

the execution delivered for Paine by a delegate who had translated it from the original. Marat interrupted the speaker to charge that the translation was incorrect and that the sentiments could not be those of Paine. The incident revealed that troubled times were in store for Paine.

When the Girondists were overthrown by the Mountain, Paine attended fewer and fewer meetings of the Convention, and after June 2 ceased altogether to appear in the legislative body. Not understanding that the party with which he had been allied had brought misery and hardship upon the people of France, he could not be expected to grasp the necessity for the new radical measures introduced by the Jacobins to cope with enemies of the revolution at home and abroad.

Although Robespierre and his associates took action against most of Paine's former friends directly after the Girondists were overthrown, they did not arrest him until December 28, 1793. And then it is more than likely that had not Gouverneur Morris, the American minister to France from 1792 to 1794, conspired to keep Paine imprisoned, he would have been speedily released. After his arrest Paine appealed to his rights as an American citizen,¹⁹ but Morris, who hated both Paine and his writings and the French Revolution, turned a deaf ear. As one of Morris's biographers puts it: "But the American minister was too clever to let such a fish escape. He told Robespierre that he did not acknowledge Mr. Paine's right to pass as an American."²⁰ He had also intimated to the Jacobins, who were anxious to gain the support of America against England, that Paine was thoroughly disliked in America and that the United States would not be disturbed if Paine were kept in prison. Meanwhile, Morris let his own government believe that he had done everything possible to help Paine. Not realizing the role the American minister was playing with respect to the government of the United States, Paine later placed the blame for his prolonged stay in prison on Washington and in his *Letter* to the President launched a bitter attack charging him with having deserted both his former friend and supporter and the cause of freedom.

Paine remained in the Luxembourg prison until November 4, 1794. He expected every day would be his last on earth, and it is probable that he was once saved from the guillotine by the mistake of a guard in marking his door. He nearly died because of an ulcer in his side and

¹⁹ Paine had been arrested under a law directed against aliens of hostile nations.

²⁰ Daniel Walther, *Gouverneur Morris*, New York, 1934, pp. 247-248.