

in particular, who were aware of these courts thought of them as a protection against foreign intervention or as a means of swift justice.

The Grenville administration changed this with the "Black Act" of 1764. As a part of the new revenue system, the mother country established in Halifax, Nova Scotia, a super-court with authority from Florida to Newfoundland. The colonists were offended by the granting of jurisdiction in revenue cases to the vice-admiralty courts which, to their horror, did not rely on juries. Quick to assume injustice, Americans believed their rights restricted.

From this point on the situation deteriorated as the British and their colonists began to go through motions which are standard in colonial relations. The officials in the courts throughout this period were in danger of mob violence if they performed their functions. Ships seized for violations of the law were wrested from the British.

The Empire's masters attempted to retain control by granting concessions. In regard to the court system, the government established four district courts to replace the one super-court at Halifax, but the colonists had reached the point where they viewed this modification as a further extension of British dominion rather than as an attempted compromise. As Ubbelohde aptly writes: "Words were no longer of any use: the pattern of attack and counterattack had gone too far" (p. 179).

With the outbreak of hostilities, the courts collapsed. Ironically, Americans realized that courts to handle maritime disputes were necessary and established an admiralty court system of their own. In one case, the position of judge was offered to Richard Morris, who had sat on the bench under the old regime. The cycle was complete.

Ubbelohde has presented a scholarly study which merits its publication by the Institute of Early American History and Culture. His bibliography shows that he has exhausted the sources on this side of the Atlantic and, with the aid of microfilm, on the other side as well. His book is a valuable aid to anyone who wishes to understand the coming of the American Revolution.

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*George Washington & the French Revolution.* By Louis Martin Sears. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1960. Pp. x, 378. Appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$7.00.)

This is Louis Martin Sears's valedictory work. He died May 15, 1960, just one month before publication of this volume. It is fortunate that Professor Sears lived long enough to finish his inquiry into Washington's sources of information on the French Revolution and his reaction to that violent upheaval, for this is the balanced and mature analysis of a scholar whose adult lifetime was largely spent in research in the federal period of American history. In this his last and perhaps his best book, Professor Sears presents his reasoned concept of a Washington thoroughly human but possessing great patience and evidencing clarity of purpose and depth of wisdom which few other leaders have shown.

The French Revolution began in 1789, the very year of George Washington's inauguration as first president of the United States.

Indeed, the first meeting of the Estates General was held at Versailles just five days after Washington took office. In the beginning America was generally enthusiastic about the revolution in a sister state. But the terror of 1792 and the execution of Louis XVI in January of 1793 cooled such ardor. And finally war between France and England placed the United States in an unenviable position. What would now be the best policy for the new nation to adopt, linked as it was by ties of friendship and alliance with France? After considerable deliberation Washington and his cabinet chose neutrality as the only possible course, and the Neutrality Proclamation of April 22, 1793, remains one of America's great state papers. The author notes that the French Revolution tested Washington in theory and practice, as a political thinker and statesman, and in response he shaped what was to remain the basis of American foreign policy for more than a century.

Professor Sears's study is based on reports from France still in Washington's files and on the reports from American agents to the Department of State, including letters in the personal files of Thomas Jefferson, William Short, Gouverneur Morris, and James Monroe, men who were the United States's ministers in France during the presidency of Washington. In addition there are the letters to Washington from his French friends, including those from the Marquis de Lafayette, the Comte de Rochambeau, the Comte de Moustier, and the Marquis de la Luzerne. Each chapter of Sears's book represents one year in the revolutionary era, and the author has provided a brief summary of revolutionary events at the beginning of each of the chapters. Professor Sears definitely limits his book to Washington, the information received, the informants, and the subsequent action influenced directly and indirectly by the reports. All material is presented chronologically so that the reader can examine the data in the same order in which it came to Washington. Biographical sketches in the appendix acquaint one with those persons of secondary importance who are named in the book.

The files of correspondence exhibit some interesting side lights. Jefferson remembered the early and more idealistic days of the revolution which he had observed in 1789, and neither the bloody terror nor the execution of some of his closest French friends could dampen his enthusiasm. Only protracted experience with Citizen Genêt finally wrought the change. Gouverneur Morris is acknowledged by two French historical authorities, Taine and Esmein, to be one of the best observers of the French Revolution, and his brilliant reports were invaluable to Washington. Yet Morris' aristocratic ways and his outspoken antipathy to the excesses of the French radicals led the revolutionary French regime to demand his recall. James Monroe, who replaced Morris, went overboard to rewin French friendship, and this led Washington to recall him.

In an epilogue Professor Sears weighs Washington's errors against the results and concludes by fully sustaining Washington's policy of neutrality. Scholars will be grateful that the author managed to compress in a volume of moderate length the essential information which kept President Washington abreast of the rapidly changing revolution in France and which in turn motivated his decisions.