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# The Word 'Treason' And Our Example

**SENATOR BARRY GOLDWATER** of Arizona came off as an arch-conservative in the 1964 Presidential campaign, but he has since worked with some success at appearing as an objective statesman.

The other day in a trivial fuss involving wire-tapping and Henry Kissinger, the Senator lost his cool and said the news media's handling of the affair was "almost treason."

For anybody who doesn't like something, the word "treason" is the big shocker, so let us see what it is, using the most famous American example of it. Of course, we heard all about it at school, but were too young to absorb the detail, and only detail will convey to us the depth of the treachery.



Major General Benedict Arnold was badly treated by the Continental Congress, and was an embittered man. He married a disloyal Philadelphia society belle, Peggy Shippen. General Washington was caught in the middle, and tried to ameliorate Arnold's rancor by assigning him to command of West Point in 1780.

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**THE FORTRESS** was the key to the American war. If the British had it, controlling the Hudson, they could divide the colonials and probably end the revolution.

For over a year Arnold had been toying with treason, in cautious communication with agents of Sir Henry Clinton, British commander on Manhattan. Within a week he was in direct correspondence with Sir Henry. His wife knew most of the story.

The plot: Arnold would surrender the Point after a token resistance, and once in the British lines would be richly rewarded by the British Crown. Sir Henry sent British Major John Andre to arrange the turnover.

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**ANDRE REACHED** the Point in mufti, hence was a spy. Arnold gave him maps and his plans for the fake surrender. Fortunately, the British sloop which was to receive him dropped downriver, and Andre had to ride a spell.

In timbered country near Tarrytown, three colonial irregulars stopped Andre, wouldn't buy his story as an innocent traveler. They found the damning papers in his boot, and delivered him to a Continental colonel.

Washington was riding upriver with an appointment to meet Arnold. No Arnold, who had been informed of Andre's capture and ducked. While Washington rode on to West Point, Arnold finally reached British naval sanctuary.

Peggy Arnold put on a fainting act, and Washington was most solicitous. It took a day for the pieces to fall into place. Washington never learned the full story of the conspiracy. He was long dead when Sir Henry's papers were released from British Army archives.

Arnold was given a few small raiding commands, then went to England. Honest Englishmen scorned him, but the King gave him 6000 pounds when he asked for 20,000. Arnold died forgotten in his chosen land.

Years later the Constitution defined the crime: "Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." That's what Benedict Arnold did. The definition is recommended to those who use the term casually.

June 19, 1974