

France and Spain Enter the War After hearing of the American victory at Saratoga, King Louis XVI of France publicly recognized U.S. independence. In 1778, France signed two treaties of alliance with the United States. By doing so, France went to war with Britain. As part of its new alliance, France promised to send badly needed funds, supplies, and troops to America.

In 1779, France persuaded its ally Spain to help the Americans, too. Spain was also Britain's rival. The Spanish governor of Louisiana, General Bernardo de Gálvez, acted quickly. He captured the British strongholds of Natchez and Baton Rouge in the lower Mississippi Valley. From there, his small army went on to take Mobile and, in 1781, Pensacola, in West Florida. These victories prevented the British from attacking the United States from the southwest. However, like France, Spain wanted more than just to help the United States. Gálvez's victories helped extend Spain's empire.

By entering the war against Britain, France and Spain forced the British to fight a number of enemies on land and sea. For instance, the British expected to have to fight the French in the West Indies, so they sent troops there. And thousands of British troops were busy fighting Gálvez in the west. The British now had to spread their military resources over many fronts.

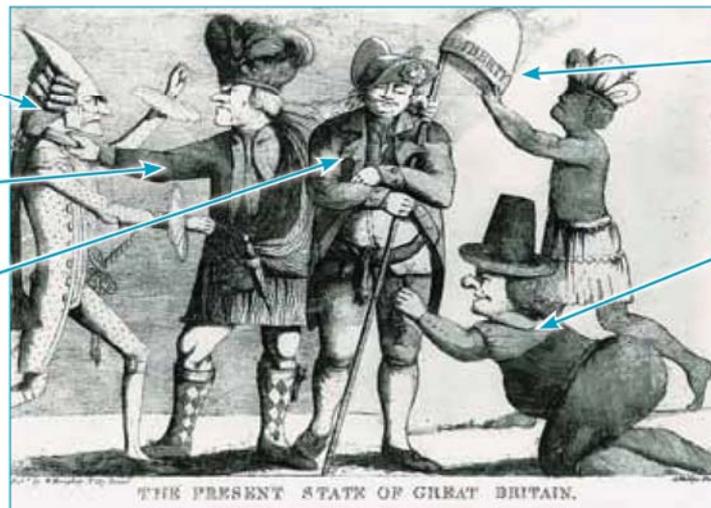
ANALYZE *Political Cartoons*

This cartoon was published in London in 1779, a year after France had formed an alliance with the United States. In political cartoons, sometimes a nation is represented by a figure wearing clothes associated with that nation. For example, in 18th-century cartoons, a Native American symbolized America. Here, figures representing different nations surround a sleeping figure representing Great Britain.

France is on the attack.

Scotland defends Britain.

Britain sleeps through the war.



America steals the cap of liberty.

Holland (whose merchants were trading with the Americans) picks Britain's pocket.



Skillbuilder Handbook, page R18.

CRITICAL THINKING

- Analyze Point of View** Why would the cartoonist have shown Britain as sleeping?
- Make Inferences** Why is Holland shown picking Britain's pocket?
- Synthesize** What is the basic meaning of the cartoon?