

16. London's Jacobin terror

On July 14, 1789, it is believed, the French Revolution was launched with the storming of the Bastille by the sans-coulottes of Paris. Such leaders as the Marquis de Lafayette, who had returned to France from the newly founded United States of America where he had fought in the American War of Independence with George Washington, hoped that the ideas of freedom and progress of the American Revolution would be transplanted to France and thence to all of Europe. But, by 1792, Lafayette was forced to flee France for his life. By 1793, Thomas Paine, the leading propagandist for the French-American alliance that had won the American War of Independence, was imprisoned in Paris; and Antoine Lavoisier, the chemist whose work had provided the ammunition for the American war, had been beheaded by a "people's judge" who pronounced, "The Revolution has no need of science."

The Revolution had devolved into terror, the final result of which was the emergence of Napoleon Bonaparte and the bitter defeat of European republicanism, with the 1815 Congress of Vienna presiding over a defeated France.

The secret to how this disaster occurred, can be found in the 1789 storming of the Bastille itself. Far from being an act of heroism, the mob that released the 18 or so petty criminals imprisoned in the Bastille were hirelings paid by the Duke of Orleans and led by Georges Jacques Danton, a paid agent of the same duke. The idea was to crush the plans then in progress by the Bourbon King Louis XVI, Thomas Paine, and the Marquis de Lafayette, to create a constitutional monarchy in philosophical and strategic alliance with the United States.

For years the disgruntled House of Orleans had been funded by the British imperial firm, the Barings, as London's fifth column within France. The Duke de Orleans had built up a considerable capability from his position as the Grand Master of the Paris Freemason Lodge of the Nine Sisters, the headquarters for the opposition to the *ancien régime*. It was also the center for the popularization of the anti-American ideas of John Locke's radical empiricism and the *laissez-faire* of Adam Smith in France.

Friends of the American Revolution targeted

Among the Barings-Orleans key agents on the ground was Georges Jacques Danton, leader of the mob that stormed the Bastille. The institutionalization of terror as a primary feature of the French Revolution begins with Danton, who organized the Cordeliers Club to direct the enraged Paris mob against

any group or person who fought for the principles of the American Revolution. According to its charter, the purpose of the club was "to denounce before the tribunal of public opinion the abuses of the various authorities and every sort of infringement of the rights of man . . . to protect the oppressed and redress abuses . . . to exercise vigilance, examine the actions of others, and to act." It was under Danton's and later Robespierre's reign of terror in 1793-94, that the mass murder of the Jacobin Terror was carried out, and the French Revolution discredited.

Although Danton was deployed directly by the Duke of Orleans, the ideological godfather of the terror was Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), the British utilitarian philosopher and first chief of the British Foreign Office intelligence. Bentham owed his career to William Petty, Lord Shelburne, the Marquess of Lansdowne (1737-1805), who served as the Minister of Colonial Affairs, and briefly, as prime minister, during the period of the negotiation and ratification of the Treaty of Paris between the new United States and Britain. Under Shelburne's sponsorship, Bentham ran a "radical writers' " workshop, which prepared many of the inflammatory texts Danton and his minions circulated in Paris.

According to documents still on display at the British Museum, both Danton and Jean Paul Marat, were agents of Bentham, in the pay of the British East India Company.

Bentham, who reduced human nature to the "hedonistic calculus" of avoiding pain and seeking pleasure, and with Shelburne, was the case officer in ensuring that the republican ideas of the American Revolution did not spread to France. In league with the Swiss finance minister of France, Jacques Necker, they worked to ruin the French economy, which in 1789 was the industrial powerhouse of Europe, far exceeding Britain.

Throughout the course of the French Revolution, their game was to pit the Jacobin "left" against the feudalist "right" in a war against the Bourbon monarchy that had allied with the Americans.

At the height of the Jacobin terror, Maximilien Robespierre wanted to bring Bentham into France, to construct and administer Bentham's "Panopticon" ("All-Seeing Eye") scheme for "cost-effective" prison slave labor.

Their most notable deployable was that model for the *enragés*, Jean Paul Marat—the progenitor of Franz Fanon and all terrorists. He justified terrorism thusly: "Learn that my reputation with the people rests, not upon my ideas, but upon my boldness, upon the impetuous outbursts of my soul, upon my cries of rage, of despair, and of fury against the rascals. . . . I am the anger, the just anger of the people. . . . When a man lacks everything, he has the right to take what others have in superfluity. Rather than starve, he is justified in cutting another's throat, and devouring the palpitating flesh." As with today's terrorists, Marat went to London for safe haven, whenever in danger in France.