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5-2007

The Seven Years War: American Warfare Goes Global

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Way, Peter. (2007). The Seven Years War: American Warfare Goes Global.
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Fort Necessity [image]

From the end of King George's War or the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748, the French and British vied with one another in Nova Scotia, on the New York and Massachusetts frontiers, and in the Ohio Valley, sending expeditions to and building forts in these disputed territories in an attempt to assert their territorial claims. On the western frontier, an expansionist Virginia contested New France for control of Ohio lands. Virginia had been probing the interior for some time, attempting to create a "settlement frontier" across Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains from the 1720s. While population pressures may not have immediately necessitated the opening up of vast new territories, Virginia power had always been coined in land and slaves. The lands west of the Appalachians constituted money and power waiting to happen, and the Virginia elite were commercially minded enough to speculate on their engrossment. The French and the Indians of the Ohio Valley could not but respond.

In 1749, an expedition under Céleron de Blainville marched to the Ohio Valley to remove traders and to lay claim to the region. Ownership of this territory was also asserted by Virginia, which had no regular troops at its command, but a large vested interest to protect. Significant figures in the colony, amongst them Lieutenant-Governor Robert Dinwiddie, were backers of the Ohio Land Company, which had been formed in 1748 as a private enterprise to promote the commercial settlement of the area. The Company subsequently surveyed their domain and, in 1753, began building a fort at the forks of the Ohio. These actions, borne of the desire for private profit as much as concerns for territorial sovereignty, sparked a French counter-move into the region. The British government's order of August 1753 stipulated that any attempt by the French to build forts in the Ohio Valley or to prevent the erection of forts by the Ohio Company were to be met with force. Dinwiddie thus sent George Washington to request that the French depart, and when he was rebuffed, the Virginia Council had to reply with force. Washington returned with

200 men to the Ohio to protect and assist those already there building a fort. A French force captured the Virginian fort on April 17, 1754, then during a parlay on May 28, a French ensign, Joseph Jumonville, was fatally shot by a soldier under Washington. The Virginians retreated and began fortifying a defensive position, Fort Necessity. However, the pursuing French force, commanded fittingly by Captain Louis de Villiers, brother to Jumonville, compelled Washington to surrender in July 1754. The slaying of Jumonville constituted the first “shot heard round the world,” and Washington’s military defeat, insignificant in terms of 18th century warfare, would echo across the Atlantic, ultimately provoking what can be termed the first true world war.

The Bigger Picture [global image]

This fracas near the ends of the earth in the American wilderness provoked a conjuncture of a number of historical processes at work across the globe. The resulting war, known as the Seven Years’ War or French and Indian War, would redraw the map of the world. Among the forces at play that need to be examined to explain the unforeseen consequences of Jumonville’s murder and Washington’s defeat, are:

- 🏰 Developments in the nature of warfare
- 🏰 The integration of Great Britain
- 🏰 The spread of the British Empire
- 🏰 Continental European politics
- 🏰 Events in Africa, India and the Far East

The Military Revolution [image]

Military historians characterize developments in the practice of warfare during the early modern period as a military revolution. Advances in military science and technology resulted in an escalation of the scale of warfare and the involvement of state and society in war making.¹ The new requirements of warfare caused political changes leading to the development of the modern state in the eighteenth century. The growth in the size and professionalism of standing armies in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—increasing tenfold in just 200 years—necessitated an expansion in the state apparatus to maintain and finance the military. Michael Duffy observed “the governments of Ancien Régime Europe were really giant war-making machines devoting their main efforts to the maintenance of large armed forces.”² This incestuous relationship in most

¹ Michael Roberts pioneered this concept by in 1955, centering it on the years 1560-1660. Roberts identified four interrelated developments: the tactical change from lance and pike to arrow and then musket, resulting in an absolute decline in firepower and consequent tactical deadlock; the expansion in the size of armies; the growing complexity of strategic thinking so as to marshal these larger forces, and the resultant need for greater training and discipline of soldiers ultimately leading to professional standing armies; and the greater social and economic impact, with greater costs, damages and associated bureaucratic developments. Geoffrey Parker more recently updated and globalized the concept, arguing that fortification, firepower, and swelling numbers of armies comprised the three key elements to the revolution, allowing western powers to dominate the world. As cannon fire overpowered the vertical defenses of castles, military engineers began building forts in the Italian style—with lower, thicker, angled walls, and gun towers that extended out at an angle from the walls to prevent flanking fire, complemented by outer defenses of ditches, casemates (pill-boxes) within the ditch, or triangular ravelins (detached bastions), or crownworks and hornworks (extensions to the fort walls). The adoption of volley firing, in which ranks of men fired in sequence, caused the battle line to be extended and thinned to maximize firepower and minimize the target. Maurice of Nassau pioneered this system, which required greater coordination and thus training and discipline, and contributed to the rise of professional armies. Improvements and greater reliance on artillery and musketeers or archers meant that infantry eclipsed cavalry and the size of armies mushroomed to maximize firepower. But the military revolution was neither uniform nor comprehensive, he added, being slower to reach the fringes of Europe, such as England, Scotland and Ireland. The middle decades of the eighteenth century, for Parker, marked the culmination of the military revolution. But already it was being undermined by new modes of warfare—the use of light infantry and light cavalry and the waging of “little war” (*guerrillo*), skirmishing, which began on the continent in the 1740s and was imported to the North America in the Seven Years’ War. Jeremy Black, disagreeing with Roberts and Parker, doubts that any military revolution occurred in early modern period, but more so belongs to the century following 1660. In the realm of weapons and tactics, this era was more significant, especially in the supplanting of the pike with the musket fitted with a bayonet, dating from the 1690s. He also believes that Parker overstated the wide adoption of the *trace italienne* fortifications when it was in fact patchy. Parker, The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988; 2nd ed. 1996), 1-4, 10-11, 19-20, 24, 43, 149-51; Jeremy Black, A Military Revolution? Military Change and European Society 1550-1800 (London: MacMillan, 1991), ix, 6-7, 20-22, 54..

² Michael Duffy, Introduction,” in Michael Duffy, ed., The Military Revolution and the State 1500-1800 (Exeter: Exeter Studies in History, No. 1, 1980), 4. Likewise, M. S. Anderson went so far as to assert: “Most of the governments of Europe were first and foremost, as they had been for generations, machines for waging war.” M. S. Anderson, War and Society in the Old Regime 1618-1789 (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 16.

cases led to absolutist rule and the privileging of a military caste. England departed from this trajectory, most argue, managing both to maintain powerful combined military and naval forces, and to develop the most liberal of governing systems of its time.

John Brewer disagreed with this conventional view: that the military was not a dominant force in British society; and that British government was not interventionist. In place of this model of British development, he offers the idea of “the fiscal-military state,” by which he means a state whose main function is to wage war and whose fiscal policy and administrative apparatus is geared to that end. War constituted “the main business of the state” for Brewer.³ From the late 17th through the 18th centuries Britain would wage war repeatedly with France and her allies in what some scholars call the second Hundred Years War. And the scale of war grew exponentially; 1689-1780 Britain’s army and navy grew by 300 percent. In addition to funding masses of armed personnel, the state also had to construct a support infrastructure. Military expenditure during the major wars of 1688-1783 amounted to 61-74% of public spending; and when costs of servicing debt are included, 75-85% of annual expenditure went to fund Britain’s war-making capabilities. England was able to wage war on this scale due to its wealth, and the state was able to raise this money due to its undisputed powers of national taxation, the fluidity of capital in a commercial economy, and the development of fiscal knowledge enabling borrowing against tax income. Britain was able to fund its expanding military commitments by sharply increasing taxation, engaging in “public deficit finance (a national debt)” in an unprecedented fashion, and creating an administrative structure for the military and fiscal needs. The key development occurred between the Restoration and Glorious Revolution with the emergence of the Treasury as the controlling body over government expenditure and tax collection, with

³ Ibid., xi, xv, xvii.

customs, excise and the land tax constituting the vast majority, and the excise tax on domestic products being by far the most important after 1714. The utilization of public debt constituted the other key to funding the fiscal-military state. Simply, Britain needed to borrow to fund wars and could do so because her loans on international money markets were guaranteed by a Parliamentary grant. Thus, from 1688-1714, according to Brewer, the British state was transformed, developing all the ingredients of the fiscal-military state: elevated taxation; increasingly sophisticated government administration; a standing army; and the desire to be a major European power.

The Consolidation of the British State

The **consolidation of the British state** occurred at the same time and in a related process with the impact of the military revolution in the British Isles, often as a result of warfare, both internal and external. The Tudor monarchs, having extended their control over England, incorporated Wales by the Act of Union in 1536, with the Council of Wales ruling the region until its abolition by the Williamite administration in the 1690s; thereafter London directly administered Wales. The ascension of the Stuarts to the thrones of both Scotland and England united the Kingdom, but their overthrow in the English Revolution freed England's Parliament to centralize power in London by the incorporation of Scotland in the Act of Union of 1707 and the perpetual adjournment of the Scottish parliament. The suppression of repeated Jacobite uprisings in support of the Stuarts end in 1746 at Culloden, when Bonnie Prince Charlie's army was brutally defeated and Scotland made safe for Britain. Ireland had even more conflicted history with England, involving successive invasions and military conquest. First came the wave of Anglo-Norman invaders, followed by "New English" colonizers of Ireland in the period 1560-1660, while Cromwell viciously put down an uprising during the English Civil War. The English Revolution and the defeat of James II and VII by William of Orange's Protestant armies led to the Treaty of

Limerick of 1692, which initiated a series of anti-Catholic penal laws restricting the political, economic and social rights of Catholics. Ireland retained its Parliament but in a colonial relationship. These are the pieces that made Britain great, but each was a distinct region with its own culture and interests. These would be made manifest in the waging of the Seven Years' War. Having consolidated the state at home, Britain could focus increasing attention abroad in the Empire proper.

Empire [image]

The vast expansion in the scale of warfare and the development of the fiscal-military state intimately interconnected with imperialism. England's exploration and colonization of new territories necessitated military support, fuelling growth in armies and navies that required unprecedented amounts of capital, which colonial trade provided through customs collection and taxation of the wealth generated, while the state apparatus grew in size and activity as a means of managing the military, trade and colonies.

Historians have characterized the empire in the 17th and 18th centuries as commercial in nature, a broad and loosely connected mercantile market ultimately made more systematic by what Daniel Baugh calls Britain's "blue-water" policy. The main tenets of this policy were: the defense of Britain received first priority; naval control of the English Channel and the North Sea constituted the basic military objective; trade and shipping were the keys to paying for defense and providing the infrastructure to naval prowess; and colonies were important inasmuch as they contributed to trade. The "Atlantic system" that began to take shape under this blue-water policy required a large navy and a growing bureaucracy to pay for it by managing taxation. Baugh calls this empire a "maritime-imperial system" in that it was based on maritime commerce rather than

the acquisition of new territories.⁴

Britain's policy had always been to allow the colonies largely to defend themselves, valuing them more for their exports than their territories, and relying on the Royal Navy to keep the sea lanes of commerce clear for the flow of commodities. Anemic bodies of troops were placed at vital nodal points in the American colonies, and in times of emergency could be fleshed out by raising provincial detachments, calling out the militia, or, if absolutely necessary, dispatching modest infusions of regular soldiers. But the stakes of empire building had risen by the mid-18th century. King George's War (ending in 1748) had left unanswered the question of who would claim the American interior, its crucial resources, land and furs, and indigenous peoples. The resolution of this stalemate increasingly exercised the thinking of imperial policymakers, given the expansion of the English colonies and Britain's increasing dependence on colonial trade.

It was at this point that the military landscape of North America, in fact British colonial policy and the nature of the Empire, began to change. The prior state of affairs, in which colonies and proprietorial companies were expected largely to manage and pay for their own defense would be supplanted by an imperial policy whereby standing armies in the colonies would perform these duties in a fashion that was more answerable to political officials in London. The army's red coat would become a more striking signifier of imperial rule than the navy's blue jacket.

The Seven Years' War constituted an important catalyst to these processes. The War marked a significant turning point in the nature of Empire from being distinctly commercial to being increasingly territorial. Two decisions undergirded this transformation: the unprecedented commitment of tens of thousands of troops to the American theater; and the stationing of a standing army in North America at war's end to protect the new acquisitions. The army was an

⁴ Daniel A. Baugh, "Great Britain's 'Blue-Water' Policy, 1689-1815," International History Review, vol. 10, no. 1

essential player in the winning of this territorial empire, and the empire was increasingly dependent on the army for its defense. The military revolution that had transformed European warfare and the nature of the state was exported to the New World. In terms of the numbers of troops mobilized, the scale of combat, and the massive investment in army supply and building of military infrastructure, this was warfare as yet unseen in the Americas.

The coming of the Seven Years' War must be placed against this long and broad historical experience of military revolution, the rise of the fiscal-military state, the consolidation of Great Britain, and imperial expansion. The army's increasing significance to the imperial state marks this watershed. As a whole numbered 49 regiments and approximately 35,000 on the eve of the war; by war's end the British army had grown to 115 regiments and upwards of 100,000 troops.

The Coming of War

The British regular army in the Americas was undermanned and ill prepared in 1754 to face the enemy in what would become known as the Seven Years' War. Only 2,420 soldiers guarded the British colonies on the continent, 3,755 including the West Indian contingents, and these were unevenly distributed along the eastern seaboard and across the Caribbean. Not only were the regulars thin on the ground they were suspect in military effectiveness given their long colonial service. In 1754, the standing army in the colonies constituted a woeful force with which to meet the imperial crisis facing Britain.⁵

At this critical juncture, there marched forward a man who was to play a crucial, if temporary, role in the construction of military policy. William Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, the favorite son of George II, had been commander of the British forces that defeated the Jacobites at

(Feb. 1988), 40-41; Baugh, "Maritime Strength and Atlantic Commerce," 185-88.

Culloden in 1746 and bloodily suppressed the Highlands afterwards, winning him the *nom de guerre* of the “Butcher.” Cumberland persuaded the king to send two regiments to North America under Edward Braddock, a fellow veteran of the suppression of the Jacobites. Cabinet approved this plan on September 26, and in early October it further decided to raise two American regular regiments, the 50th and 51st. When Braddock's instructions were drafted in November, the expedition had mushroomed to over 10,000 men in seven regiments, seven independent companies and artillery detachments. The campaign plan directed the British regulars and Virginia provincial troops to attack Fort Duquesne in the Ohio Valley, while the “American” regiments assaulted Fort Niagara, after which the two regiments were to besiege Fort Frédéric at Crown Point along with a force of provincial troops with William Johnson and their Mohawk allies. Meanwhile, a largely provincial army led by the regular officer Robert Monckton was to assault the French in Nova Scotia. This campaign strategy involved an unprecedented commitment of troops and resources to the colonies. The provisions for 1755 were merely the first step on the road to full-scale war of near European proportions.

The British army captured Fort Beauséjour in Nova Scotia while a provincial force under Johnson fought the French to a standstill at Lake George, but Braddock’s defeat **[image?]** at the Monongahela in July 1755 and the stalling of the Niagara expedition at Oswego that autumn led the government to expand the army further. Up to the summer of 1756, the majority of recruits into the British regiments in America enlisted in the colonies—7,500 men compared to 4,500 sent over from Britain and Ireland according to Stanley Pargellis—but this situation changed as a result of British military failures, Braddock’s defeat and the loss of Fort Oswego in August of that year. Whitehall decided to expand its military commitment by dispatching more regular troops across

⁵ Anderson, Crucible of War, 560.

the Atlantic. A new regiment of four battalions, the Royal Americans (60th Regiment) was raised in Europe and America. The 35th and 42nd Highlanders, and the 22nd Regiment were ordered to America in September. Early in 1757, two battalions of highlanders, each numbering 1,040, were raised for service in America. That summer seven more battalions were sent—the 2nd battalion of the 1st, and the 17th, 27th, 28th, 43rd, 46th, and 55th regiments—over five thousand men. Then in August, nine companies of Highlanders and drafts of 40 men from each of the 37 battalions in England and Ireland, notionally 2,380 men, were dispatched for America. The fall of Fort William Henry **[image]** that year and ensuing “massacre” only underlined the need for troops. By the autumn of 1757, there were 21 battalions and seven independent companies on the American continent, or 20,268 regular men and officers. From this point in the war, regular troops played the most important role in combat, with provincials troops increasingly being relegated to support functions. By summer of 1758, 23 battalions of regulars were in America, and it was then that the tide turned. The campaigns of that year against Louisbourg, Ticonderoga, and forts Frontenac and Duquesne mobilized 24,000 regulars and 22,500 provincials. All but the Ticonderoga campaign met with success. In January 1759, 32 regular battalions were based in North America and the West Indies (compared to just six battalions and 14 horse squadrons committed to the allied army in Germany). Amherst, however, found it difficult keeping his army up to strength. At this time the North American army was 4,500 men short of its notional strength (21,874 men of all ranks rather than the 27,330 on the books). Wolfe was meant to have 12,000 men for the successful Quebec campaign but his army actually amounted to 8,535. **[Death of Wolfe]** In 1760, 2,000 newly recruited troops were sent to the American army, which was at the time 7,000 men under strength. They were needed, as three armies numbering 17,000 regulars, provincials and Indians were to converge on Montreal: Murray from Quebec, Haviland from Lake Champlain, and Amherst from Lake Ontario. By 1762, 41 battalions manned the Americas plus

six companies of the 74th in Jamaica, exclusive of Gage's Light Infantry, the rangers and independent companies. In these years, the Caribbean islands of Martinique, St. Lucia, Grenada, and St. Vincent, and Cuba fell to British arms. [image]

The Americans

American colonists obviously played key roles in the war: as citizens in a war zone; as members of provincial regiments; and as recruits to the regular army. British army officers on the whole viewed colonial politicians and the general population as unsupportive and obstructionist at worse and ineffectual at best in their support of the war effort. Colonists deemed the British army to be demanding of resources, unmindful of how colonial politics worked, uncaring of matters of private property and individual liberties, and neglectful of the subordination of military to civil power within British constitutionalism; seeming at times more an occupying than a protective force. Having, for the most part, benefited from the benign neglect of the metropole during much of the preceding 150 years, the fiscal and military demands made by Britain upon its colonies, although long the norm at home since the late 17th century and essential to the assertion of the nation's military power, struck the colonies with a blunt force. The imperial military state manifested itself more palpably in America during the Seven Years' War when an army ultimately numbering in the tens of thousands landed on American shores, and the military command issued direct orders to civil authorities for funding the war effort, mobilizing troops, providing support infrastructure and supplies, and curtailing certain commercial activities. Briton and colonial mutually hammered out "the American" on the anvil of military needs—the processes of recruitment, supply, trade embargo and quartering—needs with profound consequences for the colonies. The disputes between colonials and the army over these issues were primarily economic in nature—hinging on restriction of trade, compulsory marketing of provisions, requisition of

wagons and livestock central to the agricultural economy, recruiting of scarce (free and bonded) labor, and the forced quartering of troops on civilian homes and businesses—although the colonial leaders at least tended to articulate their opposition to military actions in terms of the defense of British liberties.

The colonies also served the war effort through the mobilization of their own “provincial” military forces. Raised annually for yearly campaigns, officered by non-professional soldiers, and answering to colonial governments, these forces played central supporting roles in the conflict. But they also conflicted with the regular army over issues of who exercised ultimate command, rank, discipline, supply, and general cultural issues. Fred Anderson argued that provincials viewed military life in a more socially contractual, democratic and Christian light than did regular soldiers, with whom they had been thrown into close contact really for the first time on such an extensive scale. Two key consequences arose from the regular army’s failure to make provincials abide by their rules: the British had little regard for their military capability and this infused their approach to the revolution; war militarized colonials and made them aware of the cultural differences with the British.

Native Americans

Imperial expansion inevitably brought the British army into contact with aboriginal peoples. In the past twenty years, the writing of “New Indian History” has effloresced. The literature, for the most part, argues for a dialectical exchange of native and European forces across what could be a permeable frontier, stressing mutual dependence, complex economic and social interaction, the achievement of a balance of power between Native Americans and Europeans in what Richard White terms “the middle ground.” Accommodation took place because whites for a long time could neither force Indians to do their will nor ignore them. But accommodation eventually broke

down as whites gained the upper hand and proceeded again to define natives as “the other,” making it easier to dispossess them. New Indian histories desire to demonstrate Indians’ partial control over the course of imperial and national expansion, postponing decline to the post-revolutionary era, underestimates the extent to which eastern Indians had already been absorbed into or reduced to de facto clients of the Empire by mid-eighteenth century.

The Seven Years’ War constituted an important event in this process, involving, as it did, a struggle over who would control eastern North America. Indians were intimately involved in the conflict, fighting for their own interests while being allied to one or the other of the European powers, or remaining neutral. Their war was not about empire-building but was fought to, at the least, maintain the status quo ante, a delicate balance of British, French, Euro-American and Amerindian interests, from which the later derived significant benefit. While the French were entrenched in North America, Indians could not be ignored or pushed aside by either Europeans or their colonists. They were essential commercial and martial partners, who must be courted and given all due consideration. They decided to ally with, fight against or remain neutral in the conflict based upon a close calculation of the perceived benefits deriving from each option. The defeat of the French and Spanish in the Seven Years’ War, however, robbed Natives of alternative European allies, upsetting the diplomatic fulcrum upon which the middle ground acquired leverage, and allowing the British to impose upon them a less favorable client-patron relationship, one informed by racialist thinking.

Europe

The outbreak of hostilities with France in the colonies in 1754, prompted Britain to again contract with German territories to hold men in reserve to help protect Hanover—agreements made with Hessen-Cassel, Ansbach and Wurzburg, then in Jan. 1756 Convention of Westminster signed

with Prussia to prevent Prussia from siding with France (263) Then in January of 1756 Britain signed the Convention of Westminster with Prussia to prevent that state from siding with France. The Prussian victory over Franco-Austrian forces at Rossbach in November of that year divided the war into two halves; in Western Europe the war became "a thinly disguised continental dimension to the Anglo-French colonial conflict", while in the East Austria and Russia assaulted Prussia. Frederick the Great waged total war, exploiting resources and civilians to the full all directed to limited war aims, with western and northern Germany, which had been largely conflict free since 1714, impacted greatly.⁶ Not only did Prussia forcibly harness people to the war machine, but the ferocity of continental conflict uprooted many, making them ripe pickings for recruiters from various armies. Frederick's military support came at a price for Britain, which promised in 1758 to provide Prussia with £670,000 annually to subsidize its war effort. At the same time, Britain assumed the cost of the entire Hanoverian army, which would amount to £1.2 million per year.⁷

India [image]

The worldwide commitment of British army in the interests of empire in India was assisted by the East India Company's army. There, the British transform from traders to rulers of densely populated provinces during 18th century, with the shift beginning with the Seven Years' War and, for the first time to any extent, a larger commitment of state military and naval resources to the subcontinent. Regular soldiers and a naval squadron went with Robert Clive, commander of the East India forces, to India in 1754. With victory at the battle of Plassey in 1757, the East India Co.

⁶ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 127; Peter H. Wilson, *German Armies: War and German Politics, 1648-1806* (London: University College London Press, 1998), 263, 275, 277-78.

⁷ Anderson, *Crucible of War*, 298-99.

established control in Bengal. India was no longer a purely commercial enterprise. EIC begin forming a sepoy army to defend the province. In 1760 demand tax gathering rights to pay their troops. In 1765 the *dirwani*, or tax collection rights in Bengal, is given to East India Company by Mughal Emperor, which meant de facto control. In 1767, Britain claims all lands from which the Company controls taxation, but accepts in their place a £400,000 annual payment. Britain governs territories in India through EIC proxy, as otherwise King would appear to be a vassal of the Mughal Emperor. EIC bankrupt in Britain in 1772 due to the great cost of waging war. EIC had become a territorial power. Defeat in Am. Revolution stripped away concerns that the Empire too unwieldy and threatening to English liberties. Britain again could see itself as besieged by foreign threats, thereby validating its imperialist activities. A shift to the right politically, and increasing assertion of central control over the empire. India Act of 1784 seals British state's control of India. By late 18th c. control of a territorial empire and increasingly important element of British identity. By 1815, British in India had an army of 140,000 Indian soldiers and 30,000 British.

—in Senegambia on West African coast a new royal colony established with true governance issuing from Britain (122)

—legislative assemblies given to former French windward Islands of St. Vincent, Tobago, Dominica and Grenada, while French inhabitants given the franchise—Quebec more problematic with its 70,000 French inhabitants—deemed potentially dangerous, thus not given representative government—Governor, Council and judiciary appointed (122-23)

Aftermath

Imperial and commercial policy adopted from 1763 comprised an important break from this tradition based on a misunderstanding of how the commercial system actually worked. The Seven Years' War was essentially a contest for empire with many British regulars campaigning in North America. With war's end, the imperial state moved to secure that empire, and the year 1763 constituted an important turning point in that it was only then that British government decided that cutting off trade with foreign powers even in peacetime exceeded in importance the swelling of imperial coffers and shipping. With the official cessation of hostilities in the spring of 1763, British leaders turned to peacetime arrangements, to concerns of economy. The Treaty of Paris brought to Britain from France Canada and Cape Breton in North America, Tobago, Grenada, St. Vincent and Dominica in the Caribbean, Senegal (in exchange for Gore'e) in West Africa, and an acknowledgement of supremacy in India in return for Chandernagor and Pondichery; from Spain she received Florida.

With a vastly expanded empire, Britain sought to impose more confining imperial policies as a means of controlling its new possessions. All those directly involved in the war—Indians, colonists and soldiers—felt the impact as Britain unconsciously encoded three rules of territorial empire. First, territorial empire, more so than commercial empire, requires a military presence, an army which should be paid for out of revenues generated by the colonies, and manned by soldiers who must be willing to serve on the same terms as home troops. Second, inhabitants of the colonies should expect to pay their fair share of colonial administration, particularly self-defense, should abide by whatever trade and taxation policies Parliament set, and should not move into the interior so as to encroach on Native lands. Third, indigenous peoples, as dependents of the

empire, must not disturb the peace, should engage in the production of staple commodities and participate in the commercial exchange on the same market terms as other people. Incipient colonial revolt, general mutiny and Indian war resulted.

With the peace the British government decided to station a large **peacetime army** in America paid for by colonists. In March 1763, the government of Lord Bute proposed to Parliament that 10,000 regulars be stationed across the Atlantic, 7,500 in the American colonies for defense. The promise to make colonies pay for army pacified critics at home but led directly to a tightening of customs collection and the revenue acts. Historians have agreed that the measures of 1763-64 were necessary, however disastrous they proved. What Britain was trying to accomplish by maintaining 15 battalions in America. A small force and colonials could have been used. The British were trying to reinforce the imperial hold on commercial success, and that a shift occurred to the idea of territorial dominion. Just as Britain's dispatching tens of thousands of troops to the Americas in the Seven Years' War and the willingness to expend millions of pounds on the foreign theatre constituted the exportation of the military revolution to the New World, the fact that the revenue acts were meant to fund the military, meant that the military-fiscal state had been imported into the colonies.

As for the unwitting instruments of these policies, the **soldiers** of the regular army, all was not sunny in the new dawn of the postwar era. Under pressure from the Treasury, the War Office moved to create a "New Establishment" by cutting the size of the army and making the remaining soldiers bear more of the burden of their support. In particular, the army decided to "stop" (or withhold) 4d. of a private's daily earnings of 6d. to pay for provisions which had been freely supplied throughout the War. Mutiny erupted from Newfoundland to Florida, as regular soldiers took up arms to fight against alterations to their wage and work conditions. This mutiny reveals

much about how regular soldiers viewed their job, being a rare time when the usually historically silent and anonymously massed ranks recorded their grievances in word and deed. As an unnamed soldier of the 60th Regiment brazenly proclaimed to the military governor of Quebec, James Murray: “Better to die on a gibbet! than to perish by inches!” This wave of rebelliousness would force Jeffery Amherst to reduce the wage deductions, placating many of the troops, but mutiny raged on late into the spring of 1764 in the Canadian Maritimes. The mutineers finally yielded, albeit not before extracting further concessions from the King. Why did soldiers who had served faithfully in most trying circumstances choose to commit at war’s end the ultimate martial sin? The new stoppages assessed on soldiers' pay for their provisions constituted the key factor, but other issues intruded, with the disbanding and reduction of regiments, the drafting of soldiers into other regiments, the ending of pay for extraordinary labor, concerns over reimbursement for uniforms bought but not issued, and the termination of provisioning for soldiers’ wives all playing a part. Mutiny in this instance was a form of collective resistance by soldiers to changes within the workplace, an extreme option given their employer regularly met disobedience with dire punishment. On a broader canvas, the mutiny can be seen as resistance to the new imperial order, one in which their labor was devalued just as the army’s importance to safeguarding British possessions worldwide expanded.

American colonists also soon became alienated from Britain’s postwar imperial settlement. Cooperation, militarily and economically, had marked the last few years of the war, while battlefield success cemented this fellow feeling. But the end of the war removed the basic need of cooperation, and awoke Britain to the fact that the massive wartime debt must be paid off. Furthermore, by choosing the lands of former New France over the Caribbean island of Martinique and Guadeloupe, Britain in effect opted for territorial over commercial empire, and thus substantially enhanced the extent of possessions to be administered and defended. London

looked to the colonies to pay part of the costs. Furthermore, by opening up a previously closed frontier, the War unleashed the commercial and territorial desires of American colonists. But Pontiac's War prompted the British to attempt to insulate their Indian allies and to secure the support of the erstwhile French-allied Indian. The Proclamation Line adopted in 1763 forbade settlement west of the Appalachians, with the military meant to police the boundary. The colonists would not be restrained and the British attempts to re-cork this genie merely exacerbated conflict amongst the three groups along the frontier. The army constituted the linchpin of these colonial policies, as was the case with Indian policy, and Britain's attempt to insert a strong peacetime military presence sparked heated opposition. In March 1763, Welbore Ellis, the secretary at war, informed the House of Commons of the Bute ministry's intention to maintain 20 battalions of regulars in North America but to make the colonies pay for the troops themselves. Ellis noted that there had only been four battalions in North America in 1749, but "Now you will have the foundations of a great army there." To pay for this army, the government decided to apply a stamp tax on the colonies.⁸ Here the colonies were presented with what they perceived as two grave assaults on their rights as Englishmen: the creation of a standing army, much feared because of the experience with the military in the English Civil War and Commonwealth; and the leveling of a direct tax, seen as unprecedented and invalid without colonial representation in the taxing body, Parliament. They responded by rioting and forming an inter-colonial congress to fight the Stamp Act in a crisis that is often seen as the first battle of the rebellion. Whether there

⁸ John L. Bullion, "Security and Economy: The Bute Administration's Plans for the American Army and Revenue, 1762-1763," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 45, no. 3 (July 1988), 499-504; quotation on page 503. Peter D. G. Thomas points out that the size of the army in America did not maintain a level of 10,000 men and 20 battalions, but was reduced from 1765 to 15 battalions and 7500 men, and gradually downward from 1770 to 1773 when there were 13 battalions and 6200 troops, where it remained until the outbreak of war. See "The Cost of the British Army in North America, 1763-1775," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., vol. 45, no. 3 (July 1988), 510-16. Bullion and Thomas disagree about the annual costs of this military force, but agree that concerns about the expense led to direct taxation of the colonies.

was a need for this American army in the postwar period, or whether Britain's intentions were honorable and practical is not the main point at issue here. The decision to create a standing army of such magnitude and at such expense in the colonies marked a shift in thinking about the nature of Empire. No longer content with the fluid bonds of what Daniel Baugh termed a "maritime-imperial system," and determined to exert more control over her dominions by enforcing trade and settlement policies, Britain had opted for a military-territorial empire. Despite its imminent failure in the American colonies, this would remain the blueprint for global expansion into the 20th century. Defense of colonial territory and enforcement of colonial policy were the military watchwords of the new British Empire.

The defeat of the French and Spanish robbed Natives of alternative European allies, upsetting the diplomatic fulcrum upon which the middle ground acquired leverage, and allowing the British to impose upon them a less favorable client-patron relationship. General Jeffrey Amherst, Commander in Chief of British forces in North America, never at ease with the native combatants, attempted to restrict trade with Indians to army forts (meaning more travel to trade and less competitive pricing for natives), to terminate the trade in firearms and ammunition (undercutting Indian hunting and ability to exchange products of the hunt, while subverting their war-making capability), and to do away with the practice of gift giving, instead seeking to impose upon them a more commercial model of economic exchange (which would extract their resources at minimum expense and ensnare them in a credit relationship for the European goods on which they were increasingly dependent). This frontal assault on the fundamentals of both diplomatic and economic relations in the middle ground before and during the war evoked pervasive dissatisfaction from native peoples; allies felt betrayed while former enemies resented the assumption that defeat of France somehow gave Britain the right to dictate terms to its former allies. In the spring of 1763, the so-called Pontiac's rebellion erupted, signifying both the native

people's recognition of this transformation and their overt resistance to diminishing status. Tribal groups throughout the Ohio valley attacked and in most cases captured British posts. Pontiac's six-month siege of Detroit failed to take the fort, yet, other than Pittsburgh and Niagara, all others fell. The outcome of the Indian War had been all but decided by the end of 1763, as natives suffered from a lack of firearms and ammunition, but fighting dragged on into 1765, an indication of their profound discontent for the new order of things.⁹ Pontiac's War can be conceived of as a colonialist struggle. Having lost their long term ally France as a result of the Treaty of Paris, these independent indigenous peoples were confronted by another European power, Britain, which claimed sovereignty over and stationed military garrisons in their lands, and imposed strict new trade relations upon them, all to be mediated through the army. Indians thus rose up against British claims of both territorial and commercial empire in the North American interior, and the vassal status this meant to them. The changing definition of empire was no abstraction to these people, but a threatening new political economy manifested in military posts. Ripping these tendrils of empire out could not in and of itself uproot British *imperium*, however. Another colonial uprising resulting in revolution would eventually achieve this end, but from the native perspective put in its place an even more insidious expansionist power.

Wilson—this pro-imperialist fervour soon undermined by desires of people for continued expansion of imperial power, particularly on the American continent, and the government's desire to hold down the costs that winning and retaining the new territories entailed—restriction on American settlement and the revenue schemes came to be seen as restrictions on liberty—developing American crisis undermined justification for imperialism, as the empire came to be

⁹ Daniel K. Richter, "Native Peoples of North America and the Eighteenth-Century British Empire," in Marshall, ed.,

seen as threatening the liberties of British subjects—by 1770s empire not just populated by free British subjects but many people who had been incorporated against their will by military conquest, with both groups subjected to the presence of British troops (150-54)

Anderson, Fred. Crucible of War: The Seven Years' War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766.

decision made late 1762 to maintain a relatively large establishment after the war to secure the expanded empire—he accepts the need for this defence—decided to maintain more than 80 regts. but reduced to a single battalion, thereby halving the numbers of enlisted men, yet maintaining significant numbers of officers—no more troops to be based in Britain and those in the colonies to be paid for by the colonies through taxation—20 battalions in America (including the caribbean) and 12 added to Irish Establishment—national debt almost doubled during the war, and amounted to about £146,000,000—would cost no less than £225,000 a year to pay for the 20 batalions in America—was felt that colonies had benefited, with over £6,000,000 expended there on the army and navy from 1756-62—with such capital flowing into the colonies they had doubled their British imports during the war—colonists paid for own governments and militias, but

Conclusion

Seven Years' War important because:

- The first truly world war, marking the spread of the military revolution around the globe
- Marked the emergence of modern Great Britain

- Pushed the British Empire across North America east of the Mississippi, and into Africa, and India
- All but eliminated France from influence in the New World and limited their power in India
- Created conditions in America that further undermined the status of native peoples and led directly to the American Revolution
- As we will see in my next lecture, due to the global scale of the conflict, the Seven Years' War also involved significant cultural clashes that helped lay down the gender, ethnic and racial politics of the British Empire