

Some Thoughts about France, the French Revolution and Marie Antoinette

By Phillip W. Weiss

The Committee's treatment of Marie Antoinette was more than just a cruel and degenerate political gesture. It revealed a glaring flaw in the national character of France – a tendency to bluster in order to cover up their inadequacy. This flaw was to figure prominently in France's numerous defeats on the battlefield. They failed under Napoleon; failed against Bismarck; forty years later had to be bailed out by the English and the Americans; in 1940 suffered one of the most decisive and humiliating defeats in history; then had to be bailed out again by the English and the Americans; and now is a has-been once-was nation stuck with a checkered past. Adolf Hitler saw right through France's bluster and played it to his fullest advantage. That Hitler felt that Paris was not even worth a one-night stay clearly showed what he thought about France. After the liberation of France, French bluster erupted in a most vile and vicious manner as the French authorities vented their rage against women who had consorted with German men at a time when France itself was consorting with Adolf Hitler. France was the only country that had signed an armistice with Hitler. Even Poland refused to capitulate. The French women bore absolutely no responsibility for France's defeat, yet they became convenient scapegoats for French anger, just like Marie Antoinette became. It is not surprising that it took a cynical Italian Corsican, who had no use for bluster, to restore a measure of France's self-respect, yet even that did not last long and he died an ignoble death. It wasn't the dictator who failed; it was the country.

Ganging up on Marie Antoinette would have been like the people of Boston rising up in righteous indignation to get rid of the manager of the Boston Red Sox after their humiliating defeat by the New York Mets in the 1986 World Series and then kicking the manager's wife solely because she was the manager's wife. But the fact is that Antoinette was beaten down, leaving her a bereaved widow with four children. She was publicly stripped of all her titles. Her humiliation was complete. She was reduced to nothing. She was defanged, declawed, condemned and excoriated. The Committee could have put her in a nunnery or exiled her to America or China or anywhere else just to get rid of her, but that would have been too humane and most un-French like as it relates to their treatment of women. So the question was: what to do with a French ex-Queen and widow for whom France had no use? The French answer was: let's spit on her, humiliate her, torment her, take away her children and then kill her. All bluster, and it continued on, way past the revolution. Even Churchill couldn't deal with the French. To this day, nobody can figure out with certainty why the French were beaten so badly by the Germans. It wasn't so much that they lost. Rather it was how they lost. Then

after the war the French arrogantly behaved like they were victors when in fact they were deadweight for the allies who had to launch a highly risky and unprecedented invasion – in bad weather – to liberate the French, not only from the Germans but from the army of French collaborators who, among other outrages, were fully responsible for deporting French citizens – their own citizens – to concentration camps. In fact, the French were lucky that their nation was still intact. True, De Gaulle did publicly thank the USA and UK for their help in saving France, but twenty years later that same gentleman, whose pomposity is legendary, would demand that the US remove its forces from France, as if the USA were the enemy. But what else could the USA expect from a country with a history of ganging up on defenseless women as matter of policy and providing a safe haven for a movie director who was a convicted child rapist. Apparently, for France, a man who has sex with a thirteen year girl is someone worthy of protection. But that's the same country that thought it was justified in killing a widow with four children, so their decision to protect a convicted rapist should not be surprising.

Now, one may argue that the France of 1792 and the France of today are not the same country. That is not so. The connection between the 1789 revolution and France of today is linear and has never been severed. Unlike Germany, which has fully renounced its Nazi past, France has never repudiated its revolutionary past nor the excesses and crimes perpetrated against its own people. For them, it's a source of pride. Bastille Day is not celebrated in a vacuum. French brutality as a political tool also set a precedent that other nations later emulated, e.g. political murder, show trials, official atheism, abuse of power, totalitarianism, and political hypocrisy. Before Hitler and Stalin there was Robespierre. It was the French who introduced terror as an instrument for political action, and it is the French who have ganged up on defenseless women when things haven't gone their way.

Documentary evidence depicting French brutality against their own women can be found at the links noted below.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iN_R6q1G6M

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95hIrObdLqY>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LO7xn--G_Mo

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=st3rYBNrA6E>