Early America's Diplomatic Response to the Barbary Corsair Problem

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Early Attempts at a Moroccan-American Alliance

In December of 1777, the Emperor of Morocco, Sidi Muhammad, recognized independence of America. In 1779, Franklin reported back to Congress in a letter informing them that the Sultan was asking why "we had never sent to thank him for being the first Power on this Side of the Atlantick, that had acknowledged our Independence, and opened his Ports to us"[1] Unfortunately, Congress was too preoccupied with domestic issues to reflect on foreign affairs, and for several years there existed a lack of American reciprocation to the Emperor's well-wishes.

Things began to change on May 12, 1784, when Congress passed instructions to the ministers plenipotentiary who would be appointed to negotiate treaties of commerce. To those ministers conducting relations with the Barbary states, Congress requested that they should attempt to enter into treaties of amity, or of amity and commerce, with Morocco and the Regencies of Algiers, Tunis, and Tripoli, that would last for at least ten years. Though "the occupations of the war, and distance of our situation have prevented our meeting [the sultan's] friendship so early as we wished," Congress told its new foreign ministers to communicate to the Emperor of Morocco the appreciation Congress expressed for his early recognition of the country's independence and his readiness to come into alliance with them.[2] This resolution appointed Franklin, Jefferson, and Adams significant power in leading the negotiations with

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[1] Roberts, H. Priscilla, and Richard S. Roberts, *Thomas Barclay (1728-1793): Consul in France, Diplomat in Barbary*. (Bethlehem: Lehigh UP, 2008.) 199.

[2] Jefferson, Thomas. "Instructions To The Ministers Plenipotentiary Appointed To Negotiate Treaties of Commerce With The European Nations" Approved by Congress, 7 May, 1784. As Published In: Saul K. Padover, *The Complete Jefferson: Containing His Major Writings, Published and Unpublished, Except His Letters* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1943) 179-180.

all foreign powers. This was America's first step in setting up negotiation channels with foreign nations, but Congress again failed to specifically appoint a minister to conduct negotiations with the Barbary states.

The Emperor of Morocco was tired of being ignored, and so he decided to send a message to the Americans. On October 11, 1784, Captain James Erwin of the *Betsey* and his crew were captured by frigate captain Ahmad Turki as they left the Spanish port of Cadiz.[3] A notice was swiftly sent out by Giuseppe Chiappe to the foreign consuls stationed in Tangier that "His Imperial Majesty (may God preserve him) has instructed me to write to you that he is at peace with all Christian Nations, but in as much as the Americans have not sent anyone to sign a peace treaty with His Majesty or even a counsel as all the other leaders have done, He has decided to detain the American vessel brought in by one of our corsairs until someone comes representing the United States of America, and peace is subsequently concluded, when the vessel and cargo will be returned."[4] When news of the ship's capture arrived at ports, insurance rates on American freight soared from 1.5 percent to 25 percent. It was a long two months after the *Betsey* was captured that the news finally arrived to Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and Thomas Jefferson, who were stationed in Europe to conduct treaty negotiations.[5] To this news, Jefferson responded:

> *"Our trade to Portugal, Spain, [and] the Mediterranean is annihilated unless we do something decisive … Tribute or war is the usual alternative of these pirates … Why not begin a navy then and decide on war?"*[6]

Nothing decisive was done on the matter, however, until February of 1785. John Lamb was a commercial businessman who proactively approached Samuel Huntington, Governor of Connecticut, with a plan that he would travel to the Barbary coast and conduct negotiations on behalf of the United States if he received the Congressional authorization to do so. In his letter of approval to John Jay, Governor Huntington spoke on Lamb's behalf that he had "made several voyages to those Parts before the late War and resided considerable time in that country." The plan was presented to Congress

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[3] Roberts, 23.
[4] ibid, 201.
[5] ibid, 23.
[6] Jefferson, Thomas. Letter to Horatio Gates. 13 Dec. 1784. As Published in: Priscilla and Roberts, 25.

and endorsed by Congressional Secretary for Foreign Affairs John Jay, and Congress authorized $80,000 to be spent on the procurement of treaties with the four Barbary states.[7] Jay sent the instructions to Jefferson and Adams on March 11, 1785. John Adams first learned of this development from a piece of correspondence he received in May, but throughout the summer Jefferson and Adams were forced to anxiously await the arrival of both Lamb and the instructions from John Jay. Mr. Lamb finally arrive in France in September, where it was discovered that he had received Congress's official approval and a half-hearted letter of recommendation from John Jay.[8] John Jay's letter stated that Lamb had been sent to fill the position of Plenipotentiary to the dey of Algiers and the Emperor of Morocco. In Lamb's extended absence, however, Thomas Jefferson and John Adams had already found a replacement for negotiations with Morocco in Thomas Barclay, America's French Consul.

On June 9, 1785, at the conclusion of a diplomatic mission between Spain and Morocco, the Spanish ambassador requested the release of the *Betsey* and its crew. The crew was freed and reported no ill harm by the captors. Once released, they traveled to Spain alongside the Spanish diplomats before setting sail to the United States.[9] Fortunately, this capture of an American ship, which instigated America to seek negotiations with the Barbary nations, was the only instance of Moroccan corsairs ever abducting an American vessel. While the Spaniards had played a significant role in releasing these captive in 1785, direct peace negotiations between the Moroccans and Americans would not commence until 1786.

Negotiations Commence

Jefferson and Adams waited several months for Lamb's arrival, and meanwhile sought out a replacement for the delayed ambassador. By August, they agreed that the French consul general, Thomas Barclay, would do well in the position.[10] Barclay was an Irish immigrant who begun his career in America in 1761 as a Philadelphia store owner and

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[7] Richard B. Parker, *Uncle Sam in Barbary: A Diplomatic History.* (New York: University of Florida, 2004) 37.

[8] Jefferson, Thomas. Letter to John Adams. 24 Sept, 1785. As Published In: Cappon, Lester J., ed. *The Adams-Jefferson Letters.* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1959) 65 – 67.

[9] Roberts, 201.

[10] Adams, John. Letter to Theo. Jefferson. 23 Aug. 1785; published in: Cappon, 56-57.

shipping merchant. He was called into service by Congress in 1781 as an assistant to the French Consul General, and when the man never showed, Barclay took the initiative to appoint himself to the position so that diplomacy could continue.[11] For the newest mission to Morocco, Jefferson and Adams paired Thomas Barclay with a very skilled secretary by the name of Colonel Franks, who spoke English, French, and some Spanish.[12] Knowing that Morocco's emperor needed reciprocation, Thomas Barclay used his Congressional money to purchase Sidi Muhammad with a variety of unique gifts, which included fabrics, unusually designed clocks in the shape of a birdcage and the Temple of Athena, and a world atlas.[13]

In September of 1786, the Moroccan emperor signed a commerce treaty with the United States as it had been drafted by Jefferson, with minor changes made to just four of the twenty-nine headings of Jefferson's original document. In all, Barclay left with a treaty in hand after just four weeks in Marrakech, the majority of which was spent waiting on the work of translators and calligraphers.[14] It was secured for a total cost of $19,000, which was less than the full amount that Congress had authorized for the endeavor.[15] Congress was pleased by the treaty and ratified it on July 18, 1787. [16]

Even more impressive was the fact that America was required to pay no tribute to the Moroccan sultan, and it was the only country that had this honor. After successfully negotiating with Morocco, the Americans had high hopes for similar success with the other three Barbary states.

The Algerian Threat

On September 3, 1783, Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay had signed the Treaty of Paris with England accepting peace and recognizing the independence of the United States. Treaties were also signed with the French, Spanish and Dutch recognizing the new

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[11] Roberts, 32 – 80.
[12] Theo Jefferson. Letter to John Adams. 4 Sept. 1785; published in: Cappon, 58-59.
[13] Roberts, 187; Roberts, 209.
[14] Roberts, 211
[15] Jefferson, Thomas. "Report Relative To the Mediterranean Trade" to Congress. Dec 28, 1790. As Published In: Saul K. Padover, *The Complete Jefferson: Containing His Major Writings, Published and Unpublished, Except His Letters* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1943), 204.
[16] Roberts, 222.

;nation's independence.[17] One consequence of these treaties was that American vessels were officially no longer protected under the treaties made between the British and the Barbary states. Fortunately for United States sailors, news traveled slowly to Algiers. According to the American captive James Cathcart, it was in two years later, in June of 1785, that the newly-arrived British consul Charles Logie informed the Algerian government of America's independence, leading to a speedy Algerian decision to begin capturing American vessels. A corsair expedition left on June 30 in search of Portuguese and American cargo, and eventually captured the schooner *Maria* on July 25 and the *Dauphin* on August 1, along with a total of twenty-one American crewmen.[18] With this development, the need for successful negotiations in Algiers became increasingly important.

Mr. Lamb was an odd choice for the job. Having been recommended by Governor Huntington of Connecticut, Lamb received ambiguous praise from John Jay in his accompanying letter to Jefferson and Adams. Furthermore, his claimed expertise in the Barbary

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[17] ibid, 128.

[18] Cathcart, James L. *The Captives, Eleven Years a Prisoner in Algiers.* Comp. J. B. Newkirk. La Porte, IN: Herald Print, 1899. As Published In: Paul Michel Baepler, *White Slaves, African Masters: an Anthology of American Barbary Captivity Narratives* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1999) 106-107.

states relied entirely on mule and horse transactions that occurred in the port of Tangiers prior to the American Revolution.[19] He had no prior knowledge of Algiers, Tunis, or Tripoli, and he spoke only English in a job that ideally required familiarity of French, Spanish, and Italian. Congressman Charles Pinkney later publicly declared him to be "not a sober man but of a Loose character unfit for that purpose, that he was surprised that Congress appointed such a person."[20] Still, Jefferson and Adams were not knowledgeable of much of this at the time, and they had waited so long for Lamb's arrival that they did not risk inquiring to Congress to see if a more suitable representative could be found. Suspicious of Lamb, they found Paul Randall, to be his clerk, and it was decided that all letters sent to them must have Randall's signature placed on them.[21]

There was little precedence to rely on when estimating how much the ransom of the twenty-one captives would cost. Based on his knowledge of a deal made by the French Trinitarian Order a few years prior to purchase three hundred captives, Jefferson supposed that it would similarly cost $200 a person to ransom the American captives. He failed to take into account that the size of the groups and the difference in political circumstances might create a large variation in price. The French had purchased the freedom of three-hundred men in bulk, whereas the Americans were seeking a smaller and thus costlier-per-person purchase of twenty-one men. Furthermore, the Spanish had just completed negotiations after a long war with Algiers, where they reportedly paid over $3 million in treaties, ransoms, and tributes.[22] This not only meant that the dey expected similarly high prices in future deals, but also that that supply of slaves was now less than normal in Algiers and thus slaves were becoming increasingly valuable. As Jefferson would later acknowledge in 1790, it was "[Algerian] peace with Spain [that] reduced the profits of their Mediterranean cruise below the expense of equipment."[23] James Cathcart further mentions in his captivity narrative that British Consul Logie, known for his anti-American sentiments, was suspected of consulting with the dey to make

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[19] Parker, 37.
[20] Parker, 54.
[21] Adams, John. "Letter to Thomas Jefferson". 2 Oct, 1785; published in: Cappon, 76.
[22] Parker, 57.
[23] "Report Relative To the Mediterranean Trade" to Congress. Dec 28, 1790. As published in Padover, 208.

Algerian-American negotiations as difficult as possible.[24] Lamb himself estimated that the ransom would be no less than $1,200 per person, and while he was more realistic than Jefferson, he too had underestimated the high price of purchasing back captives.[25]

Lamb and Randall arrived in Algiers by way of Spain on March 25, 1786. By March 29, before meeting with the dey, Lamb sent Randall to bring to Jefferson Lamb's discouraging assessment of the situation, a sign that the former was very eager to rid himself of the latter. Lamb met with the dey four times during his stay in Algiers. According to the captives, Lamb began by offering $10,000 for the ransoms, and later raised his price to $30,000, an offer which he was not authorized to make. Meanwhile, the dey's counter-offer was much too high, but in their meeting on April 17 the dey lowered his price $59,496.[26] The breakdown is seen below:

$6,000 per captain	3	$18,000
$4,000 per mate	2	$8,000
$4,000 per passenger	2	$8,000
$1,400 per seaman	14	$19,600
subtotal		$53,600
Plus the dey's 11 percent cut		$5,896
Total		$59,496

There is controversy as to whether or not Lamb agreed to this price. Though Lamb's letters to Jefferson do not indicate that he did, both the Algerians and the American captives believed that he had accepted the offer, and it was widely rumored that Lamb would return in four months with the necessary money. Lamb left Algiers on April 20, less than a month after he arrived, having made little progress toward a successful negotiation. Jefferson required that Lamb immediately report back to Congress to give an update on his work, but Lamb traveled for another year before deciding to appear before Congress asking for repayment for the aid he had personally provided to the American captives.[27] Unsure of what to do, Congress approved his reimbursement.

Lamb's unsuccessful attempts at a peace treaty led Americans to shift their focus from negotiating a treaty to freeing the American

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[24] Cathcart, 106.
[25] Parker, 50.
[26] ibid, 52.
[27] ibid, 54.

captives. The captives were stripped of their clothing, given small food rations, and often beaten for perceived insubordination. Within Algiers, slaves were also held in several prisons, including one that also housed the lions and tigers that would break free and kill several slaves.[28] James Cathcart, an American captured on the *Maria* in 1785, describes the sleeping conditions in one of the prisons:

> "[Slaves sleep in square frames one over another, four deep, … swarming with myriads of vermin of all sorts, many nearly naked and few with anything more than a tattered blanket to cover them in the depth of winter…"[29]

Some of the American captives endured better conditions assigned to the dey's palace, while others were given the dangerous job of performing large-scale public works projects. To make their bad situation worse, plague struck Algiers from 1787– 1788, and again in 1793 – 1794. Of the crew from the *Dauphin*, seven of the fourteen would die of plague before they could be rescued.[30] Others among the men were more fortunate, as five of the twenty-one American captives were redeemed early either by friends or by the Dutch.[31] Seven of the twenty-one men who had originally been aboard the *Dauphin* and *Maria* in 1785 were still awaiting general redemption a decade later. Additionally, Algiers began aggressively capturing American vessels in 1793. Four ships, five brigs, and two schooners were captured in October and November of 1793, which generated an added 110 American captives.[32] These men would also learn that tough lives awaited them in Algiers.

Adams Meets With the Tripolitan Ambassador

In February of 1786, the Tripolitan ambassador arrived in London to meet with John Adams. In a pipe-smoking session between the two men, the ambassador exacted thirty thousand guineas for peace with Tripoli, and an equal sum for Tunis. In a 1790 report to Congress, Jefferson explained that Adams had refused the offer, both because "these demands were beyond the limits of Congress" and "[for as long] as Algiers remained hostile, the peace of Tunis and Tripoli was of no

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[28] Cathcart, 128.
[29] ibid, 127.
[30] Parker, 209.
[31] ibid, 209.
[32] ibid, 210 – 213.

value."[33] Also, while Adams was attempting negotiations with the ambassador, the ambassador stated that Tripoli was at war with America. Surprised, Adams asked what injury America had inflicted on Tripoli to cause this war, and the ambassador's reply was that without a treaty of peace with Tripoli, a nation was to be considered at war with Tripoli.[34]

Barclay Returns to Morocco

In the summer of 1790, American newspapers received reports of the death of Moroccan sultan Sidi Muhammad.[35] Thomas Jefferson, who had just accepted his new post as Secretary of State in February, understood the importance of sending an ambassador to meet with the new leader of Morocco in order to get the old treaty officially recognized. He turned to none other than Thomas Barclay for the job. Though Barclay was ill and still had yet to receive payment for his previous mission to Morocco, he accepted the assignment in March of 1791.[36] Barclay's mission was delayed when his creditors filed a lawsuit against him, which he finalized in June by declaring bankruptcy. Thomas Jefferson worried about the effect this delay would have, but he chose to wait on Barclay rather than find a replacement. The matter resolved itself relatively quickly, and on July 26, 1791, Thomas Barclay began his return to Morocco.[37]

Bad fortunes prevented Barclay from reaching Gibraltar until December, but that wasn't a big deal since Morocco was still without established leadership when he arrived. Sidi Mohammad's son Mawlay al-Yasid had been declared sultan, but the city of Marrakech rebelled and chose another of Mohammad's eleven sons, Mawlay Hisham, to rule the kingdom.[38] Mawlay al-Yazid defeated Mawlay Hisham's army in Marrakech, and punished those who had supported his opponent. However, he died in February, 1792 from complications from a battle injury. His death was positive from an American perspective, for "had he lived to see himself cleared of all his domestic enemies, he would have turned his chief views to the Establishment of a Navy and made War

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[33] "Report Relative To the Mediterranean Trade" to Congress. Dec 28, 1790. As published in: Padover, 204

[34] Adams, John. "Letter to Thomas Jefferson." Feb 17, 1784; published in Cappon, 121.

[35] Roberts, 257.

[36] ibid, 258.

[37] ibid, 259.

[38] ibid, 261.

with every Christian power without exception."[39] However, Mawlay al-Yazid's death led to the pronouncement of two other brothers as sultan. The situation seemed to have no conclusion as Thomas Barclay followed the events throughout 1792. On December 24, Barclay was called away from Morocco by letters from George Washington establishing him as the person to negotiate peace with Algiers and ransom the American captives there. The mission had been approved in the Spring of 1792, and assigned to Admiral John Paul Jones with a budget of $100,000 for peace, $13,500 in annual tribute, and $27,000 in ransom.[40] Jones died in Paris mid-summer, and Secretary of State Jefferson had already prepared the messenger with back-up documents for Thomas Barclay if Jones could not accept the mission.[41] Barclay died in Lisbon on January 19, 1793, the first American diplomat to die in a foreign country in the service of the United States.[42]

The political situation in Morocco settled down in 1794 when Moroccan leader Mawlay Suleman emerged with a fleet that was worthy of America's attention. James Simpson, American consul to Gibraltar and English merchant, was given orders to negotiate with Mawlay Suleman. A son of Sidi Muhammad, Mawlay Suleman remembered his father as a friend of the Americans, and gave a written declaration that he too would leave American vessels in peace.[43] This renewal of Sidi Mohammad's peace treaty would give rise to a tradition of friendly relations between the nations of Morocco and the United States that has lasted ever since.

Second Attempts for Negotiations in Algiers

While diplomacy was prospering in Morocco, the situation in Algiers was deteriorating. Many of the captives of the *Maria* and *Dauphin* still remained in Algiers. In 1792, Congress had authorized the use of $40,000 for an Algerian peace treaty and $40,000 for the ransoms, plus an additional $25,000 annual payment for the continuance of the peace treaty.[44] This was the mission that both John Paul Jones and later Thomas Barclay had been selected for but had both died prior to filling

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[39] ibid, 261.
[40] Frank Lambert. *Barbary Wars: American Independence in the Atlantic World*. (New York: Hill and Wang, 2005) 73.
[41] Roberts, 264.
[42] ibid, 264.
[43] ibid, 266.
[44] Parker, 69.

the appointment. For some reason, in his instructions to the two men, Jefferson lowered the maximum treaty expenditure to $25,000 and the ransoms to $27,000.[45] When news of Barclay's death reached America, Jefferson appointed David Humphreys to choose the replacement.

Around this same time, the Portuguese and Algerians developed a truce that allowed the Algerians to safely travel into the waters of the Atlantic. For the Portuguese, this meant that they could spend less on their navy, and for the Algerians, this allowed them to prey more easily on American shipping vessels. They wasted no time on the plan when the Portuguese-Algerian truce went into effect September 12, 1793. By early November, before news of the truce could be spread to American seamen in the Mediterranean, the Algerians had already captured eleven sailing vessels and one hundred and ten American crewmen.[46] Further exacerbating the problem was British consul to Algiers, Charles Logie. Forever an enemy to America, Logie encouraged the truce between Portugal and Algiers, and a captive working the dey's palace claimed to have overheard Logie telling Algerian corsairs where several American ships were located.[47] David Humphreys' secretary described Logie by saying,

> "The known and immediate agent in this infernal conspiracy against the peace and prosperity is at this instant walking in the garden beneath my window with all the apparent composure and self-complacency that can be inspired by successful villainy."[48] – Captain Cutting, April 15, 1794.

James Cathcart, the American captive who later chronicled his account of Algerian events, similarly despised Logie for the consul's passionate dislike of Americans. Logie used American captives as housekeepers in his house, "where they remained suffering every indignity that inhumanity could devise to render their situation humiliating in the extreme."[49] Though reports of Logie's role in constructing the Portuguese-Algerian truce are conflicting, it can be easily assumed that he did play a part in convincing the Algerian dey, with whom he was very friendly, to target in on American vessels in the Atlantic.

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[45] ibid, 69.
[46] ibid, 75.
[47] ibid, 77.
[48] ibid, 78 – 79.
[49] Cathcart, 113.

It was under these unfavorable circumstances the David Humphreys arrived safely in Alicante despite risking his safety by traveling across open Mediterranean Sea. Humphreys asked the Swedish consul general in Morocco to present his request for a meeting with the dey. The Swedish consul's brother Erik Sköldebrand was decided to be the best person for the task, and he reported back to Humphreys that the dey "would not make peace with the Americans, … at any price whatsoever… 'If I were to make peace with every body, what should I do with my corsairs?"[50] Peace negotiations were already occurring with the Netherlands and Portugal, and the dey astutely knew that he had to keep a balance between nations at which he could extract large sums in exchange for peace, and nations for which his men could plunder for valuable cargo and slave labor. [51] The dey also reminded Sköldebrand that the Americans had tried making peace earlier, but that Lamb had not finished the negotiations he had started with the dey's predecessor, and that seven years had passed since that encounter. The Algerian corsairs began another expedition in November hoping to find another several American ships, but convoys of Spanish and Portuguese ships prevented the success of the mission.[52]

Congress began quickly passing measures that would prevent future pirate attacks. In January of 1794, Congress narrowly passed a bill to create a small navy to defend against piracy, and would later approve this army to be comprised of six frigates.[53] In August, a letter arrived from Secretary of State Edmund Randolph that spelled out the President's terms for carrying out negotiations. Peace and ransom were both desired, but that Humphreys should accept if ransoms were offered and peace refused. The ransoms should not be obtained for higher than $3,000 a captive, and that Humphreys had an $800,000 limit on settling the terms for peace, ransom, and tribute.[54] This set of guidelines was not at all like the restrictive instructions Thomas Jefferson had sent to Lamb, Barclay, or John Paul Jones in earlier years, but it allowed more flexibility in which the ambassador could achieve his objectives. Sköldebrand had suggested that ransom could be purchased for under $700,000, so the treaty should have concluded quickly. Before Humphreys received his letter of instructions from Edmund Randolph,

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[50] Parker, 81 – 82.
[51] ibid, 82.
[52] ibid, 84.
[53] ibid, 91.
[54] ibid, 92 – 93.

he headed off for Madrid for unknown reasons. This decision would cause the American captives to wait another year before they could regain their freedom.

Humphreys would return to the region in May of 1795 with Washington's appointed consul to Tripoli and Tunis, Joseph Donaldson, and his assistant, Philip Sloan, who had himself been an American captive from the *Dauphin* before receiving an early release.[55] Humphreys required a stop in Paris though, so he sent Donaldson and Sloan ahead to Algiers without him. By early October of 1785, Donaldson and Sloan had completed the treaty with the help of James Cathcart, who had found himself as a clerk to the dey of Algiers through good fortune.[56] Using his influence, Cathcart convinced the dey that making peace with the Americans was in fact more valuable than peace with Holland, because America could provide naval stores that would give Algiers some independence from relying on Scandinavian supplies, and in turn Algiers would now be free to attack those more profitable countries if it desired. Furthermore, peace with the Americans would stop the need for the Americans to build up a navy in self-defense.[57] According to Cathcart's journal, the dey was moved by these arguments and Cathcart's further negotiations between the two nations. Lacking alternative sources describing the negotiations, Cathcart's account must be viewed with skepticism since it provides a lofty role for himself in the negotiations, when it is possible that he was just a minor figure. Regardless of who played what role in the negotiations, the dey initially offered peace at a cost of $2,247,000. Donaldson was distraught by this large sum, but Cathcart and Sköldebrand convinced him that the dey would accept a lower offer. Donaldson proposed $543,000. The dey responded with $982,000, and after more haggling the Americans finally secured a deal for $585,000.[58]

The treaty had finally been negotiated after over a decade of effort, and it was no easy feat. The Americans agreed to pay the Algerians $585,000, which was over nine percent of federal expenditures for the year 1795. The Algerians did not accept cash payments, and this was a large amount of money to be accumulated in gold. Humphreys had set sail to Paris to acquire this gold, but political tensions had caused large stockpiles to be sent to London and had wiped Paris out of its gold

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[55] ibid, 94.
[56] ibid, 96.
[57] Cathcart, 146.
[58] Parker, 99 – 103.

supplies. After trying for a long time to find a bank that would lend the Americans the gold, they lucked into a newly-arrived French consul in Algiers who had transferred hundreds of thousands of dollars of gold into the country. After haggling over exchange rates with the Jewish Bank in Algiers, the Americans had obtained the gold needed to purchase the captives' freedom.[59] A plague was spreading in Algiers at the time, so the men were quickly whisked away on the British ship *Fortune* in August of 1797.[60] For the men on the Maria and Dauphin, this was the end of twelve years in captivity, while most of the men had spent a more reasonable three-and-a-half. The unanticipated costs of the treaty, in addition to the struggle to find gold creditors, pushed the final cost of the treaty up to $992,463.25, nearly double what Cathcart and Donaldson had negotiated for. According to the 1797 Secretary of the Treasury, the treaty's total cost accounted for 12 percent of America's federal expenditures for the year.[61] The treaty cost twenty times as much as the $49,496 it would have in 1785, and it caused a decade more of slavery for the first American captives. Though the treaty was expensive, most Americans felt it was worth the cost to free fellow countrymen from captivity and establish safe commerce with Algiers. Furthermore, this finalized treaty was an important early success in our country's diplomatic history.

Conclusion

During these early years of American history, foreign policy makers were faced with a difficult situation. The young nation was not wealthy enough to pay the high tributes that Spain or Britain could afford. The nation did not begin formal foreign diplomacy with any nations until the Treaty of Paris in 1783 and the 1784 "Instructions To The Ministers Plenipotentiary Appointed To Negotiate Treaties of Commerce With the European Nations", a document which Jefferson wrote and Congress approved that granted Jefferson, Adams, and Franklin as important decision-making power. Until 1787, Congress lacked the legitimacy and proper funding to conduct foreign affairs under the Articles of Confederation. Jefferson and Adams had limited experience to base their judgments off of and little authority to stray from the instructions of the fledgling Congress.

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[59] ibid, 120.
[60] ibid, 122.
[61] ibid, 112.

The creation of the Constitution provided a long-term solution to Congressional problems, but the transition from one government structure to another left many foreign diplomatic posts unfilled for years at a time. Madrid was the only foreign city to have non-stop American diplomatic representation from 1785 to 1795, and it was increasingly difficult to find representatives knowledgeable and willing enough to travel to Muslim countries to negotiate peace treaties and prisoner ransoms.[62]

Personalities played a large part in the successes and failures of peace negotiations between American and Morocco and Algiers. Barclay's Puritan work ethic and Sidi Mohammad's love of America helped their respective countries work out a quick and painless negotiation. Lamb's overconfidence, lack of follow-through, and leisurely travel pace, combined with British consul Charles Logie's personal dislike of America and close friendship with the dey of Algiers greatly hindered Algerian-American negotiations. Negotiations could only occur as fast as eighteenth-century transportation would allow, causing diplomats to be stuck in a location for months and appointment nominees to not learn of the news until almost a year later. Bankruptcies, deaths, and even actions so small as John Adams's failure to make a hand-written copy of Jefferson's draft of the Moroccan treaty would hold up the already painstakingly slow diplomatic process.

Furthermore, while European nations were protected by the great expanse of the Mediterranean sea, by virtue of geography American ships were an easy target since they "all enter[ed] at a strait only five leagues wide; so that [Algerine] cruisers, taking a safe and commanding position near the strait's mouth, may very effectually inspect whatever enter[ed] it."[63]

Still, despite these numerous setbacks, America impressively stood up for itself. The young nation created a peace treaty with Morocco that required no annual tribute, and it successfully concluded its first national security hostage situation. As American diplomats gained experience negotiating with Barbary leaders from 1785 - 1795, they gained a better understanding of the piracy culture and developed a sense of urgency in defending Americans. This imminent danger pushed America to establish a basic navy that would prepare it to take a decisive military stand when the next Barbary crisis arose.

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[62] ibid, 68.

[63] "Report Relative To the Mediterranean Trade" to Congress. Dec 28, 1790. As published in: Padover, 205.

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