
HISTORY

9769/56

Paper 5f Special Subject: The French Revolution, 1774–1794

May/June 2010

2 hours

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS FIRST

Answer Question 1 and **one** other question.

The number of marks is given in brackets [] at the end of each question or part question.

You are reminded of the need for analysis and critical evaluation in your answers to questions. You should also show, where appropriate, an awareness of links and comparisons between different countries and different periods.



This document consists of **3** printed pages and **1** blank page.



Answer the following question.

Nominated topic: The Terror, 1793–4

- 1 Study all of the following documents and answer all the questions which follow. In evaluating and commenting upon the documents it is essential to set them alongside, and to make use of, your own contextual knowledge.

- A** *The Committee of Public Safety writes to one of its members, Antoine Saint-Just, expressing fears about widespread unrest.*

Liberty is exposed to new dangers. The factions revive and are more dangerous than ever. The crowds demanding butter are larger and more turbulent than ever though they have the least grounds for complaint; the outbreak of a prison revolt was expected yesterday and there are the same intrigues as in Hébert's time. All this is coupled with repeated attempts on the lives of members of the Committee of Public Safety. The remains of the factions – or rather the ever-living factions – redouble their audacity and perfidy. We fear an aristocratic rising. The greatest danger is in Paris. The Committee needs to unite the ideas and energy of all its members. Signed: Robespierre, Prieur, Carnot, Billaud-Varenne, Barère.

Letter, 6 *prairal*, year II (25 May 1794).

- B** *Police agents report on the movements of members of the Convention.*

Citizen Tallien entered the National Convention on the 17th inst. at 1.45 and left at 2.30. A citizen accosted him and he stopped several times with this citizen, always talking with him and looking around from side to side and even stopping short to look right round; he entered 237 Rue St. Thomas du Louvre alone at three o'clock, where two deputies from Guadeloupe live; stayed there until 6.15. Bourdon left the Convention after the sitting, walked in the Jardin National until 3 o'clock with five citizens unknown to us. Thuriot remained until the end of the sitting and left the chamber with three citizens whom we presumed to be peasants, judging by their clothes.

Report, 19 *messidor*, year II (7 July 1794).

- C** *Joseph Fouché, a member of the Convention representing the Loire-Inférieure, writes two letters to members of his family.*

(a) I want to reassure you that I have nothing to fear from the malicious rumours of Maximilien Robespierre. The Jacobin Society invited me to come and justify myself before it; I certainly did not go as Robespierre rules there as master. Shortly you will learn the issue of this event which I hope will turn to the profit of the Republic.

(b) Rest assured, patriotism will triumph over tyranny and all those vile and despicable passions which conspire to hound it down. Just a few more days and the rogues and knaves will be unmasked and the enterprise of the honest men will be triumphant. Even today, perhaps, we shall see the traitors unmasked.

Letters written shortly before 9 *thermidor*, year II (27 July 1794).

- D** *A member of the Convention gives an account of the overthrow and execution of Robespierre (9–10 thermidor, year II).*

Robespierre was guillotined yesterday with Saint-Just and Couthon. The speeches Couthon made at the Jacobin club against certain members of the Convention had already antagonised people. For a month Robespierre had not attended the meetings of the Committee of Public Safety and this antagonised people more. Finally his speech against the two committees on the 8th *thermidor* brought dissatisfaction to the most extreme degree. The evening session at the Jacobin club was the culmination. In it, Collot d'Herbois was mocked and Robespierre alone triumphed. On the 9th an attack on him was launched by Tallien, whose head was almost touching the guillotine. Robespierre asked for the floor in order to reply; he called us assassins because the floor was given to another first. The assembly, already very irritated, enacted the decree for his arrest.

M. Dyzez, writing on 11 *thermidor*, year II (29 July 1794).

- E** *A modern historian comments upon the circumstances surrounding the overthrow of Robespierre and the end of the Terror.*

The Committee of Public Safety became more isolated and resented. Many began to see it as the dictatorship of Robespierre, Saint-Just and Couthon. Jacobin clubs in Paris and in the provinces were in a state of confusion. The Revolutionary government looked formidable on paper, but it broke down completely in some parts of France. The Paris *sans culottes* were angry because of the food shortage. Late in May, government panic was deepened by two attempts on Robespierre's life. The Great Terror of June and July 1794 represented a frantic attempt to preserve itself by a government which felt the ground slipping beneath its feet. Over 2500 died in the two months before 9 Thermidor, more than the total for the previous year. Such a bloodbath provoked a general reaction of fear, besides a tendency by many outside the government to regard the Terror as no longer the source of the preservation of the Republic, but the instrument of the desire of the members of the government to maintain themselves in power. The atmosphere in Paris in June and July 1794 was hostility to the Jacobin dictatorship. Until the end of June, victory in the war was still uncertain, but on 26 June came the victory of the Republican armies at Fleurus. Now that the armies were on the offensive, the Terror no longer had the justification of the needs of national defence.

D.G.Wright, *Revolution and Terror in France, 1789–1795*, published 1974.

- (a)** How far is the impression of tension and suspicion in Paris in July 1794, as communicated in Document C, corroborated by the content of Document B? [10]
- (b)** How convincing is the evidence for the view that Robespierre was overthrown because by July 1794 the Terror had gone too far?

In making your evaluation, you should refer to contextual knowledge as well as to all the documents in this set (A–E). [20]

Answer one of the following questions. *Where appropriate your essay should make use of any relevant documents you have studied as well as contextual knowledge.*

- 2** How well did the King and his advisers handle the events of 1789? [30]
- 3** Assess the impact of foreign war upon the domestic affairs of France in the period 1792–94. [30]
- 4** How is the triumph of Robespierre and his allies over their political opponents in the years 1792–94 best explained? [30]

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