

Thomas Paine

(1737-1809)



Thomas Paine is very much a neglected hero. More than just neglected: There is outright hostility to him in America. Yet he is the “intellectual founder” of the United States. Prior to the January 10th, 1776 publication of *Common Sense*, most people did not want independence from England. They only wanted King George III to be a “better, nicer King”. It was Paine who promoted and idea of *independence*, and later coined the phrase “United States of America.”

In six months, in a country with perhaps three million people, it sold 500,000 copies. That would be equivalent to a book in America today selling about 45 million copies in the first six months. Very soon after the publication, almost everyone was talking about and wanting independence.

Paine is also the probable author of the Declaration of Independence. It bears his “thought print,” and not that of Jefferson. Who never claimed he wrote it until after the death of Paine.

Paine wrote what is probably the most important book ever written on religion: *The Age of Reason*. Having said that, I will probably now be persecuted as Paine was and still is. Yet on the first page Paine says: “I believe in one God and no more; and I hope for happiness beyond this life.” To me this does not sound like the thought of an atheist.

Paine raised many valid questions about the Bible and about Christianity. Questions

any thinking person should ask if they are searching for the truth. And he did not restrict his thinking and comments to Christianity, making comments about the other major religions as well.

Thomas Paine was a master at succinct, clear writing, based on true premises, and valid and logical thought processes. Therefore he was right most of the time. The world, and Americans especially, need another Thomas Paine. To replace the “spin doctors” of the many propaganda ministries with which US and all other political states are infested and infected..

As Paine said, “The mind once enlightened can never become dark.” Our current crises confirms the opposite is also true: “The mind once darkened can not stand the light of new and controversial truths.”