

Seated by a campfire near Newark, New Jersey, Paine started work on an appeal to the people in this hour of crisis. When he was finished, he rushed to Philadelphia and published in the *Pennsylvania Journal* of December 19, 1776, his *Crisis I*, and almost immediately it was issued in three pamphlet editions. His opening words in these days of adversity, "These are the times that try men's souls," rang out like a bugle and heartened the little band of patriots left with Washington. The soldiers who heard the words of Paine's great document—Washington ordered it read to his men—were inspired to face the foes, a blizzard and the swift current of the Delaware River on Christmas Eve and achieve the victory at Trenton which gave the Americans new courage.

Between 1776 and 1783 Paine published thirteen numbered essays and three extra numbers of *The Crisis* papers, each one signed "Common Sense." All were perfectly timed and perfectly adapted to the needs of the time. Did Lord Howe issue a proclamation urging Americans to negotiate a peace? Paine immediately answered him, exposed his proposal and attacked his Tory sympathizers in America. Did the Conway Cabal seek to oust Washington? Paine rushed to press to counteract this conspiracy. Did England send over a Commission for the purpose of winning the Americans away from the French? Paine issued a *Crisis* pamphlet which thoroughly ridiculed the negotiated peace overtures and was influential in compelling the Commission to return to England empty-handed. Was there a danger that the war would be lost because of financial difficulties? Paine published his *Crisis Extraordinary* to prove that it would cost more to submit than to support the war financially. "Can it then be a question," he concluded after estimating the costs of defending the country and governing it after the war as two and three-quarters millions sterling, "whether it is better to raise two millions to defend the country, and govern it ourselves, and only three quarters of a million afterwards, or pay six millions to have it conquered and let the enemy govern it?" Finally, did it appear that the American victory would be rendered valueless by the absence of a strong union? Paine reminded the people that they could not help but "be strongly impressed with the advantage, as well as the necessity of strengthening that happy union which has been our salvation."

Reprinted in most of the northern papers and in some of those in the South, the *Crisis* enormously aided the American cause and contributed to no small extent to ultimate victory. George Washington, Robert Morris, and Robert R. Livingston wrote early in 1782 that Paine