchasers for specific requirements appointed from time to time, as in the case of David Trumbull who was designated purchaser of forage for French troops.[54] After Joseph Trumbull's resignation from the continental service, he was

made state commissary general for beef and pork purchases.[55] Many of the regular supply agents and those who received special contracts from time to time were prominent Connecticut leaders or their relatives, especially David and Joseph Trumbull, Jabez and Andrew Huntington, Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., Jeremiah Wadsworth, Chauncey Whittelsey, and Thomas Mumford.

Raising needed supplies entailed much day-to-day decision making by the governor and council of safety. They relied on Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., to purchase from French and Dutch ships arriving at New London,[56] while agents were assigned to attend privateer auctions to buy much-needed items like rum, duck, rigging, and cordage.[57] Once the governor ordered the captain of the state's armed vessel, The Spy, to Virginia or Maryland to relieve flour shortages.[58] Permits were also granted for limited trade with other colonies despite the embargo in order to alleviate scarcities.[59] Much reliance was also placed on overland imports from Boston, especially with New York in British hands and the Sound infested with enemy cruisers. For example, David Trumbull was often sent to Boston for hogsheads of shoes or supplies of flints. The state also maintained a permanent agent in Boston—Samuel Elliot, Jr.—who supervised captures brought into that port by Connecticut privateers. Occasionally Elliot was ordered to procure needed goods in Massachusetts.[60]

Inevitably these inexperienced officials encountered difficulties in furnishing supplies. State commissaries came to blows with continental agents purchasing in Connecticut. In one case, the latter seized flour purchased for state needs.[61] If supplies were moved by water, they sometimes fell into British hands; if stored near shore, they were threatened with raids. Overland transportation proved difficult, especially in winter when roads were clogged with snow and forage scarce. At times

there were no provisions to haul, when crops proved inadequate as a result of wheat blasts and the militia being called out during planting time.[62]

But scarcity of supply was not the only factor causing public shortages. Troops often suffered in the midst of plenty, as farmers refused to turn over grain and cattle for depreciated currency or held back in anticipation of better prices.[63] Farmers remonstrated when paid in depreciated currency or in the commissary certificates supplied by the state in lieu of meeting Congressional requisitions for cash.[64] The farmers preferred to sell to purchasers for the French troops at Rhode Island who were armed with hard money; and in 1780, this competition proved disastrous for Connecticut commissary agents who all too often simply had no cash at all,[65] much less specie. Finally this crisis resulted in the calling of a New England convention to work out a cooperative purchasing system with the French, but it proved unsuccessful.[66] The state also made attempts to alleviate the supply shortages by setting up impressment machinery. As early as 1776, purchasers were authorized to seize needed goods withheld from the public, and from time to time, the governor and council of safety granted sheriffs specific impressment warrants.[67]

Yet, with all the difficulties encountered in this supply system, the government was faced with very few changes of irregularity among its personnel. In 1779, Edward Hallam, state deputy commissary of issues at New London, was accused of allowing butchers to embezzle public stores. Hallal resigned upon request, but the governor and council of safety considered his neglect "probably owing in good measure to his being ingaged and involved in multiplicity of other businesses;...", rather than intentional neglect.[68]

Providing clothing for the militia and Connecticut Line presented special problems. Societies and sometimes towns took up clothing donations for local soldiers on their own initiative,[69] and the state relied heavily on these local governments for official aid. In the beginning towns were required to furnish blankets for the continental army, in proportion to town lists, and in 1777, the towns were ordered to provide clothing for each of their soldiers in the national army at state expense.[70] But this disorganized system proved inadequate, so a special clothing supply system was set up in 1779. Elijah Hubbard, state clothier, was ordered to receive and distribute apparel to the Connecticut Line, in response to Congressional requisitions, while Chauncey Whittelsey was named purchasing agent to buy up and collect clothing from the towns. Selectmen or special town committees were ordered to collect both summer and winter garb in proportion to the number of soldiers previously assigned them as local quotas. The selectmen were to be reimbursed for the articles and for their expenses by Congress.[71] The towns were given similar requests during the next two years, and, as in the first try, response was disappointing.[72] Finally, in July, 1781, the governor and council of safety authorized Hubbard and his assistants to impress needed clothing from inhabitants of deficient towns.[73]

The methods by which towns met these clothing requisitions varied. Some borrowed funds; others levied taxes in currency for purchasing apparel.[74] New Haven, for example, appointed a large committee, apparently of merchants, which paid cash or goods for clothing brought in,[75] while others authorized committees to go about and collect clothing or borrow money for purchases.[76] Some towns divided themselves into districts, each with an assigned quota.

Neglect would result in warrants for impressment in that district.[77]

Clearly the towns were negligent in meeting requisitions, as the Assembly charged. Connecticut officers complained constantly of the ragged, barefoot condition of their troops. In October, 1777, Return Jonathan Meigs reported that until recently over 100 of his men had been without shoes and that a considerable number was still barefoot.[78] In 1781, another officer grumbled that his men were so entirely destitute of clothing that they could be persuaded to take furloughs only with difficulty, "which is a sufficient proof that their Uniform is not so compleat."[79]

The decision of a desperate Congress to switch to specific supply requisitions in February, 1780, made the collecting and delivering of provisions for the Connecticut Line the state's entire responsibility. Again the central government turned to the towns for aid, and again results were far from satisfactory. In October and November, 1780, taxes of six pence on the pound were levied, payable in beef, flour, or pork. The towns were authorized to penalize those who failed to deliver goods. In turn, negligent towns could be punished by the Assembly if they failed to meet deadlines. In the fall of 1781, deliveries were months behind schedule, and the Assembly threatened to collect arrears in specie.[80]

In May, 1781, further provisions taxes were levied—one for four pence on the pound, payable in coin, or beef and mutton, to be delivered in quarterly installments, and another for two shillings-six pence, payable by December, 1781, in state bills of credit or miscellaneous supplies, including flour, beef, pork, maize, oats, cloth, and stockings. In both

cases, towns were to appoint persons to receive salt, prepare and barrel provisions, and store supplies, all at state expense.[81]

Towns followed the suggestion of the Assembly and appointed committees to prepare provisions, or ordered their selectmen to do so.[82] Redding appointed a receiver of provisions, pork, and beef; New Haven named persons in each parish to receive provisions; while Torrington ordered her selectmen and the local "authority" to divide the town into four equal classes, according to the value of the inhabitants' property.[83] Classes drew lots to determine which would pay each of the quarterly beef installments of the May, 1780, tax.

As in the case of the clothing taxes, these towns were slow in complying. Hence Connecticut stood in arrears to Congress, and hence her troops suffered from hunger. But in part, this situation was unavoidable. The governor and council simply could not obtain needed salt for provisions in 1781. Realizing late in November that farmers could no longer keep cattle fattened, they ordered some of the bovines sold to raise funds for purchasing preservatives. Yet even then, some towns did not respond. In March, and again in September, 1782, the governor and council of safety took measures to force compliance with the May, 1781, levies.[84]

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Connecticut was also required to recruit and staff a military organization which included troops in both the continental and state armies. Her quotas for the national army required filling the eight regiments in the Connecticut Line. The state army consisted of the "state

troops" and the old colonial militia which had always trained regularly. Men to fill the eighteen regiments of the state troops were recruited from the militia through voluntary enlistments or drafting at various times of emergency, for longer or shorter periods of service. Meanwhile, the old militia companies were rotated for duty within the state and, like the state troops, cooperated with the continentals in other states.[85] Militia potential was increased between 1776 and 1782 by establishment of an "alarm list," consisting of those males between sixteen and sixty previously exempted from duty by virtue of age or occupation. These men were divided into separate local companies, and those under fifty might be called upon to march out of the state.[86]

The government tried to secure permanent enlistees for a period of three years or the duration of the war to serve in the continental army and urged lengthy enlistments in the state troops. Such enlistments would mean that the militia would not have to be rotated constantly for duty outside the state, thus aiding agricultural production.[87] But hopes for adequate enlistments were never realized. Despite the efforts of patriotic historians of the state to prove otherwise,[88] the ranks of the Connecticut Line and the state troops were undermanned or filled with poor recruits during much of the war. General Schuyler chided Governor Trumbull in 1777:

> Militia from the State of Connecticut,—one Major, one Captain, two Lieutenants, two Ensigns, one Adjutant, one Quartermaster, six Serjeants, one Drummer, six sick, and three rank and file fit for duty, the rest, after remaining three or four days, deserted us.[89]

This state of affairs resulted in large part from the decline in patriotic fervor soon after the war began. The early vogue of zealous old men for forming voluntary companies soon went out of fashion.[90]

And potential troops soon learned of the lot that inevitably faced them: being ill-fed, poorly clad, and almost never paid. Or, once they did join the army, they deserted. Newspapers were filled with pleas of officers for information about runaways, but the petty state rewards for captures helped little.[91] Until 1783, then, the Connecticut magistrates were forced to grapple with the perplexing problem of raising troop quotas.

Early circular letters and fervent resolves proved totally inadequate to meet the problem. Another early inducement, the bounty system, soon lost its appeal. By October, 1776, Connecticut, following the leadership of Massachusetts, initiated a bounty over and above that allowed by Congress for enlistment in the continental army.[92] Throughout the war, the government offered ever-increasing bounties for continental and state troop enlistments. In December, 1776, the Assembly cooperated with other New England states in granting an extra ten-pound bounty and a blanket to enlistees for three years or the duration of the war.[93] New England's policy generated hard feelings since it hampered efforts of Washington's recruiting officers and stimulated inflation still further.[94]

Other inducements were devised. Soldiers were exempted from imprisonment for debt and poll-tax listings.[95] Then, in March, 1777, the governor and council of safety ordered towns to aid soldiers' families. Local committees were to furnish supplies with funds the soldiers lodged with them, while extra expenses were to be met by the towns. The following year, family support was ordered, whether or not soldiers provided funds, although the husband was to be accountable for monies advanced. Selectmen and committees were to receive reasonable rewards for their services from the state.[96] Towns uniformly appointed such committees, some of

them very large. In some areas, committee members were assigned the care of one or two families.[97] In Enfield, the selectmen allowed a soldier's family to earn extra cash by caring for town ammunition,[98] while Stonington townsmen, so conscious of their parish affiliations, ordered society school committees to receive town-furnished supplies and cash which they issued to the needy.[99]

But despite such assurances that families would be cared for, enlistments lagged badly. In May, 1777, another new method was adopted for encouraging enlistments--that of allowing exemptions to any two men who would jointly hire a substitute for three years or the war. But wide-scale frauds forced its repeal in 1779. Resourceful civilians had turned in the names of fictitious persons or British war prisoners, and then left officers to round up their men, meanwhile securing their exemptions. Other patriots intentionally fell into enemy hands, were paroled, and so became ineligible for military duty. The exemption system was reinstated in 1780, but this time the lawmakers worded it more carefully.[100]

The depleted condition of the Connecticut Line was so critical by spring, 1777, that Washington pressed Trumbull with the necessity of immediate action. Meanwhile, General Samuel H. Parsons, commanding officer of the Line, journeyed to Hartford to urge decisive measures.[101] That spring the family-support program and the substitute system were set up. In addition, the government initiated a draft system by which it hoped to solve the problem of filling ranks in both the Line and the state army. The governor and council assigned each town, in proportion to its tax list, a quota of men to be raised locally.[102] After selectmen and "the authority" failed to exert pressure to fill quotas, the government took sterner measures. Military officers in each town were to determine the number of deficiencies in local quotas, then to divide all militia

men into a number of "classes" corresponding to the number of deficiencies. When a class failed to produce a recruit from its ranks within three days, the officers were to draft one such man to serve the continent, at least until January 1, 1778. Extra bounties were offered those draftees who volunteered for three years' service. Later on, draftees were allowed to hire substitutes.[103]

But in January, 1778, local quotas were still not filled.[104] Four months later, town committees were allowed to levy taxes for hiring recruits to complete local quotas.[105] But town quotas remained unfilled, even after time extensions were granted. So, in the fall of 1780, the class system was extended to embrace not only those liable for military duty, but also all local inhabitants with taxable property. Towns were to hire recruits for deficient classes, then to assess members double the sum it cost them to hire them, and negligent towns were to be fined by the state.[106] The next spring, 1781, towns or classes were ordered to pay extra specie bounties of six pounds to draftees who volunteered for longer service. In case of failure to furnish the bounties, justices of the peace were to grant warrants for selling the property of any person or persons in that town or class. Towns still not complying could expect state fines.[107]

The Connecticut towns were no more persuasive than the central government in securing recruits for state troops or the Line. Woodstock officials even provoked riots when they tried to enforce the law.[108] The towns did make genuine attempts to carry out the Assembly's orders—many levied taxes to raise special town bounties, while others offered bounties in provisions and guaranteed soldiers' pay. And at least one society levied special taxes for its men who had enlisted.[109] But despite these ef-

forts, many town quotas were never filled.

Inevitably, disputes arose between local governments in determining to which town an enlistee belonged. Conflicts often developed in the case of apprentices and servants who were legal residents of one town but worked in another. Both towns would claim them in filling their quotas. Finally, in 1781, local wrangling became so heated that a legislative committee was appointed for each county to determine disputed claims.[110] The next year, the Assembly took a long-threatened step by ordering collection of fifteen-pound fines from tardy towns and classes for every deficiency. Negligent towns went into a flurry of excitement. Stamford, then deficient forty-seven men, was horrified, but finally was excused from over half her quota. Others pleaded extenuating circumstances, that mistakes had been made, or merely begged for mercy, and the lenient legislature obliged.[111] All in all, Connecticut's efforts to raise adequate troop quotas for the war for independence had ended in failure.

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Reluctance to enlist was in large measure the result of deplorable conditions existing in the Connecticut Line and the state army during the war, particularly the lack of pay. Officers exerted every effort to prevent desertions and curb mutinies among their ragged, penniless infantrymen. But after making a thousand promises on behalf of the state, they were not even given a vote of confidence by their government, and their repeated warnings of critical conditions went unheeded. This disagreeable situation festered throughout the war and erupted in a series

of crises which forced reluctant state officials to take action.

As early as December, 1776, Connecticut troops refused to reenlist because they had received no pay since summer, and officers were forced to make private expenditures to keep their horses alive.[112] The following summer, a mutiny was touched off among state troops who accused the governor and council of safety of reducing their provisions below those of the continental forces, in violation of the law.[113] In winter, 1778, Return Jonathan Meigs informed Titus Hosmer that unless the Assembly acted promptly to prevent mutinies and desertions, the Line would be depleted by spring. The men could no longer depend on the word of the Assembly; they had constantly been disappointed in everything for which they had entered the service. Money sent in lieu of provisions had sunk to five-sixths its value before it reached them, and promises of cash in place of clothing were broken.[114]

The lower house was more responsive to the needs of the army than the council. The upper house, under the pious old governor who appeared more concerned about unpaid beef speculators than his destitute troops,[115] blocked the efforts of the deputies. General Parsons worked with the influential Thomas Mumford in the lower house to push relief measures,[116] but as one deputy reported, struggle as they might, the deputies could not persuade the council to do justice to the troops. Finally, to break the stalemate, the house of representatives was "worried" into accepting the council's proposal of two payments for the troops—£45,000 to be distributed to the Line in April, 1779, and £60,000 the last of December. Also, a committee was appointed to determine an equitable apportionment of the sums.[117]

Like most compromises, this measure satisfied no one. The committee exercised the sole voice in making settlement with the army, and no provisions were made for disabled and discharged veterans.[118] A further settlement was made in May, 1780,[119] in consideration of the depreciation of back pay. Another committee was appointed and four taxes levied, the last due in 1785, in order to discharge interest-bearing notes given the troops. Although this committee of 1780 was instructed to consider the services of previously neglected veterans who had been discharged or had died, the army was still dissatisfied. Military spokesmen reported errors on the part of the committee and complained that pay was still being made in depreciated currency.[120] The Assembly was forced to appoint still another committee for adjusting claims, this one to meet with agents of the army. In addition, Connecticut officers had their own special grievances. They failed to receive rations, and some items supplied were charged against their wages fifty per-cent higher than the Assembly's fixed prices.[121] At the same time, they were involved in the commutation issue with the national government, and the attitude of their state on the pay question probably did little to sooth their feelings.

The explosive situation reached a climax in 1781. Seething unrest among Connecticut troops and officers was ignited by the January mutiny of Pennsylvania troops. Though at first New Englanders censured these revolts, Parsons reported that he could not expect the Connecticut troops to stay quiet forever, especially when 600 of them lacked sufficient clothing to enable them to report for duty. Most had been without pay for at least twelve months, and were suffering from rum shortages.[122] By the 31st of January, the general warned Trumbull that the

flame was spreading:

> /I/ assure you that I fear that nothing short of a sum of money very speedily furnished them will keep the New England Lines from following their /Pennsylvania's/ example.[123]

Although much alarmed, Trumbull and his council of safety took no decisive steps, save to order some confiscated Tory property sold for specie. Instead, they waited to see what Massachusetts would do and for the Assembly to meet.[124] But the anticipated mutiny did not materialize, and the government took little further action.

By early summer, the situation had grown tense once more.[125] Finally intervening, Washington begged the governor to take measures to provide pay.[126] In July, General Parsons, perpetual gadfly of the state officials, notified the obstinate governor that the influence of his officers had dwindled to nothing and that the situation was out of his hands. Trumbull replied at once. The general, he chided, was unfair and unjust in his representations—he should stop to consider the hardships of the people at home. Trumbull also reminded Parsons of an officer's duty of urging his men to be good soldiers. Then, in a letter to Washington, Trumbull insinuated that Connecticut officers were stirring up troops to push redress of their own special grievances. If soldiers were out of sorts, they should remember that divine providence was smiling on the patriot cause. With patience and perseverance, all would soon be well.

This last letter proved too much, even for a man of Parsons' patience. In a bitterly sarcastic reply, he washed his hands of the entire affair—since the governor and council of safety refused to listen to the truth, Parsons would trouble them no further. The governor

was profoundly shocked by the general's audacity.[127]

In May and July, 1781, the legislature levied taxes to provide money for back pay. But as was so often the case, local collectors proved negligent in sending in the proceeds.[128] Other committees were appointed, and other taxes levied for the army's benefit during the war.[129] In Jaunary, 1782, a twenty-shilling bonus was provided. Obligations were met by giving the soldiers a series of interest-bearing securities, the last payable in 1787.[130] But throughout 1782, the army was still dissatisfied, mutiny threatened,[131] and a plan to march on Hartford to demand pay from the governor was narrowly averted by executing a ringleader.[132] In May, the Assembly made another settlement. More securities were given, the last falling due in 1789. Apparently these new issues stipulated specie payment.[133]

Officers remained bitter at what they considered the inexcusable negligence of their fellow citizens. One observor was shocked at

> The Wretched management of the Publick in Fulfilling their promisses & Engagements to the Armey /which/ is the Cause of infinite mischief & They are Justly Chargeable for the Blood of Those who Suffer by their Neglect. No Country or people Ought to be Free that will not Support the Army that is fighting for their Liberties. I am Sick & Disgusted at the Conduct of our Assembly....[134]

Another sarcastically berated the Assembly, the "Shrine of <u>democracy</u>" before which the army was forced to plead "with trembling hand and quaking hearts..."[135] At the close of the war, Jedidiah Huntington reported from New York that

> a great Proportion of the Connecticut Officers here are trying to establish themselves in some way of Living in this State, so much affected are they with the unkind Disposition of many of their fellow Citizens in Connecticut. the Value of the Commutation, although it is to many of the Officers a very considerable thing, bears no Proportion to a Sense of the Ingratitude of the People. some of the

> leading Men in this State intend to profit by the Chagrin of our Officers, and lay before them Inducements to remain here by offering them Lands on very advantageous terms.[136]

Still further disappointments were in store for returning veterans. Speculation in soldiers' securities began at once, as veterans were obliged to give them up for the purchase of necessities.[137]

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In part, Connecticut's lack of success in filling her continental troop quotas and her failure to pay soldiers resulted from the drain on money and man power required to guard the state against British invasion. As early as September, 1775, the question was raised as to whether Connecticut should send troops to Boston, as requested, or detain them at home.[138] The government was constantly under a two-fold pressure. It faced, on the one hand, demands to send aid to Washington, and on the other the clamor of towns for coast guards to protect lives and property from raids. In January, 1782, the Assembly stated that it was no longer able to bear the burden of home defense and still meet continental quotas.[139] Although only a small part of their territory was occupied, the people of Connecticut, adjacent to British-occupied New York and situated on the enemy-infested waters of Long Island Sound, were constantly harried by plundering expeditions and lived in dread of full-scale invasion.

The governor and council of safety, general supervisors of home defense,[140] rehabilitated old forts and set up new coastal defenses. State troops were stationed as coast guards and towns provided with funds for supporting them. In 1776, the "authority" and selectmen were urged

to organize sentry duty, and civilians were requested to arm themselves.[141] At the same time, a motley fleet of old and newly-built vessels began to be organized into the semblance of a navy, and daring privateers were outfitted to harass the enemy and bring in badly-needed supplies. No fewer than 250 armed vessels were commissioned for naval service during the war, under management of marine agent Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., of New London.[142]

Connecticut began commissioning armed boats to cruise the Sound and take British goods from Long Island. This privilege was notoriously abused. Private raiding parties plundered Long Island patriots and Tories alike. Expeditions generated into subterfuges for profitable trade with the enemy, and aroused a chorus of disapproval from local citizens and the governors of New York and Rhode Island.[143]

Connecticut raids on Long Island were matched or surpassed by daring plundering expeditions which plagued coastal towns throughout the war. Seaboard communities, each feeling that its own case merited special attention, clamored for troops and ammunition from the governor and council of safety.[144] The slightest movement by the British fleet was sufficient to throw the entire coast into a panic.[145] Small-scale British bombardments and raids became more and more frequent during the war. A typical raiding party, landing at Guilford in June, 1777, captured several men and cattle and burned a house and barn before the inhabitants could assemble.[146] On one noctural visit, the British boldly abducted General Silliman from his own bedroom.[147] The enemy became adept at stealthy incursions. A party of 150 men rounded up cattle, horses, and plunder in West Haven one night. Not the least alarm was given, nor was the invasion

generally known in the parish "(tho compact)" until the cows failed to come home at milking time.[148] Not even the elect were secure on the Sabbath. In 1781, a squad of the enemy swooped down on Middlesex parish during divine services and carried off about forty worshippers.[149] During these "tumultuous times," Yale's library and classes were moved inland to alleviate the dangers facing them at New Haven.[150]

Not content with harrying the coast, the British punctuated their sporadic raids with three regular invasions. Heavy property damage and loss of life resulted from the assault on continental stores at Danbury in 1777. Anticipating a full-scale invasion, the governor and council of safety convened in special session on the Sabbath.[151] Much more serious was the British expedition of 1779, spearheaded against New Haven. A week of plundering and burning left much of Norwalk and Fairfield in ashes. The entire state was panicked by the news. Frenzied citizens of Stratford were reported close to shedding blood among themselves. One faction made ready to renounce independence to save the town from the torch, and involved William Samuel Johnson in its treason.[152] Though shortlived, the effect of the 1779 invasion was startling. Samuel Webb observed:

> I am happy to tell you it has had a very good effect on the people, the Tory and the Timid Whig now join in determining to take Arms with their virtuous countryman and sware revenge—I have never seen the people so universally ready to take to the Field since the Lexington Battle—[153]

The militia stood ready to move on the shortest notice:

> only think of it they are going to work on Sunday (instead of praying) to get in the Harvest that they may be ready to move,—this for the Holy Land is something new,—[154]

This expedition of 1779 was followed two years later by Benedict Arnold's

raid which destroyed most of New London and was climaxed by the massacre of troops defending the fort at Groton.[155]

The most crucial problem of home defense centered in the western county of Fairfield, adjacent to New York, and particularly in Horse Neck parish of Greenwich township. For about a year, Greenwich was partly in British hands, and at all times it was virtually a no-man's land. British and American raiders reached understandings and plundered Tories and Whigs indiscriminately. The British "Cowboys" drove their cattle off toward New York, while "Skinners," professing attachment to the American cause, staged sham attacks and then divided the booty. American and enemy privateers plundered either side at will. Extensive trading with the enemy went on in the area, especially toward the close of the war. Civilians passed and repassed the lines, carrying intelligence to the enemy. When Greenwich town officers proved completely incapable of enforcing order, martial law went into effect in 1781.[156] Providing adequate defense for this "western frontier" area was one of the most difficult problems facing the state government, especially toward the close of the war.[157] This situation accounted in part for the failure to fill continental troop quotas adequately.

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The attention of Connecticut's government was even further diverted from national considerations by her obligation of caring for war prisoners and out-of-state Tories. Connecticut was believed to be a good detention area because her Whig government continued without interruption

and because she was free from enemy occupation. Hence, large numbers of enemies of both categories were sent into the state throughout the war.

In May, 1775, the Ticonderoga expedition sent British prisoners into the state on its own initiative, and the Assembly was expected to provide for them. At that time the legislature appointed a committee for prisoners which functioned throughout the war, even after Congress had begun to provide funds for their care. In August, 1775, the governor and council of safety accepted surplus prisoners from overcrowded Massachusetts jails and the next year the Albany committee sent in three ship loads of Tories.[158] Some notorious out-of-state Loyalists were confined in the state, including both Dr. Church and Governor Franklin for a time. These early prisoners were encouraged to put themselves out at labor in the interior whenever they could find persons willing to hire them.[159] Often, town selectmen and committees of inspection were ordered to supervise those assigned to their towns.[160] This policy was continued in so far as possible during the war, since it lessened the drain on provisions[161] and the strain on county jails.

The lenient policy of permitting prisoners freedom to find work in towns was followed up by allowing war prisoners to go at large in the state or return to British lines, on giving paroles not to give aid to the royal cause.[162] In the fall of 1776, the Assembly also acted favorably on the memorials of Tory prisoners requesting to return home on temporary paroles for food and clothing to tide them over the winter. This policy was urged by local committees which found themselves unable to find adequate food.[163]

As the war progressed, government policy became more strict. This

change in attitude was necessitated by an influx of Convention troops in 1777.[164] Many captives were quartered in Hartford and the extensive freedom granted them resulted in clashes with townsmen.[165] Eventually Hartford felt that the time had come to halt the throngs of British and Tory prisoners "rambling /the streets/ with impunity at all hours of the night, and often to the secret malice of every hardned /sic/ villain."[166] Hence, in January, 1778, the Assembly adopted the policy of detaining both British and out-of-state captives in ships or prisons.[167] But unsubstantial county jails were no more adequate for confining military than civil prisoners. Escapes were numerous, both from prisons and from the old prize ship fitted out as a detention site in 1778.[168] And confinement on foul prison ships raised a health problem not so serious when prisoners were given more freedom and fresh air.[169] In so far as possible, then, the government arranged for prisoner exchanges.[170]

A minor but time-consuming problem facing the government throughout the war concerned the regulation of the large number of refugees who voluntarily fled from behind the British lines, especially from New York and Long Island, for asylum in Connecticut. The Assembly and the governor and council of safety were confronted with a never-ending barrage of petitions from refugees for various requests. Some prayed for tax exemptions. Scores desired to return to Long Island to pick up their belongings, to settle estates, to visit their families, or even "for the purpose of marrying a wife."[171] Other memorials came in from a few British citizens stranded in Connecticut who wished safe conduct to New York.[172] At other times, the wives of Tories who had left the state desired to be with their husbands. Usually, the government acted favorably on such re-

quests, even though they created an opening for trade with the enemy. Prevention of such illicit commerce was one of the most consistent of the government's policies in connection with regulation of the wartime economy.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER V.

1. CCR, XV, 40, 125, 129, 325.

2. Ibid., XV, 191-2.

3. CSR, I, 8-9.

4. CCR, XV, 289-90.

5. See Conn. Jour., 28 Jan. 1778.

6. See CCR, XV, 213-4, 272-3, 508, 350-1, 357, 373, 204-5, 251; Conn. Jour., 26 June, 10 July 1776; Conn. Cour., 2 Dec. 1777.

7. CCR, XV, 449.

8. Ibid., 477; Conn. Cour., 25 Aug. and 23 Dec. 1777; Conn. Jour., 10 Apr. 1783.

9. Peter Colt to Gov. Trumbull, /Dec. 1779/, Trumbull Papers, III,461-2.

10. S. B. Webb to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 9 Dec. 1779, Webb Corres., II, 225-6.

11. Doolittle reported the manufacture of 80,000 lbs. by 19 Dec. 1780. Stiles, Diary (19 Dec. 1780), II, 487.

12. Conn. Jour., 10 Jan. and 3 Apr. 1776; Conn. Cour., 1 July 1776.

13. CCR, XV, 18.

14. CSR, I, 9.

15. See Stiles, Diary, II, 209; Conn. Jour., 5 and 26 June 1776, 24 Jan. 1776.

16. CCR, XV, 190-1; CSR, I, 11, 258.

17. CCR, XV, 199-200.

18. Ibid., 18.

19. Ibid., 325, 439; CSR, I, 41-2, 172, 327, 383.

20. Louis F. Middlebrook, History of Maritime Connecticut During the American Revolution, 1775-1783 (2 vols., Salem, 1925), I, 203.

21. Gov. Trumbull to Nathaniel Woodhull, 22 Mar. 1776, Trumbull Papers, III, 6; Field, Middletown, 70; Harvey M. Lawson, The History of Union, Conn..... (New Haven, 1893), 37; CCR, XV, 37, 130,156-7, 225, 329, 440, 459; CSR, I, 538.

22. Ibid., 438, 460; CSR, I, 124-5. See also Stiles, Windsor, I, 638-9.

23. CCR, XV, 17-8, 137, 317-8, 323.

24. CSR, I, 23, 244, 245, 246.

25. Ibid., II, 430,94,96, I, 94, 96, 108, 324.

26. See Middlebrook, I, 201; CCR, XV, 229-30, 255, 370, 579, 341; CSR, I, 19.

27. CCR, XV, 234; Roger Sherman to Gov. Trumbull, 21 Mar. 1777 and 23 Apr. 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 36, 45.

28. CCR, XV, 249. See also CSR, I, 204-5.

29. Ibid., II, 241, 348-9, 248, 513.

30. See Conn. Jour., 28 Sept. 1780.

31. CSR, II, 244, 542-3.

32. In February, 1777, one shipment alone amounted to 326 gallons. CSR, I, 178.

33. Ibid., III, 158. See also IV, 256, 271-3.

34. Conn. Cour., 25 Nov. 1776; Conn. Jour., 11 Dec. 1776.

See CCR, XV, 290-1; CSR, I, 10,103, 243; Steiner, Guilford, 433; J. Rupert Simonds, A History of the First Church and Society of Branford, Connecticut, 1644-1919 (New Haven, [1919]), 107; Conn. Jour., 21 Apr., 29 Apr., 25 Mar., and 8 July 1778.

See William Cothren, History of Ancient Woodbury, Connecticut....(4 vols., Waterbury, Conn., 1854-1879), I, 186-7; Edwin Hall, comp., The Ancient Historical Records of Norwalk, Conn.... (Norwalk, 1847), 130.

35. CSR, I, 315, 322.

36. Ibid., 250.

37. Samuel Orcutt, A History of the Old Town of Stratford,... (New Haven, 1886), I, 382; George L. Rockwell, The History of Ridgefield, Connecticut (Ridgefield, 1927), 98-9.

38. Conn. Jour., 5 Mar. 1777; Conn. Cour., 11 Aug. 1777.

39. CSR, I, 416, 366, II, 134, 13; Conn. Cour., 11 Aug. 1777.

40. CSR, I, 451, 457, 346.

41. Stiles, Diary (14 Nov. 1777), II, 229.

42. Ibid., (22 Sept. 1777), II, 210. See also Conn. Jour., 1 Oct. 1777; Wheeler, Stonginton, 138; Loren P. Waldo, The Early History of Tolland.... (Hartford, 1861), 60.

43. Stiles, Diary (16 Apr. 1782), III, 18; (26 June 1780), II, 440; Conn. Jour., 4 Apr. 1779 and 14 Mar. 1782.

44. Ibid., 21 Apr. 1778.

45. Ibid., 31 Mar., 7 Apr., and 14 Apr. 1779.

46. Ibid., 14 Nov. 1782, 26 Jan. 1780. Sometimes the Courant and Journal were forced to print only two-page editions.

47. Conn. Cour., 3 Feb. 1778; CSR, I, 503, 549.

48. Jeremiah Wadsworth to S. B. Webb, 31 Dec. 1775, Webb. Corres., I, 125-6.

49. CCR, XV, 81.

50. CCR, XIV, 430-1; Victor Leroy Johnson, The Administration of the American Commissariat During the Revolutionary War (Philadelphia, 1941), 28-9, 51, 44, 6-11, 109, 133-4, 163-5.

51. CSR, I, 18, III, 177.

52. Ibid., IV, 291.

53. Ibid., I, 115-6.

54. Ibid., III, 132.

55. Ibid., I, 457.

56. Ibid., 574, 157.

57.For example, ibid.,84; Conn. Jour., 13 Aug. 1777.

58. For example,CSR, I, 188.

59. Ibid., 201.

60. See ibid., 399, 418, 452, 384,390, 173, 175.

61. Edward Hallam to Gov. Trumbull, 27 Jan. 1779, Trumbull Papers, III, 338-9.

62. Conn. Jour., 5 Mar. 1777.

63. S. H. Parsons to Jonathan Trumbull, 2 Nov. 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 183-4.

64. Conn. Jour., 20 Apr. 1780; CSR, III, 379-80, 381-2.

65. Peter Colt to Gov. Trumbull, /Dec. 1779/, Trumbull Papers, III, 461-2; and see CSR, III, 158.

66. Royal Flint to Gov. Trumbull, 17 July 1780, Trumbull Papers, IV, 65-7; CSR, III, 129, 157, 158, 162, 163, 237-8; Albert Edward Van Dusen, The Trade of Revolutionary Connecticut (University of Pennsylvania Doctoral Dissertation, 1948; University Microfilms Publications, no. 1640), 283.

67. CSR, I, 20,,72, 198, 316, 328-9, 386, 457-8, III, 15.

68. Ibid., II, 442-3.

69. See Jedidiah Huntington to Gov. Trumbull, 13 Jan. 1778, Trumbull Papers, III, 213; Conn. Cour., 10 Oct. 1780, 13 Jan. 1778; Conn. Jour., 22 Oct. 1777, 11 Jan. and 19 Aug. 1778.

70. CSR, I, 71, 396-7.

71. Ibid., II, 277-9.

72. See, for example, Conn. Jour., 5 Nov. 1777.

73. CSR, III, 467, 471.

74. For example, Alonzo B. Chapin, Glastenbury for Two Hundred Years:... (Hartford, 1853), 105; Edward C. Starr. A History of Cornwall, Connecticut.... (New Haven, 1926), 53.

75. Conn. Jour., 1 Oct. 1777, 25 May.1778, 30 June 1779.

76. Charles R. Stark, Groton, Conn. 1705-1905 (Stonington, Conn., 1922), 251.

77. Samuel Orcutt, History of the Towns of New Milford and Bridgewater, Connecticut, 1703-1882 (Hartford, 1882), 220; Hall, Norwalk, 137.

78. R. J. Meigs to Gov. Trumbull, 25 Oct. 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 173-4.

79. S. W. Williams to S. B. Webb, 9 Dec. 1781, Webb Corres., II, 378. See also Jedidiah Huntington to Andrew Huntington, 12 Aug. 1777, Huntington Papers, 363.

80. CSR, III, 176, 183, 238-9, 521-2.

81. Ibid., 384-6, 468-9.

82. See, for example, Steiner, Guilford, 435.

83. Conn. Jour., 4 Oct. 1781; Samuel Orcutt, History of Torrington, Connecticut,... (Albany, 1878), 231; Charles Burr Todd, The History of Red-

ding, Connecticut.... (2d ed., New York, 1906), 25.

84. CSR, IV, 281-2, III, 553-4.

85. See Forest Morgan, ed., Connecticut as a Colony and as a State.... (4 vols., Hartford, 1904), II, chap. 6.

86. CSR, I, 91-7, IV, 139.

87. See Ibid., I, 207.

88. See Morgan, Connecticut, II, 115-6. This standard history shamefully distorts the facts.

89. Philip Schuyler to Jonathan Trumbull, 27 July 1777, Trumbull Papers, IV, 91. See also Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., to Jabez Bowen, 20 Feb. 1782, ibid., IV, 316; S. B. Webb to Joseph Webb, 27 June 1781, Webb Corres., II, 345; S. H. Parsons to Gen. Heath, 10 Feb. 1781, Parsons Letters, 336. See also Ebenezer Huntington to S. B. Webb, 16 Mar. 1782, Webb Corres., II, 388.

90. See Conn. Cour., 9 Dec. 1776.

91. CSR, IV, 117-8.

92. CSR, I, 12-3.

93. Ibid., 106.

94. S. B. Webb to Washington, 22 Jan. 1777, Webb. Corres., I, 185.

95. CSR, I, 252; CCR, XV, 196-7; CSR, I, 471.

96. Ibid., 193-4, II,135.

97. Field, Middletown, 68; Todd, Redding, 24.

98. Allen, Enfield, II, 1170.

99. Wheeler, Stonginton, 51-2.

100. Jedidiah Huntington to Jabez Huntington, 20 Dec. 1777, Huntington Papers, 387; CSR. II, 223, I, 531-2, III, 141-2 , 20-1, 14-5, 181.

101. Ibid., I, 165; S. H. Parsons to Washington, 11 May 1777, Parsons Letters, 94.

102. CSR, I, 193-4.

103. Ibid., 207-9, 240-1.

104. Ibid., 474-5.

105. Ibid., III, 20.

106. Ibid., 174-6.

107. Ibid., 390-1.

108. Clarence Winthrop Bowen, The History of Woodstock, Connecticut (8 vols., Norwood, Mass., 1926-1943), I, 155.

109. See, for example, Chapin, Glastenbury, 105, 107; Stark, Groton, 250-1; Steiner, Guilford, 436-7; Francis Atwater, History of Kent, Connecticut... (Meriden, Conn., 1897), 35; Stiles, Windsor, II, 330; Heman R. Timlow, Ecclesiastical and other Sketches of Southington, Conn. (Hartford, 1875), 528-9.

110. CSR, III, 311-2, 312-4.

111. Ibid., IV, 166, 222, 231, 261-2, 319-20, 321, V, 56.

112. CSR, I, 127n.

113. Gold Selleck Silliman to Jonathan Trumbull, 2 Aug. 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 99-100.

114. R. J. Meigs to Titus Hosmer, 26 Dec. 1778, ibid., 325-6.

115. See, for example, Trumbull to President of Congress, 8 June 1780, ibid., IV, 50-3.

116. See Mumford to Parsons, 4 June 1779, and Parsons to Mumford, 22 Jan. 1778, Parsons Letters, 250, 139.

117. John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 4 Feb. 1779, Huntington Papers, 425; CSR, II, 229.

118. Parsons to Trumbull, 30 Apr. 1779, Parsons Letters, 239-40.

119. CSR, III, 21-3.

120. Ibid., 189-90.

121. Conn. Officers to Trumbull, 26 July 1781, Parsons Letters, 382-6.

122. Parsons to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 14 Jan. 1781, ibid., 321-2.

123. 31 Jan. 1781, ibid., 324. See also 5 Feb. 1781, ibid., 324-5.

124. Jedidiah Huntington to Parsons, 24 Jan. 1781, ibid., 324; CSR, III, 290, 300.

125. See S. B. Webb to Joseph Webb, 27 June 1781, Webb Corres., II, 345-6;

Jonathan Trumbull, Jr. to Gov. Trumbull, 13 July 1781, Trumbull Papers, IV, 247-8.

126. Washington to Trumbull, 28 June and 3 Aug.1781, Parsons Letters, 371-3, 387. See also Trumbull to Washington, 9 July 1781, ibid., 372-3.

127. Parsons to Trumbull, 10 July and 12 July 1781,ibid., 375-6, 376; Trumbull to Parsons, 16 July 1781, ibid., 377-8; Trumbull to Washington, 17 July 1781, ibid., 378-9; Parsons to Trumbull, 26 July 1781, ibid., 380-2; CSR, III, 476. See also Jonathan Trumbull, Jr., to Gov. Trumbull, 26 July 1781, Trumbull Papers, IV, 257.

128. CSR, III, 480-1.

129. For example, ibid., V, 86.

130. Ibid., IV, 12-4.

131. Washington to Robert Morris, 17 May 1782, Webb Corres., II, 394n.

132. Silas Goodell to Joshua Huntington, 10 June 1782, Huntington Papers, 157.

133. CSR, IV, 169-71.

134. Barnabas Deane to S. B. Webb, 14 May 1782, Webb Corres., II, 394-5.

135. Capt. Rogers to S. B. Webb, 17 May 1782, ibid., II, 398.

136. Jedidiah to Andrew Huntington, 3 Sept. 1783, Huntington Papers, 465.

137. See Simeon Deane to Barnabas Deane, 21 Apr. 1781, Deane Bros. Corres., 159; Conn. Jour., 8 Oct. 1783.

138. CCR, XV, 128.

139. CSR, IV, 17-8.

140. CCR, XV, 99.

141. Ibid., 398-9,37,142-3, 240; CSR, IV, 11-2, I, 116-8.

142. Ibid., II, 136; Morgan, Conn., II, ch. 7.

143. SeeJonathan Trumbull to Geo. Clinton, 20 July 1781, Trumbull Papers,IV, 248-51; R. Sherman and O. Wolcott to Gov.Trumbull, 14 Aug. 1781, ibid., 261-2; Thaddeus Burr to Trumbull, 5 Nov. 1779, ibid., III, 4534; Conn. Jour., 5 Apr. 1781.

144. For example, see Trumbull Papers, III, 31.

145. For example, CSR, I, 83; Conn. Jour., 16 Sept. 1778.

146. Ibid., 25 June 1778.

147. Ibid., 5 and 12 May 1779.

148. Ibid., 6 Sept. 1781.

149. Ibid., 26 July 1781.

150. Stiles, Diary, II, 158, 213, 226, 348.

151. CSR, I, 214; Conn. Jour., 30 Apr. and 7 May 1777.

152. CSR, II, 358.

153. S. B. Webb to Joseph Barrell, 11 July 1779, Webb Corres., II, 179-81.

154. Webb to Jeremiah Wadsworth, 9 July 1779, ibid., II, 178.

155. See especially Thomas Mumford to Gov. Trumbull, 9 Sept. 1781, Trumbull Papers, IV, 268-70; Gurdon Saltonstall to Trumbull, 10 Oct. 1781, ibid, 284-5; Conn. Jour., 13 and 20 Sept. 1781.

156. Lydia Holland and Margaret Leaf, Greenwich Old and New (Greenwich, 1935), 72-8; Parsons to Washington, 14 Mar. 1781, Parsons Letters, 346-7; CSR, III, 283-4; Thaddeus Burr to Trumbull, 4 July 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 66; Gold Selleck Silliman to Trumbull, 5 Feb. 1781, ibid., IV, 192-4; CSR, III, 308-9; William Wheeler, "A Journal for the Town of Fairfield...", in Cornelia Penfield Lathrop, Black Rock, Seaport of Old Fairfield, Connecticut, 1644-1870 (New Haven, 1930), 34-6, and passim.

157. See especially CSR, III, 35-6, 317-9, 293, IV, 9-11, V, 93, 102.

158. CCR, XV, 32-3, 145-6, 123, 180, 262, 467, 497; Conn. Jour., 28 Aug. 1776.

159. See, for example, CCR, XV, 182; CSR, I, 419, II, 214.

160. For example, ibid., I, 59.

161. See ibid., 78.

162. For example, ibid., 339, 83, 84.

163. Ibid., 58, 59.

164. Conn. Jour., 15 Oct. 1777.

165. Major Christopher French, "Major French's Journal," Connecticut Historical Society Collections, I (1860), 204, 207, 213.

166. Conn. Jour., 3 Feb. 1778.

167. CSR, I, 482.

168. For example, Ibid., II, 247, IV, 158-9, 251-2.

169. Ibid., IV, 263.

170. For example, ibid., II, 289-90, 464, IV, 122.

171. See ibid., II, 440.

172. See, for example, ibid., I, 333.

CHAPTER VI.

THE WARTIME ECONOMY

Faced with constant problems of raising cash, of trying to maintain a stable currency, and insure adequate and reasonably-priced provisions for feeding the army and civilians, the Connecticut Assembly passed extensive economic legislation throughout the war. The fiscal and commercial programs set up by this legislature were worked out in an arena in which landed and trading interests sparred for political control--hence spectators saw official policy ever shifting in response to the relative power exerted by particular economic interests at a given moment. And at the same time Connecticut merchants were trying to influence legislation favorable to their interests, they carried on their search for wartime profits. Their commercial activities brought changes, some of them temporary and others of longer duration, in prewar economic patterns--in the relative importance of certain trade routes and markets, in the role of certain commercial towns, and in the status of individual merchants.

I. Government Policy:

At the prompting of the agrarian interests, Connecticut, along with other northern states, enacted economic legislation restricting business enterprise in the form of legal tender laws, profiteering and price-fixing regulations, and embargoes. Although they were carrying on the best colonial traditions, these restrictive laws came under constant fire from merchants and were consistently evaded until a conservative reaction around

1779 and 1780 resulted in large-scale repeals.

The Assembly began its regulatory program in April, 1775, by laying an embargo on land and water exports of provisions.[1] This and successive embargoes aimed at preventing domestic and military supply shortages, holding prices in check by restricting purchases by outsiders, and halting enemy seizures of provisions. Subsequent embargoes[2] were laid from time to time by the Assembly or by the governor and council of safety, who were usually authorized to discontinue the bans entirely or to allow special trading permits. The original embargo on the export of provisions was later extended to West Indian goods and long lists of scarce articles, including wool, flax, bar iron, leather, and shoes. Detailed laws were also passed to bolster enforcement, including bonding and inspection regulations.[3]

The need for enforcement rules indicated the opposition aroused against these commercial restrictions, both at home and in neighboring states. Early in the war, prominent Connecticut shipowners unsuccessfully petitioned for tax exemptions on their idle vessels, which were becoming so much "useless Lumber."[4] Opposition also came from merchants in Wethersfield, New England's onion capital, against an embargo on vegetables in 1780. Inability to export their huge onion crop resulted in a glut on the market, so that commissaries were able to set their own prices.[5]

Residents of neighboring states suffered from the resulting scarcities and high prices of provisions, especially in the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys. With the British occupying New York City, they were absolutely dependent on overland imports of West Indian goods and salt,[6] as were the Rhode Islanders, who also begged for relief in 1779. According

to Governor Greene, Rhode Island had never raised sufficient foodstuffs and now with trade cut off and the enemy in control of one-fifth of the state, their situation was critical.[7] In fact, as another communication pointed out:

> It would soften the most obdurate heart into sympathetic feeling to behold old age and childhood tottering thro' these streets in their tattered habiliments seeking break in this inclement season, chilled with nipping frost, and debilitated with want of food and fuel.[8]

Massachusetts towns also objected to the restrictions on food exports, especially in Nantucket, Martha's Vineyard, and present-day Maine.[9] The embargoes also upset balanced regional economic life, for example by cutting off Londonderry, New Hampshire's weaver from flax supplies in Connecticut.[10]

Operation of the embargo resulted in a flood of petitions for special shipping permits from both Connecticut and out-of-state merchants. A very large part of these requests were granted, either by the Assembly, the governor and council of safety, or for a time, by local selectmen and "authority." But even with a permit system, protests continued. In 1777, General Schuyler complained that it was more economical to buy sugar in Albany at $40 a hundred weight than to ride 200 miles to secure a permit for bringing in cheaper sugar from New England.[11]

Distaste for these commercial restrictions became so widespread that in July, 1777, a Springfield Convention of New England states recommended modification of the embargo laws to allow free interstate transportation of articles that could be spared.[12] There is evidence that Trumbull personally disliked the restrictions,[13] as did many legislators. Finally, in May, 1780, the Assembly requested the governor and council of safety to correspond with neighboring states about establishing free

trade by land and sea,[14] while that August the Boston Convention called for repeal of land embargoes.[15] In October, 1781, and January, 1782, practically all restrictions were lifted, and a bonding system for shippers was substituted.[16]

Despite the embargoes, provisions were often scarce or priced out of reach of commissaries and civilians. Responsibility for these scarcities was placed on the "sharpers" and "engrossers"—speculators who allegedly bought up vital commodities in anticipation of higher prices. Alarmed by exorbitant prices, some towns agreed on maximum rates that would be paid locally, even before the state acted.[17] Very soon, however, the Assembly tried to solve the problem through legislation—in the form of an extensive program of price regulation and anti-hoarding laws designed to protect the general public and the commissaries. In November, 1776, a price-control act[18] was passed which set maximum rates for labor, grain, meat, flax, wool, West Indian goods, salt, tea, and dairy products. All other goods were to be sold in proportion to the prices specifically set.

But this first law met the fate of most other economic restrictions, and by December, 1776, prices had become so exorbitant that delegates of the New England states convened in Providence to decide on a joint policy. Adopting the Convention's recommendations, the General Assembly set up a more comprehensive price-control program in December. Maximum price levels were adjusted, further rates were specifically stated, and legal profits from the sale of imports were stipulated. Noting that some imports were being marked up 500 or 600 per cent above original cost and then retailed at additional "profits" of 40 or 50 per cent, the Assembly stipulated what it considered a fair reward to merchants. For

example, importers were barred from marking up the price of imported cloth above 175 per cent of its original cost.[19] The following year, many of these price levels were raised, and in addition, provision was made for regulating the exorbitant charges of tavern keepers.[20]

Price-control laws were ignored from the outset. Some aroused citizens valiantly resolved to back efforts of local law enforcement agents,[21] while New Haven set up a committee of inspection to consider violations and advertise the guilty as public enemies.[22] But despite sporadic attempts at enforcement, flagrant violations persisted. Merchants condemned these economic palliatives as unrealistic and unjust.[23] They made profitable business impossible, in light of high insurance costs and heavy losses of ships. On the other hand, they charged, the Assembly, under the control of farmers, had allowed inequitably high price levels on agricultural produce.[24] Finally, in July, 1777, a Springfield Convention recommended complete repeal of the program, and the Assembly complied the next month.[25]

Then, six months later, a further price control experiment was recommended by the New Haven Convention of delegates from New England and New York, which met on the suggestion of Congress.[26] Governor Trumbull informed the Assembly of his own personal opposition to further legislation, fearing that profit restrictions would deter the farmer from planting adequate crops and the merchant from risking his fortune "on a small and precarious gain."[27] But ignoring the governor's warning, the Assembly adopted the New Haven recommendations in February, 1778.[28] The new law limited wages to seventy-five per cent above those of 1775, while price schedules for provisions were specifically stated in some instances.

For example, the price of good wheat flour was set at twenty-seven shillings a hundred weight and that of West Indian rum at eighteen shillings a gallon, wholesale. Other prices were to be determined by local meetings of the civil "authority" and selectmen. Violators were to be barred from holding civil offices and those refusing to pay fines were to be drafted for military or privateer service.

Local officials drew up very detailed price regulations for all local craftsmen,[29] while in Norwalk, at least, the town ordered a copy of the act printed for each householder's information.[30] And, in an outburst of patriotism, many innkeepers and businessmen in Hartford and other towns agreed to abide by the letter of the new law.[31] But Trumbull's fears that price restrictions would discourage the initiative of the farmer and merchant were unwarranted. From the outset, the new program was openly and blatantly ignored throughout the state, just as its predecessor had been.[32] So, in May, 1778, the Assembly suspended the new laws, on the recommendation of Congress, and in October the entire program was repealed.[33] The price situation continued to be chaotic, and in 1779, Congress toyed with the idea of proposing uniform legislation on a national scale, but the project never materialized.[34]

Along with its price-control laws, the state launched a program to prevent hoarding and profiteering. Shifting from time to time in response to recommendations of interstate conventions, Congressional suggestions, and violations, these economic restrictions proved equally ineffective in safeguarding the public interest. The first of the laws directed against the hoarders provided for impressment of army supplies from those "engrossers" allegedly preying "upon the bowels of their

country."[35] After further acts for speeding up seizures proved inadequate,[36] the Assembly launched a rationing program in October, 1777. Except for small quantities for home consumption, no person might purchase scarce commodities (including West Indian goods, tea, wine, coffee, salt, cloth, shoes, hides, flax, dairy products, grain, meat, and cattle) without securing a license from a majority of his local selectmen and "authority" and taking the state loyalty oath. Merchants charging unfair prices or refusing to make sales at all would forfeit their purchasing licenses.[37]

Public opinion was aroused against the merchants and farmers responsible for artificial scarcities which resulted in inadequately fed troops. The press condemned the "rum jockies" and other speculators who, hearing of commissaries purchasing nearby, bought up liquor, grain, and fat cattle, kept them two or three days, and then sold them at exorbitant profits.[38] Remedial legislation was either violated or found to be inadequate for making seizures.[39] In 1779, Commissary Wadsworth reported his deputies were unable to confiscate needed grain because it did not come under the scope of impressment laws, although his department learned that profiteers were daily shipping grain out of the state by misusing embargo permits. And even if it were possible to seize supplies under existing laws, the cost would be prohibitive. In one instance, charges for impressing £1314 worth of flour, whenwarrants, officers' fees, guards, transportation, storage, and appraisal costs were considered, totalled over £97.[40] Thus, although the impressment laws were retained during the war, the anti-hoarding program proved most unsuccessful.

In addition to these chronic problems of scarcity and high prices, the state was faced with the constant difficulty of raising the huge amounts of cash needed to meet its tremendous wartime expenses. The government was constantly in financial straits. High-ranking civilians, like the army officers and soldiers, went long periods without pay, and they too were obliged to meet public expenses out of their personal resources.[41] The problem of meeting public obligations was hampered by currency depreciation, by laxness of towns in sending in tax monies, by the necessity of cooperating with an erratic Congress in setting up fiscal policy, and by the conflicting ideas of the landed and trading interests. But despite these handicaps the necessary funds were raised—by forced and voluntary loans from the public and by the old colonial expedient of printing bills of credit.

The printing of currency to finance government expenditures began at once, when in April, 1775, a special session of the Assembly authorized £50,000 in bills of credit. Additional emissions brought the total for 1775 and 1776 to £260,000, the last bills issued until 1780, except for £5,250 in October, 1777, for meeting a scarcity of small change. Redemption of these non-interest bearing notes, ranging from one to forty shillings, was promised after two to six years.[42] In all cases, except for the issue of 1777, taxes were levied, payable in the bills—the method for retiring the public debt traditionally used in the American colonies. These bills of credit, along with those of Congress and the other states,[43] served as a currency during the war.

At the close of the Seven Years' War, Connecticut had put her rather demoralized finances on a firm basis. With the aid of hard money

granted by Parliament, she met the extraordinary wartime expenses (even with very light taxes), discharged her old bills of credit, and so buttressed her credit that by 1771, her paper money was accepted freely even though it carried no interest.[44] The new currency issued in 1775 and 1776 benefited from the state's good credit reputation and for several months was accepted without hesitation.[45] But before long, people thought twice before accepting paper money on a par with specie, hard money began to disappear, and the drastic depreciation of state and continental currency began. By June, 1779, paper dollars were accepted at only a fifteenth of their face value in New Haven, and five months later at only a twentieth or less.[46]

Inflation of prices and depreciation of paper currency worked hardships on all, especially those with fixed salaries. Clamors of soldiers and officers for relief stemmed in large part from pay depreciation. The legislature was forced to raise wage and fee scales for public officials.[47] Ministers were especially hard-hit. Societies received constant pleas from pastors for cost-of-living adjustments of salaries to keep pace with the decreasing purchasing power of the currency.[48] Some were granted relief; others, including the Reverned Samuel Newell of Bristol, were not so fortunate. But after his society refused to make an adjustment, certain parishioners aided Newell on their own initiative. Thereupon, the parson entered the following in the parish records:

> to prevent trouble in the present world I do Give a free Discharge to sd Society for what was due to me & Refer them to the Last tribunal where impartial Justice will be Enquired after.[49]

Solutions for the depreciation problem were debated in the press and the legislature throughout the war. Like other states, Connecticut enacted a legal tender law in October, 1776, which prohibited any

person undervaluing either state or continental currency, on pain of forfeiting the full value of the goods involved.[50] But legal tender laws were of course ignored, just as were the price-control and profiteering rules, while streams of continental bills continued to roll off the press. In an attempt to decrease the overabundant supply of cash, the Assembly barred the bills of other states from circulation in 1777.[51] The public became very concerned. Town and county committees of correspondence and county conventions of town delegates debated the problem. Eventually a state convention met, but it too accomplished nothing.[52] Newspaper correspondents proposed calling in surplus continental bills to appreciate the value of the remainder;[53] others favored much heavier taxation or a public devaluation of the currency to wipe out part of the public debt.[54] Some writers, reflecting the growing distaste of creditors for accepting depreciated bills at face value in payment of debts contracted in specie, demanded repeal of the tender law.[55]

In 1777, Congress recommended that the states print no further bills of credit and that outstanding issues be called in by loans and taxes. The states were called on to pay quotas for running the national government and raise funds for sinking the continental bills.[56] In February, 1778, Connecticut responded by calling in her outstanding currency and exchanging it for interest-bearing treasurer's notes or continental bills, at face value.[57] But Congress continued to issue more and more currency, and the depreciation problem continued.

In 1780, many changes were made in state and national policy. First of all, the Assembly reversed its stand against further paper money in January, and authorized £40,000 in bills of credit payable in four years, this time bearing interest at five per cent. The new bills were

to be received in payment of all state salaries and fees.[58] The same session of the legislature tried to comfort uneasy creditors who feared that money they had loaned the public would be repaid in depreciated currency. They were promised that all state securities, including those granted when the old bills of credit were cancelled, would be repaid with interest, in specie or in state bills of credit, according to the full value of the money at the time of the loan.[59] At the same time, creditors were benefited by a modification of the legal tender law. State and continental bills were made a tender only according to their actual value in terms of specie, at the time the contract was made.[60] In line with a Congressional resolution, the act of 1780, making bills even a modified legal tender was repealed in February, 1781[61]—a response to the conservative reaction taking hold throughout the country. Still further benefit was extended creditors in October, 1782, when the courts were ordered to determine by equity proceedings or through referees all cases involving the refusal of creditors to accept offers of depreciated continental bills in payments of debts incurred between September, 1777, and March, 1780.[62]

At the same time that Connecticut was issuing new paper money and extending relief to her creditors, Congress was torn by indecision over how best to cope with the demoralization of public credit. By spring, delegates had convinced themselves that since current holders of continental bills had received the money at a depreciated value, justice and fairness required their redemption only on such a basis of depreciation as might appear equitable. The decision was set forth in the resolve of 18 March 1780, which ordered devaluation of the old notes at one-fortieth their face value, thus reducing at one stroke the nominal debt

of $200,000,000 to only $5,000,000. This program was to be carried out by the states levying taxes payable in the devaluated bills for meeting their Congressional requisitions and then destroying the remaining old notes. In their place, the states were to issue new bills, carrying five per-cent interest, in proportion to their respective quotas, at a rate not to exceed one-twentieth part of the nominal sum of the bills brought in. The new bills were to be redeemable in specie during the next six years by sinking funds which the states were to establish for their redemption. The faith of the United States was also pledged for their payment.[63]

Connecticut was assigned a quota of $22,100,000 worth of old bills to be collected. In April, 1780, the Assembly approved the plan of 18 March and agreed to sink its quota of old bills and issue the new.[64] But at the May session, the legislators were informed that although the new bills had not been prepared, the treasurer was in desperate need of funds. Thereupon, the Assembly ordered a further issue of state notes, in lieu of those recommended by Congress. Thus, Connecticut, like other states, pursued the course her own exigencies and interests seemed to demand—a policy which contributed to the breakdown of the plan of 1780. New state bills worth £150,000 in lawful money, bearing five per-cent interest and payable in specie in four and five years, were authorized. As in the past, taxes were levied, payable in specie or in the new bills. Notes turned in for taxes were not to be put back into circulation except by order of the Assembly.[65] These emissions of January and May, 1780, amounting in all to £190,000, were the last paper money issued by the state during the war. These new bills might be exchanged for old continental bills at the established rate of forty to one, in accordance

with the Congressional resolve of 18 March.

Merchants, hoping to prove that credit could be maintained without the hated tender acts, tried to insure circulation of the new state bills at face value. In April, a group of the most prominent traders, including Jeremiah Wadsworth, Thomas Mumford, Barnabas Deane, Joseph Webb, and John Chenevard, notified the Assembly that despite their losses in the past, they were willing and determined to accept the currency devaluation and receive payment in the new emissions.[66] On the local level as well, action was taken to ward off the depreciation which had been the downfall of the old currency. A New Haven town meeting drew up an association whose members promised to accept the new money on a par with specie;[67] other towns agreed to boycott or prosecute anyone demonstrating lack of faith in the new bills.[68]

Although the bills of 1780 fared better than the old continental notes, they did not stand up as their backers had hoped. Promises to repay principal and interest at maturity were distrusted from the outset; by December they were worth but ten shillings on the pound, and in January, 1783, were received for taxes at a rate of two for one. The state took advantage of its fallen credit by levying taxes payable in the depreciated bills, and so most were destroyed before they became due. The small amount outstanding was charged to the national government after the adoption of the new constitution.[69]

By issuing these notes, Connecticut was able to meet heavy wartime expenses and provide a circulating medium to supplement scarce hard money supplies. Many people suffered from the rapid depreciation, but this automatic drop in value as the money passed from hand to hand was viewed as another form of taxation.[70] And everyone accepted as a matter

of course the expedient of wiping out these obligations by making depreciated bills receivable for public taxes.

Other types of loans, both forced and voluntary, were used to raise cash, and large amounts of interest-bearing securities were given state creditors. As early as December, 1776, £60,000 in securities at four per cent were handed soldiers as bounty pay,[71] and later certificates of indebtedness were printed to quiet the clamoring troops who demanded back-pay arrears.[72] Other securities were authorized for commissary purchases.[73] Interest-bearing promissory notes were also given creditors voluntarily loaning money to the state at various times, as well as to those who turned in the old state bills of credit in 1778.[74] The government was regularly forced to pay six per-cent interest on its debts and eventually had to grant holders of the four per-cent bounty notes of 1776 the six per-cent rate.[75]

Many day-to-day financial decisions were required to meet emergencies, as when a special tax was levied in 1780 to pay bounties or when a certain Tory estate was ordered sold to equip a regiment with saddles.[76] The sale of this confiscated Loyalist property often proved a convenient safety-valve for meeting pressing obligations, especially for paying the army.[77] Toward the close of the war, returning soldiers began petitioning for title to specific Tory estates in lieu of back pay.[78] A few societies were also granted proceeds from such local sales for repairing or rebuilding meeting houses.[79] Then, in May, 1782, the Assembly ordered all forfeited Tory property sold at public auction. Purchasers were to give the state their personal notes promising payment in specie within one year, with interest. These notes were then to be handed over to officers and soldiers of the Connecticut Line to help meet arrears in back pay.[80] But even after this general act, the Assembly

continued to grant specific Tory property to some soldiers when they requested it.[81]

The heavy expenses of the war for independence left Connecticut with a debt of over a million pounds,[82] in addition to her share of the continental obligations. This state debt was nearly all reduced to specie value and payable in coin by 1783,[83] and all but the outstanding bills of credit carried six per-cent interest. By November, 1789, this debt was reduced to £608,043, through devaluating its nominal value and by a method of taxation which secured to the state the benefit of its poor credit. That is, taxes were made payable in depreciated evidences of the public debt—bills of credit, soldiers' securities, interest certificates, treasurer's notes, and pay-table orders.[84] Interest was not paid regularly, and if at all, settled by issuing interest certificates, receivable for certain taxes.[85] Outstanding bills of credit of 1780 were retired in part by making them receivable at their nominal value for western land sales.[86] Retirement of such a large part of the debt was something of an accomplishment, in light of the postwar depression and the clamors of the farmers against taxation at the close of the war which forced a three-year suspension of part of the state taxes in 1784.

It is difficult to determine the burden of wartime taxes, relative to the prewar tax load. Clearly the tax rates were very much higher. In fact, from 1765 through 1769, no colony taxes were levied, and from 1770 until the outbreak of the war, rates amounted to only one or two pence per pound of valuation.[87] Thus the wartime taxes appear very burdensome. In 1777, they totalled twenty-eight pence on the pound and in 1778,fifty-five pence.[88] Town taxes. levied to meet ordinary expenses,plus raising provisions and paying off local indebtedness, were

also considerably higher, as were parish rates.[89] But of course these taxes were levied at a time when currency was circulating in great quantities and rapidly depreciating in value.

The state was obliged to levy these higher taxes, not only on account of its increased expenses and the depreciation of currency, but also because a given tax levy, say of a pence on the pound of valuation, simply did not raise as much revenue in terms of lawful money as it had before the war. This situation resulted in large measure from the exemption of officers and soldiers from poll-tax listing while in service. As before, local officials were permitted to abate one-twentieth of their town's levies for benefit of the poor. The customary liberal exemptions were also extended poor towns and parishes, especially those in the northwest.[90] And time after time, the Assembly waived taxes of "sufferers" in the-once prosperous coastal towns, including New Haven, New London, Greenwich, Norwalk, and Fairfield, which were raided and put to the torch by the enemy.[91] In fact, an investigation in 1783, revealed that revenue lost through all tax abatements had amounted to about one-quarter of all the taxes collected since the beginning of the war.[92]

Further financial difficulties developed because many towns defaulted on tax payments, just as they had habitually done even in the prewar era of light taxation. Sometimes unavoidable delays in payment were responsible, as when Westmoreland's collector was captured by the Indians or when local listers and collectors were called into the army.[93] Organized resistance by defiant Tories sometimes met the collectors, as in Newtown where troops were sent to aid an harrassed public servant who was

> obstructed in the execution of his duty and manaced with personal abuses and injury, and ... likewise received an anonymous letter

> menacing him with banishment or something else more dreadfull than death unless he shall desist from the collection of public taxes.[94]

Collectors were ever pleading with their constituents to bring in payments,[95] and the Assembly or governor and council of safety were ever resolving to "invigorate the collection" of past and current taxes and threatening executions against estates of negligent local officials.[96] And at times these threats were carried out.[97]

The normal complaints which one would expect to hear from the public were made against heavy taxes during the war, but more significant was the widescale opposition generated against the tax system itself. Under the existing arrangement, burdens were not equitably apportioned among the population, and those with the least means were often given the heaviest loads. The really widespread discontent with the tax system was still another reflection of the conflict between Connecticut's poor farmers and the wealthier merchants. At first, the landed interests succeeded in lifting part of the burden from their own shoulders, but before long the conservative reaction nullified a large part of their gains, just as it resulted in abandonment of the legal tender and price-fixing laws.

At the outbreak of the war, almost all tax revenues in this predominantly agrarian state came from the uniform poll tax levied on practically all males between sixteen and seventy, and from the tax on livestock and improved land.[98] Other revenue was provided by levies on houses, boats, curricles, and chaises, and from the "faculty" taxes placed on professional men and merchants according to some vague notion on the part of the lister as to their "ability." This system clearly benefited the wealthy at the expense of the poor, especially in light of

its uniform poll-tax provision; its fixed valuations on land, cattle, and dwellings, no matter what their actual worth; and its failure to tax the stores, warehouses, or stock of merchants, or any personal property except luxury vehicles. With higher wartime taxes, the shocking inequalities of the system became more glaring,[99] and a vocal protest movement sprang up in the state.

Reformers pointed out that some men were not supporting the war effort in proportion to their abilities. Some worth not over 300 or 400 pounds paid taxes as large as others worth 4,000 or 5,000 pounds. All houses with a specified number of rooms and fireplaces were taxed uniformly, whether they were in town or country, large or small, old or newly-built. Hence some dwellings were assessed at a rate twenty times others worth practically the same.[100] And as a Norwich town meeting stated:

> By the present system, six of the poorest swine a year are rated equal to £100 in cash at interest, and 30 such swine equal to a house of £1000. The meanest horse, even 30 years old, in on a par with the best in his prime. An acre of the best land is rated no higher than the poorest that is arable in the State.[101]

Reform proposals appeared in the press, in resolves of town meetings, and even in the petitions of county conventions of town delegates.[102] Their demands were essentially the same: (1). that all property, both real and personal, especially "the growing estate of the rich," be taxed, and taxed according to its real value, as was then being done in Massachusetts; (2). that the inequitable poll tax which placed "an insupportable burden on the poor" be adjusted or abolished.[103]

The first step toward tax reform was taken in August, 1777, when an assessment system was established to determine the "clear annual pro-

fits" of merchants, artisans, professional men, mill owners, and others previously listed in proportion to their "faculty," i. e., ability, according to the discretion of the lister. Henceforth, assessors, to be appointed by the selectmen and "authority," were to determine these annual profits and set them in the list, along with the individual's polls and other taxable property. A further attempt to lighten the tax burden of the agrarian interests provided that all monies one had out on interest, less those debts he owad,were to be assessed at six per cent of their face value, and all profiteers—"those who make a business of buying and selling the necessaries or conveniences of life and by engrossing the same or other artificial methods enhance the prices thereof and thereby make great gains to themselves"—were to be assessed an additional sum, the least in town at fifty pounds and others "in like proportion."[104]

Agrarian spokesmen had high hopes that the new system would provide a just reward to those "public robbers" who thought themselves as "of some importance among mankind from the monies which they have gained" through extortion.[105] But others feared that "a great part of the good designed by this act will not be attained through the negligence or the timorousness of the assessors. For those engrossers and sharpers make the most horrid clamour and noise as soon as ever their great and unrighteous gains are touched.... [It] is to be feared that the assessors will not have resolution enough to assess these proud oppressors any thing like enough, to humble their haughtiness..."[106] Apparently a "clamour and noise" was raised, for the following January, the Assembly provided for a rehearing of cases in which taxpayers felt aggrieved by the origi-

nal assessments.[107]

In January, 1779, other substantial reform gains were made. (1). Most important, the poll tax system was changed. Henceforth, all males between sixteen and twenty-one were listed at only nine pounds, instead of eighteen, although men between twenty-one and seventy were still rated uniformly at eighteen pounds. (2). All buildings, with the notable exception of barns, were made subject to taxation, at three per cent of their valuation, figured according to 1774 prices. For the first time, then, shops and stores were taxed, and houses were not to be rated according to the number of their stories, fireplaces, and rooms, with no reference to age, as had been the case. (3). Undeveloped lands of absentee proprietors and uninclosed lands in town commons were taxed, and all cash above fifty pounds in excess of what one owed was listed at six per cent of its face value, as was all debt-free stock-in-trade owned by merchants. (5). Taxable personal property was extended to include coaches, chariots, phaetons, watches, clocks, and household silver plate.[108]

This new program, clearly aimed at shifting more of the burden on to the wealthy, aroused substantial opposition. "A.B." warned that the state was in danger of despotic rule, now that the farmers were more than ever in domination of the Assembly. The farmer's lands, he claimed, were still taxed according to prewar schedules, and so were undervalued, despite the high wartime prices he received, thus permitting excessive profits with little taxation. Meanwhile, the merchant was taxed according to his profits. The trader, who had suffered continuously throughout the war—from non-importation, tender laws, depreciated currency, price controls, seizure warrants, and unpaid debts—now faced confiscation of

the property that remained, especially with depreciated bills of credit and securities being taxed according to their nominal value. And why, he asked, had barns been exempted, while the dwellings of the "poor cottager" or the shop of the poor tradesman away at war were taxed? The answer was simple—the farmer had "a powerful patronage and the merchant hath none."[109]

But among the deputies at the May, 1779, Assembly, the merchants apparently found a more "powerful patronage," for certain changes were made in the tax system for the benefit of the wealthy. The valuation set on vehicles was lowered, the rate on both cash and interest-bearing debts reduced from six to two per cent, and the profits tax for traders and professional men was replaced with the old "faculty" system, with rates again to be determined by listers according to no clearly-defined rules. But apparently in the interests of those who desired more equitable valuations, dwellings were now to be assessed by a highly logical system, depending on their size, location, and building material, and shops, stores, and warehouses were valued according to their size. The valuation of farm lands was changed slightly, some types being raised and others lowered.[110] On the whole, these adjustments of May, 1779, indicate a compromise between the conflicting economic interests.

A year later, in May, 1780, part of the program for more equitable taxation was nullified. At the time the Assembly was repealing the tender laws, it also abolished the assessments on cash-on-hand and stock-in-trade, though it did restore the valuation on monies out on interest to six per cent. The Assembly also returned to the old assessment system for houses, whereby valuation was determined by reference

to the number of fireplaces, with no consideration of actual size. But if a dwelling appeared "old or decayed" to the lister, he might abate part of the assessment.[111] The merchants made even further gains in May, 1781, when securities representing loans to the state or the United States, including commissary certificates, were exempted from taxation.[112]

Thus the initial victories in the campaign for a more equitable tax system were of short duration. A few permanent gains were made, including the slight adjustment in the poll-tax system, extension of the list of taxable personal property, and inclusion of stores and shops. But the gains of the merchants during the period of conservative reaction outweighed the reform measures. The farmers did not forget their grievances—the tax situation was again brought up during the campaign of 1784, when, it will be recalled, they raised a hue and cry against any further levies for the benefit of the national government and army officers. At that time the festering resentment toward the tax system again erupted, when it was charged that the system was forcing immigration from the state. Despite the additional benefits gained by the farmers in 1784,[113] their protests continued through the depression years of the confederation period, even though agrarian discontent did not assume the proportions it did further up the Connecticut Valley, in neighboring Massachusetts.[114]

II. Wartime Commerce

As the merchants tried to secure favorable legislation, they carried on their private search for profits through commerce. The pattern of this wartime trade, some of it conducted through new channels, had

a lasting influence on certain Connecticut towns, on the fortunes of certain individuals, and on the future economic development of the state.

Connecticut's agricultural surpluses were eagerly sought for feeding the continental and French armies and civilian populations in other states. This demand stimulated her trade and compensated for the curtailment of West Indian commerce. While the activities of coastal ports like New Haven and New London lagged, safer overland routes were developed, especially from such towns as Hartford, Middletown, Litchfield, and Danbury across to those Hudson River towns cut off from direct access to the sea. Much of the Massachusetts and Rhode Island trade authorized by embargo permits was conducted overland as well, and as in the past, much interstate trade was conducted via the Connecticut Valley. But despite the dangers, coastal routes were also much used for interstate trade in New England.[115]

With the interruption of normal West Indian and coastal trade, scores of merchants faced the alternative of leaving their ships idle or outfitting them as privateers. Despite the heavy risks involved, this alternative attracted immediate interest, and between 200 and 300 privateers were commissioned by the state. Capital was invested by many prominent merchants, including Nathaniel Shaw, Jr., William Coit, Andrew and Ebenezer Huntington, Christopher Leffingwell, Jabez Perkins, James Church, the Deane and Webb brothers, Matthew Talcott, Pierpont Edwards, Thomas Mumford, and Jeremiah Wadsworth. Some of these merchants outfitted ships on their own, while others pooled their resources to decrease risks. New London became the leading privateering port of the state, and Connecticut River towns were also heavily involved, especially Wethersfield, Middletown, Hartford, Saybrook, East Haddam, Chatham, and

Glastonbury. After the British shifted their main attack to the South in 1778, profits became more certain. The next year the peak of the privateering business was reached, after which captures tapered off till the end of the war.[116]

Connecticut's normal foreign trade, essentially that with the West Indies, was dislocated by the war, and never recovered its exact prewar shape. The British blockade disrupted the normal course of commerce so much that privateering largely replaced regular foreign commercial activities. But though small in volume, the West Indian trade remained important. Connecticut merchants continued to ship out lumber, hoops, staves, livestock, provisions, flaxseed, pearl ashes, and beeswax, just as they had done before the war. The only important change, aside from the greatly reduced quantities, was the concentration on critically-needed items, especially salt. A limited amount of direct trade went on with friendly countries, as well.[117] In this way, as well as through captures and the highly-developed channels of illegal trade, the public was able to acquire coveted European goods, especially British manufactures.

A very large proportion of the English goods was secured through the extensive "illicit trade" with the enemy which went on all through the war, especially toward the close of the conflict. This very profitable exchange of goods and provisions was conducted on Long Island or in the vicinity of Greenwich. There was no effective way of checking the trade or making it unpopular when it was openly justified,[118] and men as influential as Jeremiah Wadsworth connived in the smuggling operations.[119] Local officials winked as itinerant merchants distributed the forbidden

goods among eager purchasers willing to pay out coin with no questions asked.[120]

Beginning in 1778, the legislature drafted law after law to check the trade. It ordered bonding of all persons passing to and from Long Island; authorized search warrants for entering buildings suspected of harboring the forbidden goods; threatened imprisonment of the guilty in the Simsbury mines; commissioned more and more armed boats to cruise the Sound; set up heavy coast-guard reinforcements; tightened up the bonding system; forfeited all right of appeal in case of conviction; totally prohibited the importation of manufactures of any possession of Great Britain or her allies, save by privateer; and finally threatened disfranchisement and disability of bringing legal action in state courts.[121]

But still the trade flourished. Legislators found to their dismay that coast guard commanders and captains of armed cruisers were conniving in the smuggling operations.[122] They watched helplessly as their troops were assaulted by trading parties.[123] In summer, 1782, they saw a minor civil war break out in Branford between "y^{e} opposers and y^{e} supporters of y^{e} trade" which finally reached such

> a high pitch, y^{e} former /became/ much exasperated at the insults of y^{e} latter; indeed civil officers in town of every denomination, as well as privet persons, are in some instenses threatened; an alarming affair latly happened, a person returning home in y^{e} evening was beset by two or three men, knock'd down, & very seveарly handled, and is thought would have ben murder'd, had not y^{e} assallents discovered their mistake, that it was not the man they aim'd at:...

If the governor and council would authorize removal of the disaffected to "the dreary abodes in Symsbury" the selectmen would "chearfully acquies."[124] Finally, in December, 1782, this local schism became so heated that one group of town officers was elected by the traders and a rival set by their opponents.[125]

Many local governments, like that of Branford, tried to prevent the "illicit trade." Typical was the New Haven town meeting's association of 1780, signed by inhabitants who pledged to purchase no smuggled goods and to boycott all suspected traders.[126] Two years later, committees consisting of the "authority," selectmen, constables, and grand-jurymen of all New Haven County towns consulted about more effective law enforcement,[127] as did delegates from the towns in Hartford and Fairfield Counties. These county conventions recommended the setting up of local committees of inspection or voluntary associations to stifle the trade.[128] In New Haven, one of these associations, consisting of "a number of respectable inhabitants," in the best Stamp-Act tradition, seized the boat of Captain Ebenezer Dayton, who they had "very great reason to believe" had "prostituted" his commission as commander of an armed cruiser. The offending vessel was carried into the public marketplace, and there burned, "together with every thing belonging to her, amidst a large concourse of people, who manifested their entire satisfaction, by closing the bonfire with three cheers."[129]

But all these efforts, official and unofficial, on both the state and local levels, proved futile. Finally, in April, 1783, after the signing of the definitive peace treaties, the state lifted the restraints.[130] In May, the long series of legislative enactments was repealed, along with other wartime measures.[131]

Besides its effect in stimulating privateering and illegal trade and in decreasing the volume of West-Indian commerce, the war for independence had a marked influence on the prosperity of certain towns. New Haven, along with other coastal centers, found her prosperous prewar commerce paralyzed by the blockade. With the close of the war, a partial

revival of her foreign shipping took place—in 1781 only four ships were registered while the year beginning June, 1783, saw forty registrations.[132] But despite the vigorous planning of her merchants to promote postwar commerce, particularly with the aid of Loyalists,[133] New Haven never regained her prewar dominance over Connecticut trade.[134] Similarly, Fairfield, a bustling little seaport in prewar days, never resumed her commercial importance. Instead, the nearby parishes of Newfield, Stratfield, and Stratford took her place, and eventually these societies formed the nucleus of modern Bridgeport, a thriving commercial and manufacturing city by the early nineteenth century.[135]

New London, New Haven's chief commercial rival, also suffered from her exposed coastal position. In severe economic straits through the war, her local population declined. For eight years, New London resembled a great militia garrison, and scarcely a day passed in which enemy sails were not in sight.[136] Finally, in 1781, the major part of the town was put to the torch by the enemy. But New London carried on more commerce during the war than did New Haven, particularly through privateering operations, and by 1784 , her commerce was once more flourishing. Privateersmen resumed the role of peaceful traders, unemployed officers and crews were eager for employment, and a host of young mariners headed out to sea.[137] By November, 1784, Jacob Sebor reported that the town had "risen surprisingly since the Fire there is more Houses in it now, than before that misfortune."[138] The town encouraged British factors and Tory refugees from Nova Scotia to become residents,[139] and Frenchmen and Spaniards took up citizenship,[140] in line with the new state act for encouraging postwar commerce. Thus New London re-

covered from her wartime commercial eclipse far more successfully than did New Haven, and after the postwar depression surpassed her one-time rival.

While the war temporarily exhausted New London's strength, it acted as a spur to the enterprise of neighboring Norwich. Located further up the Thames and so protected by her inland position from British raids, Norwich not only built new shops and houses during the war, but also engaged in shipbuilding, while her merchants "boldly sent out ... vessels to bring in spoils from the ocean." In 1781 and 1782, the town was overflowing with coveted tropical and European merchandise, mostly obtained by successful privateering ventures. New mercantile firms were established—those of Daniel Rodman, Samuel Woodbridge, Lynde McCurdy, and others.[141]

But it was Hartford's economy which was the most stimulated by wartime trade. As large amounts of inter- and intra-state commerce were diverted to the safer interior routes, this river town became a great trading center for provisions and public stores. A French hospital was set up in 1781, and prisoners and refugee patriots were quartered in town throughout the war—all of which required supplies and brought in cash.[142] Hartford was also host to the General Assembly during the war, and the permanent wartime offices filled by her professional and business men were maintained in town.[143] These prodigious wartime activities attracted merchants like John Morgan, Jacob Ogden, and Barnabas Deane,[144] and started the chain of events eventually making Hartford the leading city of Connecticut.

The economic effects of the war varied from individual to individual, just as they did from town to town. Jabez Huntington was said to

have lost nearly half his property, partly through the capture of his vessels.[145] Other traders suffered, including Joseph Webb and the firm of Hooker and Chaffee in Windsor.[146] But at the same time, wartime activity stimulated the fortunes of many merchants and provided capital for vigorous economic enterprise, especially after the postwar depression. The most notable group of men who profited from the war were those associated with the capitalist enterprises of Jeremiah Wadsworth of Hartford.

One of the most important traders of the Revolution, Wadsworth had become one of the wealthiest men in America by the time of his death in 1804. His extraordinary career[147] began during the war when Wadsworth assumed many public duties, including the posts of Connecticut and continental commissary, which he eventually resigned to act as a free agent. But he became involved in private commerce even while in public service. Probably in 1779, while commissary general, he formed a secret commercial connection with Quartermaster-General Nathanael Greene. Barnabas Deane of Wethersfield who had taken over the trade of his brother Silas managed the affairs of the new concern, known to the world as "Barnabas Deane and Company," for which Wadsworth and Greene supplied the capital. But Wadsworth first became a commercial figure of great importance when he acquired the supply contracts for the French troops. Extensive purchasing activities were maintained through a number of Connecticut merchants, including the Huntingtons, Webbs, Deanes, Thomas Mumford, Thomas Shaw, Nathaniel Shaw, Jr, Ezekiel Williams, and John Davenport. In addition, Wadsworth worked through a large group of agents and subcontractors, often experienced in the continental and state commissariats, including James Watson, Peter Colt, Nehemiah Hubbard, Oliver

Phelps, David Trumbull, and Royal Flint.

Thus, under Wadsworth's leadership, there grew up in the heart of New England a remarkable wartime activity among a number of traders, who continued to cooperate in postwar capitalist enterprise. Wadsworth's associates also made extensive profits by their private business ventures during the war. For example, the socially prominent Webb brothers of Wethersfield carried on considerable trade, including privateering ventures, and in 1777, joined in the Martinique trade with Joseph Trumbull and Jacob Sebor. Other Hartford businessmen who had only minor dealings with Wadsworth during the war, men like John Morgan, John Chevenard, John Caldwell, and the Bull brothers, followed his lead in local enterprise after the war. These men were prominent in the movement to stimulate an independent postwar commerce and backed the statewide convention of merchants in 1783.[148] These Hartford businessmen were the force behind the local municipal incorporation movement and lobbied for harbor improvement and the cutting of a canal.[149] Wadsworth took the lead in promoting postwar manufacturing, especially in textiles, and after the depression, his old associates subscribed capital.[150] The organization of the Hartford Bank in 1792 was clearly the work of these men whose fortunes had been made during the war, and their leader was elected the first president, although he declined the post.[151] The careers of Wadsworth and his fellow capitalists present a striking contrast to those of the little traders of pre-war years, when the colony had no men of really great wealth.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VI.

1. CCR, XIV, 415-6.

2. See ibid, XV, 14-5, 101, 119, 135, 314, 413-4, 465-6; CSR, I, 10, 72, 12, 63-5, 71-2, 123-4, 166-86, II, 17.

3. Ibid., 222-3, 267-9, 450-2, III, 13-4, 129.

4. Van Dusen, 340-1; Conn. Cour., 13 Jan. 1778.

5. Representations from the Town of Wethersfield, 19 July 1780, Trumbull Papers, IV, 69-74; CSR, III, 140.

6. See, for example, James Livingston to Gov. Trumbull, 14 Jan. 1777,ibid., III, 8-9; Trumbull to Philip Schuyler, 11 Feb. 1777, ibid., 21; Trumbull to N. Y. Committee of Safety, 2 Jan. 1777, ibid., 13-4; CCR, XV, 116.

7. William Greene to Trumbull, Jan. 1779, Trumbull Papers, III, 340-5.

8. Peleg Clarke and Nathaniel Mumford to Conn. Assembly, 23 Jan. 1779, ibid., 334-6.

9. For example, CCR, XV, 105-6, 165-6.

10. CSR, I, 151.

11. Schuyler to Trumbull, 16 Mar. 1777, Trumbull Papers, III, 33-4.

12. CSR, I, 604-5.

13. Van Dusen, 342n16.

14. CSR, III, 39.

15. Ibid., 562.

16. Ibid., 519-21, IV, 4.

17. Conn. Cour., 8 July 1776.

18. CSR, I, 62-3.

19. Ibid., 97-100.

20. Ibid., 230-1, 103-4.

21. Conn. Cour., 7 Apr. 1777; Hall, Norwalk, 131; Conn. Jour., 16 Apr. 1777.

22. Ibid., 5 Feb. 1777.

23. Silas Deane to Barnabas Deane, 2 Dec. 1779, Deane Papers, IV, 112-3.

24. Conn. Cour., 26 May 1777.

25. CSR, I, 603-4, 366.

26. Ibid., 607-20.

27. Ibid., 522n.

28. Ibid., 524-8.

29. See Groton, Conn. /Proceedings of a Meeting for Regulating the Price of Provisions, 1778/ /New London, 1778/.

30. Hall, Norwalk, 135-6.

31. Conn. Jour., 25 Mar. 1778.

32. Conn. Cour., 26 May 1778.

33. CSR, II, 12-3, 134.

34. Ibid., 572-9.

35. Ibid., I, 9.

36. Ibid., 65, II, 132-3, 272, 483, 267.

37. Ibid., 413-4, II, 175.

38. See Conn. Cour., 23 Dec. 1777.

39. See CSR, I, 184, 186, II, 111, 203-4.

40. Wadsworth to Trumbull, 6 Apr. 1779, Trumbull Papers, III, 385-8.

41. For example, CSR, IV, 48, 66, III, 532.

42. CCR, XIV, 432, XV, 13-4, 101-2, 306-7, 440-1; CSR, I, 429.

43. See CCR, XV, 248, 313-4,410; Conn. Jour., 16 July 1777.

44. Gipson, Conn. Taxation, 7-9, 17-22, 29-33.

45. Henry Bronson, "A Historical Account of Connecticut Currency, Continental Money, and the Finances of the Revolution," New Haven Colony Historical Society Papers, I (1865), 89. Although an "expose" of the sins of paper money, the Bronson article is really invaluable as it is based on sound scholarship in unpublished MSS.

46. Stiles, Diary (15 June and 15 Nov. 1779), III, 346-7, 390.

47. See, for example, CSR. II, 173-4.

48. See, for example, Conn. Jour., 25 Mar. 1778; Simonds, Branford, 107; Nathan Strong to Hartford First Ecclesiastical Society, 24 May 1779, The Wyllys Papers. Correspondence and Documents Chiefly of Descendants of Gov. George Wyllys of Connecticut, 1590-1796 (Connecticut Historical Society Collections, vol. XXI, 1924), 464-6.

49. Peck, Bristol, 47-8.

50. CSR, I, 5-6.

51. Ibid., 231-2.

52. Hall, Norwalk, 137-8; Wheeler, Stonington, 53; Conn. Jour., 22 Sept. 1779; Conn. Cour., 14 Sept. 1779, 27 July 1779, 3 Aug. 1779.

53. Conn. Jour., 17 Feb. 1779, 14 Jan. 1778.

54. Ibid., 6 May 1778, 14 Sept. 1780.

55. Ibid., 14 Oct. 1778.

56. Bronson, 106; CSR, I, 418.

57. Ibid., 531. See also, ibid., II, 236.

58. Ibid., 478-80.

59. Ibid., 477-8.

60. Ibid., 482.

61. Ibid., III, 310.

62. Ibid., IV, 287-8.

63. Edmund Cody Burnett, The Continental Congress (New York, 1941), 426-7, 510.

64. CSR, II, 518-20.

65. Ibid., III, 23-5.

66. Conn. Jour., 18 May 1780.

67. Ibid., 6 July 1780.

68. Ibid.; Beach, Cheshire, 168-9.

69. Bronson, 135-8. See also CSR, III, 89.

70. Joseph Huntington, God ruling the Nations for the most glorious end.

/Election Sermon, 1784/ (Hartford, 1784), 31.

71. CSR, I, 105.

72. For example, ibid., III,21-3. See also Chapter V of this thesis.

73. See CSR, III, 381-2, 379-80.

74. See, for example, ibid., I, 242, II, 16-7, 531.

75. Ibid., 18.

76. Ibid., III, 182, 395.

77. See, for example, ibid., 181, 240,282, 384-5.

78. See, for example, ibid., 442-4, 445-6.

79. See, for example, ibid., IV, 313, V, 40-1, 170.

80. Ibid., IV, 162.

81. See, for example, ibid., V, 56.

82. The treasurer's accounts were in great disorder at the close of the war, but the debt was distributed somewhat as follows:

I. Securities:	
a) Securities due Conn. Line, exclusive of interest:	£427,725
b) Treasury notes, payable 1 yr. after war:	395,010
c) Treasury notes for horses, payable 1 June 1783:	5,900
d) Treasury notes for beef cattle, payable 1 year after war:	40,284
e) Treasury notes for services and supplies, estimated:	20,000
II. State Money Debt:	
a) State bills of 1780 in circulation, exclusive of interest:	49,000
b) Orders on Committee of Pay Table, not yet received by Treasurer, 15 April 1783:	72,460
III. a) Committee of Pay Table orders in excess of 2 and 6d. taxes /levied to meet such expenses/:	62,183
b) Miscellaneous:	27,590
c) Unliquidated debt, estimated:	35,000
	£1,135,153

(Taken from Bronson, 157).

83. Bronson, 158.

84. Ibid., 161-2; CSR, IV, 24-5.

85. Ibid., V, 119; Bronson, 159-60.

86. Ibid., 161.

87. Gipson, Conn. Taxation, 9.

88. Bronson, 130-1.

89. See, for example, Samuel Orcutt and Ambrose Beardsley, The History of the Town of Derby, Connecticut.... (Springfield, Mass., 1880), 179-80; Steiner, Guilford, 441; Gillespie, Meriden, 303; A. G. Hibbard, History of the Town of Goshen, Connecticut.... (Hartford, 1897), 138; Goodwin, East Hartford, 87; Starr, Cornwall, 53; Hartley, Hamden, 79.

90. For example, CSR, III, 84, IV, 48-9, 52-3.

91. For example, ibid., III, 46-51, II, 41-2.

92. Ibid., V, 130.

93. Ibid., II, 34, I, 34, IV, 66-7; CCR, XV, 331.

94. CSR ., III, 45, and also 147-8.

95. For example, Conn. Jour., 30 Apr. 1777, 25 Mar. 1777, 28 Oct. 1778.

96. See, for example, CCR, XV, 313; CSR, IV, 273, 290.

97. Ibid., III, 249-50, V, 55-6.

98. According to a tabulation made by Erastus Wolcott, the tax burden fell as follows in 1778 and 1779, after some reforms had been made:

List of Oct. 1778:

1) Polls	33.7%
2) Improved land and stock	59.0
3) Houses	2.3
4) Money on loan and sheep and cattle let out	1.2
5) Carriages	1.0
6) Professions, tradesmen, tavernkeepers, iron works owners, engrossers, etc.	3.4

List of Oct. 1779:

1) Polls	31.8%
2) Improved land and stock	58.9
3) Woodland	1.9
4) Houses	3.9
5) Monies on hand and on loan	.9
6) Carriages, clocks, watches, silverplate	.5
7) Attorneys, doctors, tavernkeepers, tradesmen, iron works and mill owners	1.0
8) Goods, wares, merchandise, engrossers	.9

The figures show the almost entire reliance on polls, land, and livestock for taxation, even after the reforms, described in the succeeding paragraphs. (Compiled from data in Conn. Cour., 18 Apr. 1780).

99. Conn. Jour., 8 Apr. 1778.

100. Ibid.

101. Caulkins, Norwich, 396.

102. For example, Roys, Norfolk, 19-20; Conn. Jour., 16 Sept. 1778; Wheeler, Stonington, 52; Allen, Enfield, I, 456.

103. Conn. Jour., 8 Apr. and 16 Sept. 1778, 10 Dec. 1777; Conn. Cour., 1 Sept. 1778, 22 May 1781; Caulkins, Norwich, 395-6.

104. CSR, I, 365-6.

105. Conn. Cour., 21 Oct. 1777.

106. Ibid., 13 Jan. 1778.

107. CSR, I, 471.

108. Ibid., II, 172-3.

109. Conn. Cour., 4 May 1779.

110. CSR, II, 256-63.

111. Ibid., III, 11.

112. Ibid., 377, 380.

113. See pp. 145-6 of this thesis, and CSR, V, 340-1, 375-6.

114. See Richard Donald Hershcopf, The New England Farmer and Politics, 1785-1787. (Unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1947), 138-9, and passim.

115. East, 80; Van Dusen, 329, 330, 332; CSR, II, 49-50.

116. Van Dusen, 235-45.

117. Ibid., 369-81.

118. John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 4 July 1782, Huntington Papers, 160.

119. East, 182-3.

120. Caulkins, Norwich, 397-8.

121. CSR, I, 528-30, III, 15-9, 34, 37-8, 179-80, 186, 190, 233, 299, 553, 303, 519-21, IV, 161-2, V, 21-2.

122. For example, ibid., III, 405, V, 90-1.

123, Ibid., IV, 99.

124. Memorial of Town of Branford, 25 June 1782, Trumbull Papers, IV, 360-2.

125. CSR, V, 53-4.

126. Conn. Jour., 6 July 1780.

127. Ibid., 25 July 1782.

128. Ibid., 12 and 22 Aug. 1782; Conn. Cour., 20 Aug. and 10 Sept. 1782; Caulkins, Norwich, 398-9; Todd, Redding, 26.

129. Conn. Jour., 19 Dec. 1782; and see also 26 Dec. 1782.

130. Conn. Cour., 29 Apr. 1783.

131. CSR, V, 115.

132. Van Dusen, 384.

133. See Conn. Jour., 10 Mar. 1784.

134. See East, 301-2.

135. Samuel Orcutt, A History of the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut (New Haven, 1887), 28-9, 31; Schenck, Fairfield, II, 425; Philo Shelton, Stratford in 1800 (Hartford, 1949), 6-7.

136. Caulkins, New London, 574.

137. Ibid., 574-5.

138. To Silas Deane, 10 Nov. 1784, Deane Bros. Corres., 204.

139. Sebor to Silas Deane,1 July 1785, ibid., 214.

140. Caulkins, New London, 579.

141. Caulkins, Norwich, 397, 475.

142. East, 82.

143. See pp. 112-3 and 117-8 of this thesis.

144. East, 233.

145. Caulkins, Norwich, 416.

146. Stiles, Windsor, I, 424-6.

147. See East, 80-100, for discussion of Wadsworth and his associates.

148. Conn. Jour., 9 July 1783.

149. East, 267.

150. Ibid., 313-4.

151. Ibid., 301-2.

CHAPTER VII.

THE REVOLUTION IN CONNNECTICUT

The gala public demonstrations celebrating Cornwallis's surrender in the fall of 1781 were interpreted by many as a sign that the war for independence was over. Certain that the British would not remain official enemies for long, ever larger numbers of Connecticut citizens began smuggling operations with New York. But still Congressional requisitions came in for troops, provisions, and cash, especially for the Southern campaign and still the state found it necessary to maintain heavy garrisons along the western frontier. But in 1782, the Assembly also began to prepare for postwar developments as it passed laws to facilitate suits in Connecticut courts involving citizens of foreign nations and other states.[1]

Then, in April, 1783, came the long-awaited word that the war was officially over. Spirited "public rejoicing[s] for peace"[2] were held in New Haven and elsewhere. In fact, the celebrations in New Haven were so spirited that a stray rocket set fire to the cupola and roof of the state house.[3] But the Hartford state house escaped damage, and the lawmakers met there the next month. At that time, special wartime legislation was repealed and the military posts in Fairfield County were evacuated. Meetings of the governor and council of safety, which continued into October, disposed of remaining war materials, while the committee of the pay table began adjusting state accounts.[4]

Although her Congressional delegates were still trying to solve problems created by the war, especially the commutation and impost questions, the American Revolution, as far as Connecticut was concerned, was

closed. In its origins this Revolution had been a twin movement—on the one hand, an attempt to replace one colonial political faction with a new set of leaders, and on the other a move to oppose British restrictions on colonial self-government and economic interests. In its immediate consequences this resistance movement had resulted in a successful intercolonial war for independence which imposed a new central government over the state. In its long-range consequences, the Revolution left a marked influence on the patterns of social and economic life in Connecticut. Equally significant was the influence of the Revolutionary period on the patterns of political life and the attitude of the freemen toward the state government. Had they so desired, and many of them definitely did, the people of Connecticut could never return to the steadier prewar ways of life.

The traditional picture of pre-Revolutionary Connecticut is that given by Andrews,[5] who described her as an inconspicuous, self-governing, agrarian colony, uniquely shut off from the main currents of colonial and British life. More than any other New England colony, Connecticut maintained the institutions and ways of life of her Puritan founders. Her freemen, who resided in isolated rural communities, knew little of their neighbors, less of other colonies, and almost nothing of what was going on in England or on the continent. Her economy was characterized by an equitable distribution of wealth—mainly acquired from farming, even in river and coastal towns where commerce supplemented the somewhat meagre returns from tillage of the soil. With few rich and few poor, few large estates and few small, little marked class feeling developed, whatever role social differences played in politics.

Under what was to all appearances a popular form of government, there prevailed a system which was aristocratic and paternalistic. Deeply imbedded in the popular mind was the fixed idea that government should be in the hands of the elect—those most worthy in the sight of God and man to govern by virtue of their orthodoxy, family, education, and political experience. During elections, devoid of political issues or political campaigns, the voters performed their expected function of continuing in office those who were already there.

Although this description was probably accurate for the seventeenth century, Andrews' stereotyped picture of colonial Connecticut does not hold true even as late as the eve of the Stamp Act crisis. By the 1750's, the institutions and ways of life of her Puritan forefathers were involved in the slow, evolutionary process which eventually transformed Connecticut into the industrial, democratic state of the nineteenth century. During the period of the American Revolution—that is, the period from the Stamp Act crisis to the close of the war—Connecticut came into increasing contact with the outside world; she developed a more worldly and sophisticated society; the religious unity of her Puritan ancestors became a thing of the past; and the economic basis of her society became more diversified. Just as pronounced was the change in Connecticut's once steady political habits. Political parties were formed and political campaigns waged; and the voters began to lose their inhibitions against turning their rulers out of office. Perhaps most significant of all, in the long run, was the idea which began to take hold—that a government should operate for the benefit of a majority of the people, instead of for the minority fortunate

enough to be numbered among the political and religious elect.

I. Economic Changes:

Although predominantly a land of farmers until well into the nineteenth century, Connecticut began to develop diversified economic interests well before the Revolution. From the 1730's on, her commerce expanded steadily as agricultural surpluses were carried to the West Indies and the ports of neighboring colonies in exchange for manufactures. The inventory of trading vessels illustrates the trend: 44 in 1731, 74 in 1756, 114 in 1762, and 180 in 1783.[6] Provisions markets were especially stimulated during the French and Indian War, and in the 1750's shipbuilding began to flourish in once-quiet ports like Middletown.[7] An increasing amount of small scale manufacturing also began to develop toward the close of the colonial period. By 1766, paper was being produced in Norwich, and at the same time tiny carding, fulling, cloth, and even chocolate mills were established to supplement the common grist, saw, and cider mills.[8] Then, during the war, the need for home manufactures stimulated the production of gunpowder, saltpeter, sulphur, iron, paper, and even home-made liquor. Although these enterprises were very limited in size, they aroused a definite interest in industrial expansion after the Revolution.

The long interest of Connecticut merchants in promoting an independent commercial development to free themselves from reliance on neighboring traders has been noted. In the summer of 1783, it will be remembered, a state-wide convention of merchants urged the Assembly to

promote commerce and manufacturing, and at the same time they tried to lure Tories into the state to aid in acquiring economic independence. For a time it appeared that these optimistic plans for the development of direct trade with Europe would materialize at once. The Connecticut traders began importing European manufactured goods, made possible by generous credit extensions,[9] and in November, 1784, Jacob Sebor reported that

> every ones attention seems at present to be turn'd toward Commerce. Agriculture & the Arts are too much neglected. Numbers of Tradesmen, Farmers, & Mechanics have made Money by the War this they employ in Trade.[10]

But despite the bright picture he painted, Sebor and other merchants feared the over-extension of credit used for importing huge quantities of European goods.[11] As early as June, 1783, Barnabas Deane stated that prices were falling off as local markets became glutted with imported goods.[12] This over-stocking brought difficult economic times for Connecticut merchants,[13] and by October, 1785, Deane reported:

> no money Stirring, we are Almost Entirely Cut of from the West India Trade as well as from Whaling, Failures are Daily Takeing place among the Traders.[14]

But this postwar depression which affected the farmers and traders was not of long duration. Prosperity gradually returned to the state, as direct commerce with the large ports of England increased and the coasting trade improved. Farmers once again found markets for their surpluses, especially after 1790, following a poor European grain harvest. As demands for agricultural produce grew, merchants were able to pay off their debts and invest capital in other ventures. Then, with the outbreak of the European wars in 1793, Connecticut's trade

with the West Indies began to boom, and, until 1807, island trade once again became a lucrative branch of commerce.[15] As this economic upswing took place, merchants began to accumulate capital resources which were used to finance the development of a new era in Connecticut's economic history—the industrialization of the early nineteenth century.

Manufacturing, which had aroused interest even before the war, came into its own after the Revolution. In 1784, William Pitkin abandoned his wartime powder making for snuff manufacturing, for which he was allowed a fourteen-year, tax-free monopoly. Pitkin was also granted a twenty-five year glass-making monopoly, in lieu of compensation for powder supplied during the war.[16] Then, in 1788, Jeremiah Wadsworth formed a joint-stock company for woolen cloth manufacturing. Thirty of Wadsworth's wartime associates invested their newly-won wealth in this project—the real beginning of the mechanized textile industry in Connecticut. Wadsworth also promoted a subscription list for a proposed Connecticut Manufacturing Company in 1791, although this scheme never materialized.[17]

As prosperity returned after the postwar depression, the wartime profits of the Wadsworth associates and the wealth from the expanding commerce began to be concentrated and made available for industrial expansion. In 1792, the state chartered the Hartford Bank, organized by persons whose fortunes had been connected with Wadsworth's during the war.[18] By 1818, Connecticut had ten banks and a branch of the Bank of the United States, with a total capitalization of over

$3,000,000.[19] This wealth was invested in internal trade, turnpikes, western lands, insurance companies, and factories.[20] Before long, the state was producing textiles, glass, pottery, nails, guns, tinware, and iron—in quantities far exceeding any previous output. In 1810, industry was fairly well-established, and only Rhode Island had a larger proportion of her population working in factories.[21]

As a result of these economic changes, Connecticut began to develop an influential moneyed class—a definite contrast to the old days, when, as Andrews pointed out, a fairly equitable distribution of income prevailed. This fact had far-reaching political consequences. At the very moment that real opposition was aroused against the traditional aristocracy which had always governed the colony, this class gained economic power by which it strengthened the control of the Federalist Party and the Congregational Church. Jeremiah Wadsworth, Jedidiah Huntington, John Morgan, John Caldwell, Oliver Ellsworth, Andrew Kingsby, David Daggett, Roger M. Sherman, Timothy Dwight, Frederick Wolcott, and their associates—all were members of the interlocking directorates of banking, insurance, and industrial organizations; all were Federalist councilors, Congressmen, state treasurers, or national bank directors; and all, with the exception of a few wealthy Episcopalians, supported the state church.[22] But in the end, this alliance of government, church, and moneyed interests provoked a bitter Republican denunciation which hastened the downfall of Federalist rule in Connecticut.

II. Social Changes:

The Revolutionary period also marked the end of Connecticut's isolated, rural society and the jealous clinging to the ways of the Puritan forefathers. At least by the 1750's, "the land of steady habits" was developing an increasingly secular, sophisticated society, and its citizens were coming into more and more contact with the outside world.

The expanding commerce of the French and Indian War period was a major stimulus to the development of intercolonial and international interests. Merchants like Silas Deane and Thomas Mumford began to develop commercial ties throughout America, and before the war for independence New York newspapers were circulating in the colony. The Hartford Courant, founded in 1764, began to serve the entire Connecticut Valley of New England, while neighboring merchants advertised in the Connecticut press. By 1768, a regular weekly stage was operating between Norwich and Providence, and towns along its route came into increasing contact with the outside world as they entertained the travellers in their local taverns.[23] Lists of inns and descriptions of the best New England travel routes began to appear in Connecticut almanacs before the war, and at the same time people began to look outside the colony for projects in which to invest surplus capital. Many Connecticut freemen invested in Acadian lands in the 1760's,[24] in Phineas Lyman's project on the lower Mississippi, and in the grandiose schemes of the Susquehannah Company which did so much to bring the colony into collision with Pennsylvania and the crown.

The intercolonial resistance movement did much to break down

the remaining isolation of the colony. Already farmers in Windham and New London Counties were involved in the Mohegan land title dispute in which the mother country had intervened, while the Anglican population concentrated in the west was developing a strong link with the British. Then, under the stimulation of the developing Revolutionary movement, the colonial press was filled with the proceedings of neighboring assemblies and news from London. Connecticut's political leaders began negotiations with patriots in other colonies, first during the Stamp Act Congress, and the Sons of Liberty even formed a military alliance with the New York radicals. Before long, parishes, town, and finally the house of representatives set up committees of correspondence to discuss policy with similar organizations in other colonies. By the time of the Continental Congress, then, Connecticut already had a long record of cooperation with her neighbors.

The war years brought ever increasing interstate and international connections. Soldiers stationed in other sections of the country realized the inferiority of their own rock-strewn farms and made plans for postwar emigration.[25] Businessmen like Jeremiah Wadsworth became acquainted with leading merchants throughout the new nation, including Robert Morris; and Congressmen made lasting friendships with members of other delegations, as in the case of Roger Sherman's alliance with the Lees of Virginia. Sherman and a Virginia Congressman even served as liasions in establishing a correspondence between Ezra Stiles and the president of William and Mary College. The two scholars compared notes on curricula and mutual problems and resolved to continue their exchange of notes.[26]

International contacts were stimulated by the war, especially with the French. Large numbers of French troops were stationed in Connecticut, and the women were reported to have come from miles around to dance with the gay young officers. The leading men took pains to show them every hospitality as they passed through their towns.[27] So careful were the Americans to give no offense to their new-found allies that New London's sailors and rowdy boys desisted from their traditional Guy Fawkes' Day celebrations in which effigies of the devil and the pope were publicly burned, after Washington pointed out that the French were loyal subjects of the pontiff.[28] French schools were opened during the war years, including one in New Haven by Francis Vandale, "a Protestant."[29] Another was started in Stratford in 1783 by an instructor who pointed out the importance of learning that tongue since Connecticut's postwar trade would be carried on with the French.[30] Silas Deane confessed that he well knew the difficulties and embarrassments encountered in the business world if one were ignorant of modern languages. In 1778, he offered to cooperate with President Stiles in establishing a French professorship at Yale. Genuinely interested, the liberal Dr. Stiles immediately consulted some of the leading clergy. One divine was reported "violent against because of Popery—others doubtful." But the judges of the superior court, also consulted before taking such a momentous step, proved more open-minded. They felt there was "no danger of Popery," though some of the clergy still remained "cautious."[31] The results of Deane's project are not recorded, but the next year Yale officially indicated its good will by conferring a doctor of laws degree on the French minister.[32]

Increased commerce with other colonies and newly-created wealth stimulated the development of a more worldly and sophisticated colonial society. By the 1750's, this development had already marked the beginning of the end of Connecticut's isolated agrarian society with its equitable distribution of income. The transformation of the old patterns of society began first in the coastal and river towns, where social refinements came to be regarded more highly, and prosperous merchants began to send their eligible daughters to fashionable Boston finishing schools.[33] "Pleasure vehicles" were introduced in the '50's,[34] furnishings became more luxurious, and a revival of building took place, featuring new styles of architecture. Conservatives began to cry out against the prevailing extravagance of dress, as the clergy and other dignitaries donned full, curled wigs. Meanwhile, their wives decked themselves out in the latest French styles, as the newspapers began advertising fashionable European imports.[35] By 1774, the New Haven press carried the notice of John Earle, a "Portraite Painter" who also specialized in landscapes and coats of arms, and of "Francois-Dominique Rouseeau," "A Native of Old France" who offered, on suitable encouragement, to instruct the youth of both sexes "in the polite and agreeable Exercise of dancing MINUETS..."[36] These advertisements were carried in the colonial newspapers which began to be published about the time of the Seven Years' War, first with the Connecticut Gazette of 1755-1768. The Gazette was followed by New London's Summary (1758) and Gazette (1763), Hartford's Courant of 1764, the Connecticut Journal of New Haven (1767), and the Norwich Packet (1773).

This Norwich journal gave further proof of the growing seculari-

zation of Connecticut life in 1774, when one of the four local book establishments advertised, in addition to the usual hymnals and religious texts, copies of the Arabian Nights, the Vicar of Wakefield, "King Philip's Bloody War," "Hancock's On the bloody 5th of March, 1770," and other popular works, including books for children.[37] At the same time, New Haven's printers notified the public of the newly-published "Macaronie Jester: Being a select series of original stories, witty repartees, comical and original Bull's, entertaining Anecdotes, &c. &c. ..." "As to the stories being original," the printers could "assure the publick there has been very few of them published in any book or pamphlet from Laugh and be Fat, down to Hoe's pretty modern Story Teller."[38] Books "Propagating" both "Christian and Useful Knowledge" were also becoming available in smaller towns—as early as 1733, a library was founded in Durham, followed by another in Windham County in 1736, and still another in Pomfret four years later.[39]

These social changes took place first in river and coastal towns like Hartford, New Haven, and New London—areas which were involved in direct shipping and so increased in wealth and worldliness more quickly. But as postwar trade, industry, and intellectual horizons expanded, similar changes took place in those inland towns which previously formed eddies off the main stream of Connecticut's commercial life. Profits from postwar commerce were used to fill the houses of Farmington with china, silks, silver, rugs, and treasures from around the world.[40] About 1800, Governor John Treadwell of Farmington nostalgically reviewed the impact of commercial developments on his town, which until recently had been almost entirely involved

in agriculture:

> Industry and economy have characterized the inhabitants; labour has been held in reputation; none, however elevated by office,or profession, have considered themselves above it. Magistrates and ministers, when their appropriate business would permit, have laboured in the field. Indeed our magistrates have always been farmers;... They have been content to eat their bread in the sweat of their brow; and it was honour enough to be esteemed the first among equals ... While the men have been thus employed in the field, in raising the materials for food and clothing, the women have been no less industrious in the domestic circle, in rearing the tender branches of the family, and in dressing food for the table...
>
> Our ancestors here, of both sexes, have, till of late, clad themselves in simple apparel, suited to their moderate circumstances and agricultural state. ...
>
> The same simplicity has been conspicuous in their diet, their houses and their furniture. Equipage they had none; pleasure carriages and sleighs were unknown. ...
>
> Till within about forty years, a single retailer of imported goods with a small capital sufficed for the town/.7 Of late years trade has greatly increased, and a greater capital is employed in it, then in any inland town in the state. That agriculture and commerce go hand in hand is true; but it is equally true that farmers never flourish in a populous settlement where the commercial character predominate./sic/ The reasons are obvious. Commerce where it prevails creates riches; riches introduce a taste for luxury in building, dress, furniture, equipage, &c. which agriculture can never support. The farmer is thrown into the shade; he feels that riches, as the world goes, give pre-eminence. In homely dress and covered with sweat and dust, with weary steps returning from the field, he sees with pain the powdered beau rolling in his carriage, with horses richly caparisoned, and feels himself degraded, his cheerfulness forsakes him, if his ambition remains. ... Where riches are accumulated, equality is destroyed; simplicity of manners is lost, never to return; a different state succeeds; there will be at once a display of magnificence by the rich, and of wretchedness by the poor; ... The change is equally visible in the female part of our families. The young ladies are changing their spinning-wheels for piano-fortes, and forming their manners at the dancing school, rather than in the school of industry. Of course the people are laying aside their plain apparel, manufacturing in their houses, and clothing themselves with European and India fabrics. Labor is growing into disrepute; and the time when the independent farmer and reputable citizen could whistle at the tail of his plough with as much serenity as the cobler over his last, is fast drawing to a close. The present time makes a revolution of taste and of manners of immense import to society; but while others glory in this as a great advance in refinement, we cannot help dropping a tear at the close of the golden age of our ancestors, while with a pensive pleasure we reflect on the past, and with suspense and apprehension anticipate the future.[41]

Some Connecticut towns proudly drew attention to their resistance to change. In 1800, Ridgefield reported that its population was still mostly engaged in self-sufficient farming as the town was distant from markets and had little water power. But even then, a hat factory and two boot and shoe shops had been set up, as well as a library, and "pleasure sleighs" had "greatly multiplied" since the Revolution.[42] Soldiers returning to Salem society in Waterbury were said to have resumed their customary habits as self-sufficient farmers, without change. But even in this rather secluded area, a library to promote "useful knowledge" was formed in 1783.[43]

The horizons of many other communities were broadened after the war as proprietary library associations sprang up all over the state. Even the rural town of Goshen in Litchfield County had established five such organizations, including a "Farmers library," by 1801.[44] And Haddam, which in 1808 stoutly maintained that "There is not perhaps a/nother/town in Connecticut which retains more of the primitive, puritanic simplicity of character"[45] had a library by 1791.[46] In 1813, Middlesex County alone contained twenty-three libraries,[47] and the state had a total of about 140 five years later, almost all of them founded after the Revolution. In addition to works dealing with "divinity and morals," most had a selection of geography, history, biography, and travel accounts.[48] This general increase in knowledge and curiosity about the world was also indicated by the large number of newspapers which supplemented the three publications surviving at the close of the war. In the first three years after the Revolution, seven were established, and between 1786 and 1820, sixty-four more, although most were short-

lived.[49]

This growing secularization of society and the breakdown of the steadier habits of the past was best illustrated by the schism in the state church which at the beginning of the century claimed every man's allegiance and tithes. The faith of the Puritan fathers began to be undermined early in the eighteenth century, and in 1727, certain Episcopalians were freed from supporting the Congregational establishment. Then, as has been described, the religious standing order was further split during the Great Awakening as Separatist Congregational or New Light groups seceded. Gradually the tax exemptions of the Anglicans were extended to the Baptists, and in 1784, the Separatists were also exempted from ecclesiastical taxes if they could prove support of their own churches.

The breakdown of the Puritan monopoly of Connecticut's religious life was aided by the low ebb into which orthodox Congregationalism fell throughout the entire second half of the eighteenth century. Despite the invigorated religious life of the dissenting sects, the great schisms of the 1740's were followed by a long period of religious decline and demoralization in the state churches. As the moral vigor of the fathers disappeared, revivals became as rare as great divines.[50] By 1774, the First Church of Hartford had only fifteen males in full communion, and many congregations were without pastors for long periods.[51] The influence of camp life during the Seven Years' War was cited as a contributing factor, as impressionable young recruits

abandoned the steadier habits for a religion of infidelity.[52] By the close of that war, Deism had infiltrated the colony, and even Ezra Stiles passed through a brief period of painful skepticism.[53]

In the resulting reaction to the harshness and determinism of strict Calvinism, some congregations introduced such drastic innovations as allowing both sexes to sit together during divine services and substituting trained choirs for the traditional "lining-out" of psalms. Still others permitted the introduction of musical instruments to guide the voices, first the pitch pipe, then that horror of the older Puritans, the great viol, followed by the flute and the clarionette.[54]

The war years accelerated even more this decline in religion and the secularization of society. A spirit of lawlessness, beginning with the Stamp Act crisis, continued until after the return of peace. Groups of debtors forced closing of courts; impromptu raiding parties moved against alleged smugglers; voluntary associations bodily evicted returning Loyalists from their towns.[55] A widespread disregard for the law developed, as indicated by the almost complete breakdown of legal tender, draft, price-control, anti-hoarding, and anti-smuggling regulations, while in Greenwich martial law was put into effect after the civil authorities became absolutely powerless to prevent violence. Towns passed resolves to suppress "that extravagant night revelling, excessive company keeping, gaming and profaneness so prevalent in our land." Army camps were considered dens of iniquity, and a "Reverend Association of Ministers of the Gospel in Windham County to encourage Religion and discountenance Vice" was formed to curb "that abounding

wickedness & profaneness in the camps, which more threatens our ruin than all the powers of earth, if combined against us, might do."[56]

But though the clergy sounded the alarm, their admonitions were unheeded. In 1778, Thomas Mumford reported that "the Clergy's influence Lessons Sensibly."[57] Ministers everywhere met resistance in obtaining salary adjustments; religious education declined as parents and children grew less attentive to their duties.[58] Meanwhile, Yale, that stronghold of Congregational divines, was being shaken to its foundations by both internal and external attacks. In 1777, Governor Trumbull reported that nothing short of appointing civilians to Yale's board would "give radical Healing & Satisfaction" to reformers. Unless these demands were met, anti-clerical men in the Assembly threatened to establish a rival secular college in the east.[59] And the students proved quite as refractory. Their insubordination during the Stamp Act crisis, then charitably attributed to "the Spirit of the Times,"[60] was repeated in March, 1782, when twenty or twenty-five scholars "went into a great Tumult & Riot, in Contempt of a public Judgment & Punishm^t inflicted in the Chapel for Damages done to the Hall & Buttery. Upon which they collected in a body for the Demolition of Old College." This revolution in miniature was curbed by expulsions, but the armistice was only temporary. The two college fraternities had long been secretly acting out the forbidden "Tragedies & other dramatical Exhibitions at their Anniversaries," but the next month they openly invited the public to "their Entertainments & dramatic Exhibitions. ... /which had become/ of Notoriety no longer to be concealed."[61] That same year the venerable classical curriculum was forced to make way for dancing lessons--and "great /public/

Dissatisfaction" was generated against this "School of polite manners called the dancing School"[62] which tried to transform Yale's scholars into gentlemen.

The irreligion and Deism which invaded even Yale continued until the close of the century, and throughout the postwar years the moribund Congregational Church continued to decline in membership and zeal.[63] A New London Congregational minister reported that in 1806, in a surrounding area of 600 square miles, his parish was the only one served by a pastor.[64] Stiles estimated in 1794, that of the eighty-five nominees for the council for that year, one-third were "Revelationists," one-third "doubtful," and the remainder "deists." Of the eighty-five, only thirty-six were religious characters, while many were of doubtful virtue and some of flagitious morals.[65] In 1800, it has been estimated that not more than a third of the population was Presbyterian-Congregational save in name, while the thriving dissenting sects held the allegiance of a third.[66]

Of these dissenters, the Baptists experienced the most astonishing postwar revival. By 1800, they claimed an estimated fifty-nine societies, and by 1812, about sixty-five.[67] Although no group matched their astonishing growth, the Methodists grew after the war, as did the Universalists to a lesser extent.[68] These more democratic sects (especially the Baptists who even allowed sisters to participate in church voting) chafed under the certificate laws, the Congregational domination of parish schools and Yale College, and the disproportionate share of western land proceeds distributed among the established churches. They joined with the politically malcontent Republicans in demanding a complete severance of the church-state connection.[69] The wealthier Episcopalians, who recovered from their wartime stigma as "Tories," also joined in the

opposition against the standing order, especially after they were denied the privilege of chartering banks and a private college. Although not in favor of reform as a matter of principle,[70] as were the Baptists and Methodists, the more aristocratic Anglicans were eventually driven, along with the other dissenters, into an alliance with the Republican party—a coalition which marked the beginning of the end for the Federalist-Congregationalists.

III. The Revolution in Political Life:

The rapid social and economic changes which took place in Connecticut during the Revolutionary era were more than matched by radical innovations in the traditional political habits of the freemen. Under the influence of the religious schism, it will be recalled, political factions developed for the first time, and then under the stimulation of the Stamp Act crisis these nebulous entities crystallized into parties. The conflict between Trumbull's popular party and the old party of Fitch continued until the period of one party rule at the outbreak of the war. But wartime political unity gradually broke down, and in 1783, as has been noted, vital political issues again developed as Trumbull and his supporters were attacked by the "landed interests." From the time of the Stamp Act on, then, the tempo of Connecticut's political life greatly speeded up, and by the close of the war for independence it was transformed, never again to resume permanently its old pattern.

One of the most conspicuous changes of the Revolutionary period was the marked increase in political participation, especially until af-

ter 1776. Much of this activity, especially before the beginning of hostilities, was carried on in extra-legal channels. With the backing of popular leaders, the Sons of Liberty met in mass meetings, on the town, county, and colony levels, where they planned and then executed public policy. Smaller groups also formed extra-legal bodies to enforce their demands, first with the Wallingford association which notified the courts to serve no more foreclosure writs in 1766. Others convened to enforce the laws when civil authorities proved lax, as in the case of associations against smugglers and local or returning Tories. These groups, in an attempt to affect legality, uniformly labelled themselves the "respectable populace" or "respectable inhabitants" of their areas, elected moderators and clerks, and usually convened in meeting or court houses.

Although this extra-legal action proved very effective in reaching political objectives, most of the increased political life was carried on through special town meetings or committees of inspection. Committees were continued even after the commutation-impost issue, for in 1794, Redding appointed a committee to stir up interest for the repeal of an "impolitic" state law which appropriated western land proceeds to the Congregational ministry and schools.[71] And, beginning with the Middletown Convention of 1774, town meetings or their local committees began sending delegates to county and state conventions. These groups tried to influence state and national legislation, as in the case of the tax-reform and price-control conventions, or to adopt uniform policy, as in the case of interpreting and enforcing the Continental Association. Some conventions, finding the programs of their special interests thwarted by the Assembly, appealed directly to the people, as in the case of the

Middletown Conventions of 1774 and 1783-84.

The development of real political issues and the increasing number of persons voting resulted in another political innovation—the first real political campaigns in Connecticut's history. The organized efforts of the emerging popular leaders resulted in the removal of Governor Fitch in 1766—the second time a governor had ever been removed from office. From then until 1770, especially bitterly-fought campaigns were waged in the state as the Old Lights tried to regain control of the Assembly. The campaigns of 1774 and 1784, involving the Susquehannah and the commutation-impost questions, also aroused spirited electioneering.

Most of this electioneering was done through the press as writers tried to influence voters by discussions of public policy, as in the case of fiscal and commercial policy during the war. At other times, special pamphlets were issued—for example to popularize Norwich's tax reform proposals. At first partisan attacks were shrouded in innuendo and satire, but more and more issues were discussed in the open. By 1783, a writer felt sufficiently uninhibited to state in plain language the reasons for Trumbull's previous gubernatorial defeats.[72] Although correspondents almost invariably used pseudonyms, even when their identities were fairly obvious, Erastus Wolcott signed his name to some data he felt relevant to a consideration of taxation policy in 1780.[73]

Other methods than propaganda in the press were used to bring out and influence the voters. In 1766, it will be recalled, the statewide convention of the Sons of Liberty under the control of the popular leaders decided that "a Change in the Ministry" would be beneficial. The convention proceeded to nominate a slate of candidates in order "to give the Freemen a Lead in the ensuing Election, since should they run

upon different Men, the Persons desired might not be elected by the Freemen." Part of the delegates indignantly withdrew at this point, feeling that

> such Proceedure would be very unconstitutional, and tend in an undue Manner to influence the Minds of the Freemen, and be fraught with the worst of Mischiefs, as it would tend to produce infinite Disquietude among the People, ... especially as a Step of this Kind not only be establishing a pernicious Precedent, unknown to, and unpracticed by, the virtuous Founders and Supporters of this Colony, ... It was further urged, that any Method of this Kind, taken to influence the Minds of the Freemen, or to give them a Lead in Election, was an undue influence, and that, being under the Solemnity of an Oath, they should be left absolutely free.[74]

But this technique proved effective, and continued to be used, despite the charges of the old party that the procedure undermined free elections.[75] In due time, the Fitch party, foreseeing defeat in 1774 over the expansionist issue, tried to maneuver a political upset of the Trumbull party by proposing a slate of candidates itself at the Middletown Convention. The conservatives had previously urged in the press that their supporters turn out at the polls, and like the popular leaders, encouraged potential voters to take the necessary steps for becoming freemen.[76] Nominating slates were not proposed during the war, though undoubtedly the leaders of the Middletown Convention of 1783-84 agreed to back certain candidates and informed their townsmen of the decisions, since the election resulted in the dropping of several old councilors.

Just as extraordinary as these campaign techniques was the change in attitude of the voters during the American Revolution. In order to justify the defeat of Fitch and the councilors at the polls, the radical leaders popularized Revolutionary doctrine in the press and in spirited

resolves against British encroachments on colonial rights. As the New London County Sons of Liberty proclaimed in 1765—" ... every Form of Government rightfully founded, originates from the Consent of the People."[77] The people, then, might with impunity turn their rulers out of office, which they did wholesale in 1766. The conservatives were genuinely shocked as more and more of their men were replaced with popular leaders. They felt that the very basis of stable government was being undermined. As one ex-office holder wailed in 1767:

> /when/Men of unblemished Reputation, ... /were being/turn'd out of Posts of Trust and Profit, in which they have conducted themselves without Exception or Accusation; for no other Cause but to make Room for Others who are the Tools of those in Power, then at that Instant, in Whatever Community it happens, one main Support of Liberty is undermined, and the Avenues of Faction, Bribery, and Corruption, with all their attendant Train of Horrors are set wide open.[78]

Equally alarming was the use of political spoils to reward the victors:

> When a Minister of State, a Governor or other public Officer displaces and steps in the Room of his Rival, this meanness of Spirit, this Corruption of Principle, is often most lamentably visible in the Disgrace and Dismission of the former's Favourites, and the Honors and Promotions conferr'd on their own; like some tyrannical or usurping Princes. ... [79]

Holy Writ was even invoked to check the independent tendencies shown by the voters:

> Thou shalt not revile the God's, nor curse the Ruler of thy People, ... Put them in Mind to be subject to Principalities and Powers; to obey Magistrates—to speak Evil of no man, ... They despise Government, presumptuous are they, self-willed; they are not afraid to speak Evil of Dignities.[80]

But the leaders of the popular party—men such as the Pitkins, Trumbull, Dyer, and Wolcott—felt themselves fully qualified to replace the fallen magistrates. After all, they too possessed the credentials which made them <u>bona fide</u> members of Connecticut's natural political elite—

they were orthodox, had long political experience, and represented some of the oldest families in the colony. But expediency forced them to pay lip service to the doctrine of popular sovereignty, to the idea that the people had a right to turn their rulers out of office. Their objective of replacing the old leaders in order to promote the twin policies of expansion and resistance to the crown required the use of these ideas. Indeed, they believed the dogma, in so far as it applied to the British-colonial relationship. But they learned to their horror that the theories they had popularized could be applied against them as well, especially as the cohesion of Trumbull's party began to dissolve during the war. In 1777, for example, "A Freeman" castigated the lawmakers for their refusal to pass a loyalty oath. He reminded his readers that their rulers were "creatures of your own making and therefore accountable to you for their conduct." The voters should keep strict watch over the General Assembly so lawmakers would not betray or abuse the power the freemen had delegated them.[81] "A Plain Dealer" agreed. He deplored the notion still entertained by many that legislators should be immune from criticism. After all, were not the freemen their "political creators"?[82]

But these two men were answered by a commentator who still clung to the steadier political habits of the past. Casting reflections on the legislators would weaken the sinews of government and lead to mob rule.[83] The General Association of the Congregational Church entertained similar ideas. In 1779, the Association issued an edict against the growing immorality and vice of the period, especially:

> an impatience under the reins of a moderate government, and an unjustifiable freedom in censuring the measures adopted by our

> legislature, tho' men of our own choice, and whose measures are undoubtedly the effect of mature deliberation.[84]

How shocked these clerics must have been when the voters refused to renominate Joseph Spencer to the council in 1777; or when, in 1780, 1781, and 1783, Jonathan Trumbull, one of the most godly men in the state and a pillar of Crank Parish, Lebanon, was turned down by the freemen; or again, when many of the old councilors were dropped in 1783 was a result of the impost-commutation question.

In 1784, "A Republican"took liberties such as no previous writer in the Connecticut press had ever dared. Urging the election of men who opposed the commutation grant, he bitterly attacked the aristocratic tendencies of Trumbull and his faithful followers in the council. Although everyone, he said, professed republican principles

> And the people of Connecticut are from their education, feelings, knowledge, equal distribution of property, and every other circumstance, exactly calculated for a democratical government:

yet a few designing men were determined

> to throw the whole power and property in this state into a few hands. ...

These men, above all, were

> of haughty, sovereign, domineering souls: vindictive, malignant spirits, uncharitable, sensorious and tyrannical beings, who would subject every men's will to their own, and brand all those who happen to differ from them in opinion, in regard to present measures, with infamy and disgrace; with whom no man's reputation is safe whatever wisdom or integrity may direct his conduct, (if it don't coincide with their measures) and whenever power or chance gives them an opportunity will not fail to scourge or crush the unhappy victim who has virtue enough to oppose their nefarious designs, who are anxious to enlarge the powers of Congress, and are eternally harping upon the danger of anarchy, of extreme equality, and of trusting power in the hands of the common people, on whom they look down with sovereign contempt, and view as a rank of beings almost infinitely inferior to themselves. These men are tyrants by constitution, and will never fail to oppress those who are unhappily

> under their domination, when they can do it with impunity which they can't so successfully do, so long as power and property remain in the hands of the common people, and which they would therefore gladly deprive them of.

Had they not merely exchanged British for American tyrants?[85]

The threatened revolt of 1783-84 was averted; Matthew Griswold, Trumbull's heir apparent, was placed in the governor's chair. But many of the old assistants were not returned to office. In his election sermon that spring, the Reverend Mr. Joseph Huntington, representative of one of the most prominent families in the council, felt it his duty to denounce officially the opponents of commutation and the national impost. Who could tell what might happen if these subverters of the public peace, these men in "Pursuit of Popularity and Promotion,"[86] continued their oppostion? After condemning sundry vices which had sprung up during the war, especially "that shameful irreligious temper, ... extortion, idleness and luxury, prophanation of the holy sabbath, ... lasciviousness, and wantonness," Huntington noted that:

> there is one abominable vice that is so pernicious to us every day, and so immediately threatens us with dissolution and anarchy, that I must bear my testimony more largely against it.
>
> It is that unreasonable, raging spirit of jealousy pointed against all in power, especially against those in the most burdensome and important trusts. Jealousy is the rage and distraction of men, as well in civil as domestic life. We elect all our rulers, and often enough in all reason: we choose such as we esteem men of the greatest wisdom and probity; we have no jealousy of them until we exalt them into office, and burden them with a great weight; then we turn jealous, for no reason but because they are exerting all their wisdom and goodness to pour out blessings upon us, and sacrificing their lives to make us happy. ...

Of course rulers were accountable to their constituents in all they did, and the voters had a right to turn them out of office when they pleased. Huntington was as much in favor of liberty "in utmost extent," as any

man on earth.

> But this hydra of jealousy and evil surmise, it is not liberty, it is tyranny, it is confusion, it is death. Proud, selfish, wicked men take the advantage of it; they lust for offices, for which they are utterly unfit; but they must first remove those worthy men that hold them: they make or propagate a thousand lies, to stir up the jealousy of the people, inrage the multitude, and clear the seats of honour for themselves.

If this tendency continued to develop, soon few men of wisdom and probity would be left in seats of honor and trust.

> God grant we may be delivered from this iniquity, and other land defiling crimes, practise every virtue, and serve the God of our fathers with a perfect heart.[87]

With this increased interest in the business of government, political attitudes gradually underwent another change. Perhaps most revolutionary of all was the way in which the age-old platitudes of the clergy that Connecticut's freemen were the chosen of God and lived under the best of all possible governments[88] began to be questioned. More and more, men decided that despite the much-vaunted republican form of government and frequency of elections, their political system did not operate for the benefit of a majority of the people. The dissenters and Separatists had realized this fact for years, and had been campaigning vigorously against taxation for the support of the established clergy. The increased secularization of the Revolutionary period and the effective drawing of parallels between British tax policy and the colonial situation aided their drive for religious toleration. These factors helped to secure the gains of 1777 and 1784 for the Separatists.[89]

Others began to examine the machinery by which public officials were placed in office. "Justice" drew attention to the practice of giving seniority to old councilors on the nominating list. He favored

ranking nominees according to the number of nominating votes they received.[90] And "Ignoramus" asked:

> Doth not the obligating the constables in the several towns to call for votes for those who stand first in nomination (which are always those of the /old/council) and so in order as they stand contribute more to their reelection, than the qualifications they are possessed of for government?[91]

Another observer pointed out how voting for assistants from the colony at large reassured the return of the same men to office.[92] Still another writer opposed the law requiring election of the councilors from the official slate of twenty nominees.[93] "Justice" also drew attention to the possibility of inaccurate counting under the loose system of returning ballots to the Assembly.[94] And much attention was paid to the multiple office holding of the judges who interpreted the very laws they had drafted and sometimes heard the same case more than once:

> What has the Subject more than the Shadow without the Substance - the Expence & Burden without Advantage, where the Judge of the supreme and subordinate Courts are the same Men, it not being the Office, but the Man that examines, deliberates, and adjudicates? Is not this depriving the Subject of the Advantage of having his Cause tried at different Times, by different and superior Judges—and, in Lieu of it, giving him only the Expence and Burden of having his Cause tried at different Times, by the same Judges.

It was dangerous when "the same Hand that makes the Law, is also a Solicitor of Causes, & a Judge,..."[95]

Many people came to recognize two features of the political system which often thwarted the popular will—the influence of the clergy and the ability of only seven men on the council to block any appointments or the passage of any bill. Some began to remonstrate openly against the "priest ridden" government and "the knack" of the ecclesiastics "of reducing many Things into their Cognizance, the relation

whereof to their Office is not so obvious and easy to be perceived."[96] As a result of the resentment of dissenters and the growing worldliness of the period, the Congregational clergy emerged from the war with their political influence shaken. Nor were the assistants ever held in such high repute as in the past, after they had blocked wartime measures, including relief to the Connecticut Line, had insisted in imposing their will on the lower house in the appointment of judges and Congressmen, and backed the commutation and impost grants.[97] One writer even questioned the right of the governor and council to appoint sheriffs without the concurring vote of the deputies.[98]

Increasing interest in government and the declining respect for public officials brought demands for public enlightenment about the proceedings of the legislature. The very widespread agitation for public admission to Assembly sessions and for publication of votes and debates "that thereby their /the legislature's/ constituents may be fully informed into the conduct of their representatives, and be more satisfied as to the measures taken by them"[99] reflected this changing attitude. Also, information was requested about the rather chaotic condition of prewar public finances, and demands were raised for a more systematic tax-collection system.[100] Later these ideas were applied to the national legislature as well. Towns urged the Assembly to keep a watchful eye on the proceedings of Congressmen to see that they did not exceed the powers invested in them, and to appoint regular committees to evaluate Congressional activities and applaud or censure the proceedings.[101] Growing interest in government was also responsible for the successful drive to give freemen the privilege (they

claimed it as a right) to elect their own delegates to Congress.[102] In 1784, they used the privilege to change the personnel of their delegation quite considerably. This interest in government was also responsible for Norwich's demand that all those who paid taxes and were of good moral standing should be allowed to vote.[103]

Much of this insistence on keeping a closer watch on the activities of public officials stemmed from a reaction against the glaring inequalities in the operation of state laws. The most vigorous protest against the partiality shown the wealthy was the widespread movement for tax reform.[104] Other liberals called attention to the unfair highway repair system. The poor were forced to make repairs without reimbursement, while magistrates and justices were exempted from labor.[105] So, about the time of the war, the Assembly began authorizing towns to levy taxes to pay for road work at public expense. And why, it was queried, were the college men, the justices, constables, and "men of interest" exempted from militia service, while the poor were obliged to attend training days, to provide their own arms and ammunition, and to go to war, leaving their businesses in ruin? Public burdens, it was urged, should be borne equally by all.[106] In 1769, the Sons of Liberty of Fairfield County expressed the growing sentiment that the government should operate for the benefit of all. In opposing a General-Assembly decision to build the new court house in Fairfield instead of Norwalk, the Sons remarked that:

> a spirit of liberty seems to have fired the breast of the main body of the inhabitants of this county: we are not easily to be persuaded to renounce our title to this privilege; the privilege of having our courts held where it may be most convenient for the whole. ... Will it not be quite enough tamely to submit to be taxed by the authority of the county [the county court] (in whom if at

> all, we are but virtually represented) for the purpose of erecting a court house & gaol, when the same are ordered to be erected where they will best accomodate the whole.[107]

But the most striking proof of the growing opposition to the extension of special benefits to a segment of the community was cited by Ezra Stiles. In 1782, he learned about the growing demand that either laymen be appointed to Yale's governing board or else that a rival college completely under secular control be set up. After one conference, Dr. Stiles confided in his diary that the "prevailing opinion" of the lower house was that

> the poor & those who dont educate their Child. at Coll^{g} (w^{c} is the body of the Comm^{y}) ought not to be burdened with rais^{g} Revenues for the use of the rich—& that the Parents who send Children shd pay for their Education.[108]

What further proof could one require that the ways of the fathers were being abandoned?

Another striking change was that which occurred in the political vocabulary of the period as the theories of the Revolution were popularized. The extent to which they became everyday property is indicated by their widescale use in judging issues other than the imperial-colonial relationship. From the beginning, such concepts as "constitutional"; "natural," "inalienable," and "vested rights"; the "sovereignty of the people"; and "civil liberties" were used for promoting or condemning policy on the state level or the proposals of the new national government. According to the people of Simsbury, it was "the inherent and unalienable right of the Freemen at large to appoint Delegates for Congress, and that they ought to be appointed accordingly."[109]

In their dispute over the site of the local courthouse, the grounds used by the Fairfield Sons of Liberty to oppose taxation for erecting the building were significant. They objected to taxation "by the authority of the county (in whom if at all, we are but virtually represented)".[110] Most used were the theories of natural law and natural rights. It was held to be against the law of nature, for example, to continue price regulations when more and more paper money was being issued.[111] Or again, the principle was subverted when the poor were denied the right of being admitted as inhabitants to a town unless they had sufficient property:

> a body politic ... /cannot/ with-hold from its inferior members /the poor/ the exercise of their natural rights, any more than the head of a natural body can without suffering, with-hold from its inferior members their peculiar powers, and several nourishments of blood and spirits.[112]

Much of the Revolutionary political theory concerned the constitutionality of British restrictions, and most of the new states were involved in writing state constitutions which defined and limited the powers of government. Although their government continued to operate under the royal charter, Connecticut's freemen were fully aware of the importance of written contracts between ruler and ruled. From the beginning they used constitutional arguments in condemning British measures. The Sons of Liberty nullified the Stamp Act on constitutional grounds, and observed that:

> ... the boundaries set by the People in all the Constitutions are the only Limits within which any Officer can rightfully exercise Authority.[113]

The Boston Port Bill, according to one town, was

> repugnant to the operation, freedom, and fundamentals of the British Constitution, and in direct violation of Magna Charter.[114]

Later on, this flexible test was used as a criterion for challenging the validity of acts of Congress to which one happened to object, especially during the uproar over commutation and the impost. A Durham town meeting informed the public that it was by "no means convinced Congress are vested with competent power to adopt" commutation,[115] while Winchester condemned the measure as "unconstitutional and altogether unjust and unreasonable."[116]

Even more significant was the transfer of this test to purely internal considerations. For example, the refusal of the Assembly to receive the petitions of dissenters for religious toleration was condemned as unconstitutional and in violation of Magna Charta.[117] And the legislature's insistence on functioning as a court of last resort, despite the fact that the lawmakers had delegated judicial power to lower courts, was labelled "contrary to the nature of our constitution" as well as "inconsistent with the genius and spirit of our laws;...",[118] evidently because it violated the theory of separation of powers. The royal charter began to be given a "strict construction," despite the fact that the Assembly had never construed this document as imposing a limitation on its legislative powers. Nevertheless, it was pointed out that a law of the Assembly limited the freemen to electing assistants from the list of twenty nominees, despite the fact that the charter made no such prohibition. Was not this law, then, "an abridgement of one of the essential Rights of the Freemen of this Colony, and unconstitutional?" since it prohibited them from obeying their solemn oaths to vote for whomever, in conscience, they considered best qualified.[119] Again, what provision of the charter authorized a two-house legislature?—

a procedure which enabled the councilors to veto acts of the lower house.[120] These speculations were never formulated in very precise terms, but they indicated that the people were aware of the political theorizing of the times. When the question of the constitutional basis of the state government was raised at the close of the war, Connecticut's freemen were sufficiently familiar with constitutional theory to debate the issue for thirty-six years.

The adoption of the royal charter as the basis of the new state government in 1776 aroused no opposition. But as early as 1781, a Norwich townmeeting called for the formation of a regular constitution,[121] along with its many other reform proposals. The following year, the question as to whether the state had a constitution in the approved sense was formally raised by Dr. Benjamin Gale of Killingworth, in an able pamphlet. The state's most prominent physician and a well-known inventor, Dr. Gale was also one of the most bitter critics of the clergy; the brother-in-law and business partner of Aaron Eliot, leader of the Middletown Convention of 1783; and subsequently a prominent opponent of the constitution of 1787.[122] In exercising the right of revolution, Gale argued, the state had abrogated its charter, and thus the power to form a fundamental law had reverted to the people. The Assembly's declaration re-establishing the charter was extra-legal and could be regarded by thinking people as only a temporary expedient. Gale's address, incorporating the best of Revolutionary political theory, announced that withthe war drawing to a close, the time had come for forming a regular

civil government through a popular convention:

> It ought to be a work of time, and composed of men well versed in government, well acquainted with the laws of nature and nations, men who well understand, not only the civil but the natural, the religious, the unalienable rights of men and of Christians. ... Our charter carefully examined ... everything retained, the advantages of which we have experienced--Everything expurged we have found on experience disadvantageous; the several constitutions of our sister states carefully inspected, and everything worthy of our imitation selected.[123]

The Assembly first took official notice of the constitutional question in 1786-87, when a bill to restrict representation to one deputy from each town was introduced. One member objected to the measure:

> It is a constitutional question. The people are the fountain of power, and must agree if the mode is altered. The Assembly cannot do it. It is a native right of the people.

James Davenport replied that Connecticut had no constitution, only state laws, as the decision for revolution had abrogated the charter, and its subsequent adoption by the Assembly gave it only the force of statutory law.[124] Although the legislature accepted this interpretation, Gale continued his argument that the state had no constitution, for

> a civil constitution is a charter, a bill of rights, or a compact made between ruler and ruled.[125]

The constitutional question continued to be aired, but remained an academic issue until about 1800, when the Republicans seized on the alleged absence of a written constitution as a political issue to attack the intrenched aristocracy. Immediately the Baptists, then the Methodists, and still later the Episcopalians joined in the attack against the standing order as they all saw in a constitutional convention the only hope for disestablishment and an overthrow of the government - moneyed class alliance of the Federalist-Congregationalists.[126]

The resolves of the Republican party were phrased in the political vocabulary of the Revolution—government with the consent of the governed, unalienable and natural rights, no taxation without representation. In fact, the proposed constitutional convention—the essential plank in the Republican platform—was demanded in order to secure for the people of Connecticut, in a written contract, the results of the Revolution. The postwar period had many of the same political leaders, and they continued to use the political techniques of the 1760's and '70's, including formal nomination of candidates, mass meetings, and state-wide conventions to urge reforms.[127] The Republican party advocated the same reforms which had been suggested earlier. In fact, practically every plea for economic and social change and every demand for altering the operation of Connecticut's political system after 1800 which have been attributed to the influence of the national movement for Jeffersonian Democracy were first made during the Revolution.[128]

These Republican demands included, besides a written constitution, an abolition of plural office holding and an independent judiciary; a complete separation of church and state; and the elimination of clerical influence in politics. Election reforms were also urged, including an extension of the suffrage to all who paid taxes and were liable for militia service and an abolition of the complex voting system, especially double balloting for top posts. Demands for open legislative sessions, publication of debates, and information about public finances, always a closely-guarded secret, were also brought up again. The old agitation for tax relief was also revived as the poor demanded that their inequitable burdens be lifted through less reliance on land, livestock,

and poll taxes. Instead, they urged valuation according to the real worth of property and reliance on newer forms of wealth, including exempted stock, capital, and bank shares. Therefore, the new constitution which was finally drawn up in 1818 and the subsequent legislation which incorporated these demands merely recognized on paper the "revolution of taste and of manners,"[129] the changes in political thinking which had taken decades to complete. Connecticut's bloodless revolution of 1818 which gave the state its first written constitution was but the culmination of the American Revolution.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER VII.

1. CSR, V, 156-8, 163-4.

2. Stiles, Diary (24 Apr. 1783), III, 69-70.

3. Conn. Jour., 1 and 8 May 1783.

4. See CSR, V, 115-6, 104-5, 123-4, 377, 120.

5. Charles M. Andrews, Connecticut's Place in Colonial History (New Haven, 1924), 9, 10, 18, 31, 32, 47-8, and passim.

6. Martin, Merchants and Trade, 20.

7. The local histories very often dwell on this theme--the expanding economic activities and social changes beginning with the 1750's, especially, Field, Middletown, 44, 61-2, and Caulkins, Norwich, 309-14.

8. The town histories are filled with examples. See Sheldon B. Thorpe, North Haven Annals, ... (New Haven, 1892), 164-5; Orcutt, Torrington, 89, 202; Caulkins, Norwich, 367, 371-2; John Devotion to E. Stiles, 15 Oct. 1767, Stiles, Itineraries, 470.

9. See Silas to Simeon Deane, 1 Apr. 1783, Deane Bros. Corres., 172-3.

10. To Silas Deane, 10 Nov. 1784, ibid., 204.

11. Ibid.

12. To Silas Deane, 9 June 1783, ibid., 180.

13. See Martin, Merchants and Trade, 42-3ff.

14. To Silas Deane, 15 Nov. 1785, ibid., 217. See also 215.

15. Martin, Merchants and Trade, 51-2.

16. Goodwin, East Hartford, 157; Mathias Spiess and Percy W. Bidwell, History of Manchester, Connecticut (Manchester, 1924), 62, 80; see also Barnabas to Silas Deane, 14 Oct. 1785, 28 Sept. 1788, Deane Bros. Corres., 215, 231.

17. Barnabas to Silas Deane, 28 Sept. 1788, ibid., 213; East, 313-4.

18. Ibid., 301-2.

19. Purcell, especially 98-113.

20. Ibid., 122ff.

21. Ibid., especially 119-38.

22. Ibid., especially 102-8ff.

23. Caulkins, Norwich, 371; Plainfield Bicentennial... (Norwich, 1899), 80.

24. Caulkins, Norwich, 309-10.

25. See, for example, Federal Writers Project, History of Milford, Connecticut, 1639-1939 (Bridgeport, 1939), 67; Roys, Norfolk, 22; S. H. Parsons to Gov. Geo. Clinton, 21 Feb. 1780, Parsons Letters, 282; Daniel W. Teller, The History of Ridgefield, Conn. ... (Danbury, 1878), 170-1.

26. Stiles, Diary, II, 445-6, 446-9, 464.

27. See Goodwin, East Hartford, 89; Cothren, Woodbury, I, 213-4; Timlow, Southington, 530.

28. Caulkins, New London, 481-2.

29. Conn. Jour., 3 Jan. 1776. See also Conn. Cour., 28 Nov. 1780.

30. Conn. Jour., 1 Oct.1783.

31. Deane to Stiles, 29 July 1778, Deane Papers, II, 475-7; Stiles, Diary, (24 and 25 Aug. 1778), II, 297-8.

32. Conn. Jour., 5 May 1779.

33. Caulkins, Norwich, 334.

34. Field, Middlesex, 17.

35. Caulkins, Norwich, 323, 334-5; Love, Hartford, 245, 326.

36. Conn. Jour., 8 July and 12 Aug. 1774.

37. Caulkins, Norwich, 361-2.

38. Conn. Jour., 1 Oct. 1773.

39. Susan J. Griggs, Early Homesteads of Pomfret and Hampton (n.p., 1950), 53-4.

40. Hurlburt, Farmington, 105.

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42. Teller, Ridgefield, 169-72, 179.

43. Constance McL.Greene, History of Naugatuck, Connecticut (New Haven, 1949), 47-8, 41.

44. Lewis M. Norton, Goshen in 1812 (n. p., 1949), 24.

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46. David D. Field, A History of the Towns of Haddam and East-Haddam (Middletown, 1814), 21.

47. Field, Middlesex, 21.

48. Benjamin Trumbull, A Complete History of Connecticut, Civil and Ecclesiastical, to the Year 1764;... (2 vols., New Haven, 1818), II,548.

49. Clarence S. Brigham, History and Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820 (2 vols., Worcester, Mass., 1947), I, 11-76.

50. See, especially, Purcell, 5-7.

51. Edwin Pond Parker, History of the Second Church of Christ in Hartford (Hartford, 1892), 149-53.

52. David N. Camp, History of New Britain, ... Connecticut. (New Britain, 1889), 265; Purcell, 7[illegible].

53. Ibid., 6.

54. Julius Gay, Church Music in Farmington in Olden Time (Hartford, 1891), 15-22, passim.

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56. Conn. Jour., 6 July 1780; Petition to Trumbull, 14 Oct. 1778, Trumbull Papers, III, 289-90.

57. To Silas Deane, 4 June 1778, Deane Bros. Corres., 129.

58. Thorpe, North Haven, 212-3.

59. Stiles, Diary (17 Nov. 1777, 23 Feb. 1778), II, 230, 257.

60. Alexander Cowie, Educational Problems at Yale College in the Eighteenth Century (Connecticut Tercentenary Commission Publications, no. 55, New Haven, 1936), 22-4.

61. Stiles, Diary (26, 27, 29, 30 Mar.,16 Apr. 1782), III, 12, 14-5.

62. Ibid., (12 Feb. 1782), III, 11. See also Conn. Jour., 14 Mar. 1782.

63. Purcell, 5-30.

64. Abel McEwen, Half-Century Sermon on Some Changes Which Have Occurred in the First Congregational Society Society in New London; in This City:... (New London, 1857), 23.

65. Purcell, 43.

66. Ibid., 44-5.

67. Ibid., 69-80.

68. Ibid., 81-92.

69. Ibid., 92-7.

70. Ibid., 53-64.

71. Todd, Redding, 28.

72. Conn. Cour., 2 Apr. 1782.

73. Ibid., 8 Apr. 1780.

74. Ibid., 31 Mar. 1766.

75. Ibid., 26 Mar. and 2 Apr. 1770.

76. Ibid., 4 /6 7 Apr. 1767.

77. Ibid., 30 Dec. 1765.

78. Ibid., 20 July 1767.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid., 9 Mar. 1767.

81. Conn. Jour., 19 Mar. 1777.

82. Ibid.

83. Ibid., 4 Apr. 1777.

84. Ibid., 7 July 1779.

85. See ibid., 10 Mar. 1784.

86. Ibid., 31 Mar. 1784.

87. Huntington, God ruling the Nations, 25-8.

88. See, for example, Conn. Cour., 29 Feb. 1768.

89. See pp. 147-8 of this thesis.

90. Conn. Cour., 19 Oct. 1767.

91. Ibid., 23 Jan. 1769.

92. Ibid., and 27 Feb. 1769.

93. Ibid., 9 May 1768.

94. Ibid., 19 Oct. 1767.

95. Ibid., 14 Sept. 1767.

96. Benjamin Gale, A Reply to a Pamphlet. ... (/New London/, 1755, ix. See also Conn. Jour., 22 and 29 Apr. 1774.

97. For example, Jedidiah Huntington, 3 Sept. 1783, Huntington Papers, 465; John Devotion to Stiles, 6 June 1767, Stiles Itineraries, 465; John Chester to Joshua Huntington, 4 Feb. 1779, Huntington Papers, 425; Gipson, Conn. Taxation, 34-5.

98. Conn. Cour., 9 May 1768.

99. Conn. Jour., 15 Mar. 1780. See also p. 148 of this thesis.

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101. Caulkins, Norwich, 400, and Wilcoxson, Stratford, 523.

102. See p. 148 of this thesis.

103. Wilcoxson, Stratford, 523, and Caulkins, Norwich, 395, 396.

104. See chapter VI. of this thesis.

105. Conn. Cour., 19 Oct. 1767, 26 Mar. 1770.

106. Ibid., 2 June 1772, 14 Oct. 1776.

107. Ibid., 2 Jan. 1769.

108. Stiles, Diary (16 Feb. 1782), III, 8-9.

109. Conn. Cour., 15 Sept. 1777.

110. Ibid., 2 Jan. 1769. Italics added.

111. Ibid., 10 Aug. 1779.

112. Conn. Jour., 13 Oct. 1777.

113. Conn. Cour., 30 Oct. 1765.

114. Wheeler, Stonington, 36.

115. Fowler, Durham, 144-5.

116. Boyd, Winchester, 154. See also, for example, Conn. Jour., 24 and 31 Mar. 1784.

117. Ibid., 9 Aug.1775.

118. Ibid., 5 May 1769.

119. Conn. Cour., 9 May 1768.

120. Ibid.

121. Caulkins, Norwich, 396, and p. 149 of this thesis.

122. See George C. Groce, Jr., "Benjamin Gale," New England Quarterly, X (1939), 697-716. Groce is not aware of Aaron Eliot's connection with the Middletown Convention or of Gale's other reform measures proposed in the press during the war under his pen name of "A.Z."

123. Purcell, 176-7; J. Hammond Trumbull, Historical Notes on the Constitutions of Connecticut, 1639-1818. ... (Hartford, 1901), 15-7.

124. Purcell, 177; Trumbull, Constitutions, 16.

125. Purcell, 177-9.

126. See ibid., especially 229-33, 243-4ff.

127. See ibid, 256. Purcell makes no point of this obvious continuity of the wartime and postwar periods. His almost complete lack of knowledge about the Revolutionary period is a serious weakness in his otherwise excellent monograph.

128. Practically the only reform proposals not specifically made during the Revolution were for extending suffrage to those in militia service and the demand for controlling moneyed corporations, whose abuses developed only after the accumulation of capital during and after the war. For discussion of the Republican reforms, which Purcell does not realize originated during the Revolution, see ibid., 187-8, 192, 196-7, 200, 202, 203, 206-9, 214, 221-5, 233, 340-7, 354-5, 363, 314ff, 336ff, 347, 237--8, 250, 254, 363.

129. Porter, Farmington, 84.

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