Out of War, a Republic Is Born

(continued from previous page)

Superior toward Lake of the Woods, now in Minnesota, and down the middle of the mouth of the great river, but Mississippi. Commissioners' map was inadequate and nobody was

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headwaters were.)

(The parallel, which was the toit. northern edge of Spanish holdings in West Florida and demanded that the new nation

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exactly sure just where those Florida (which the United States did not acquire finally The western limits ran until 1819) Spain held the on to the headwaters of the Mississippi, to the 31st all nations got navigation rights

In return the British

independence, the fisheries, and half he Great Lakes."

guarantee legitimate private and public debts contracted before 1775, and insisted that reparations be paid to the thousands of Loyalists whose lands and goods had been seized during the war. On the first matter, after some demur, the Americans agreed, Adams, self-righteous as ever, asserting "we have no notion of Cheating anybody." But repaying the hated Loyalists was more than the commissioners could bring themselves to do. Adroitly they reiterated that the property had been seized by individual, semiautonomous states. The Continental Congress, which had no effective power to tax, also had no authority to force restitution. The British kept pressing, until finally Franklin noted that if individual Loyalists were to be recompensated for war damage done them, it would only be fair for the British to recompense individual patriots for the damage done them by Loyalist and Indians who had collaborated with the British Army in North America. He drew from his pocket a long ist. The British, seeing themselves once more confounded by Yankee bookkeeping, figuratively groaned. Eventually they recompensed, and relocated the Loyalists themselves. The

In London the agreement met with noisy criticism. In February 1783, the Parliament rewarded Shelburne by turning out his government. But so eager was everyone to have the matter over and done, that they passed his treaty anyway. In Paris the American peace commissioners were uneasy about what the Congress would say about those totally disobeyed instructions. But not too worried. As Laurens put it, "I cannot think our country will hang their ministers merely for their simplicity in being cheated into

final text said that the

government should "earnestly recommend" restitution to

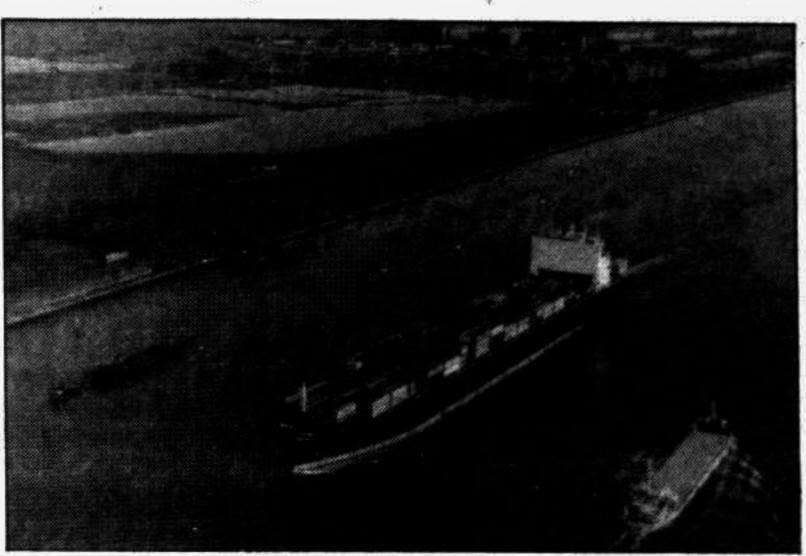
Loyalists.

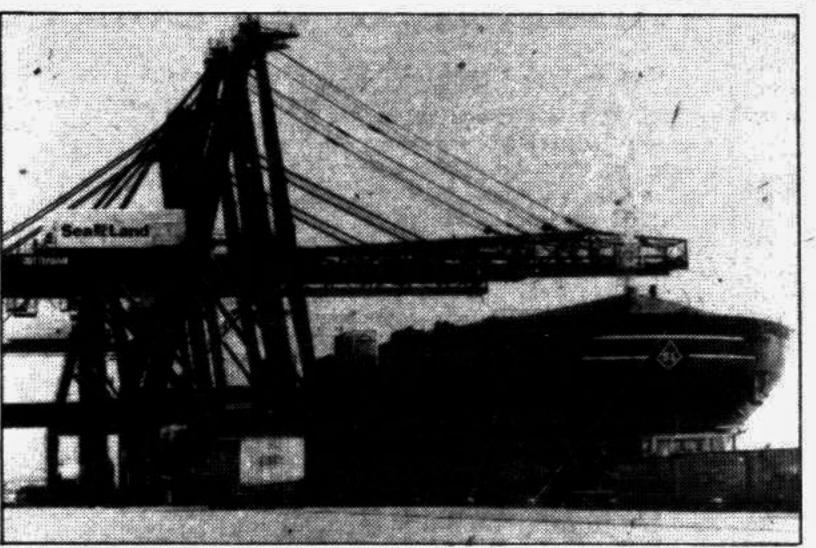
So it proved. The Congress did reprimand the peace commissioners, but on April 15, 1783, ratified their preliminary agreement. There was no peace, though, officially until September 3, when the terms worked out with the British were agreed upon, without a single change, in the Treaty of Paris.

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