

From Bolsheviks to the Black Tom Perpetrators

The original meaning remains: French and American liberation from slavery post war and Grand Derangement.

Blamesovj+ War

Black Tom perpetrators were broadly German agents, while the identities of the individuals who physically placed the incendiaries are less certain. The case was not solved at the time, and later investigations connected several people to the German sabotage network. ([FBI](#))

People connected to the Black Tom operation

Person	Origin / nationality	Role or connection
Kurt Jahnke	German Empire, born in Gnesen (now Gniezno, Poland)	German intelligence/sabotage operative. Later identified as one of the principal people legally held responsible for Black Tom. (Wikipedia)
Lothar Witzke	German Empire	German intelligence operative and associate of Jahnke. Later identified as responsible for Black Tom along with Jahnke. (FBI)
Michael Kristoff	Austria-Hungary, a Slovak immigrant	Worked around Bayonne and allegedly provided access to Black Tom and participated in the operation. U.S. investigators considered him a possible direct perpetrator, but the evidence concerning his exact role is disputed. (National Archives)
Franz von Rintelen	German Empire	German naval intelligence officer who organized sabotage operations against Allied shipping and munitions. His connection to Black Tom is generally described as probable rather than conclusively established as the person who ordered the specific attack. (Intelligence Resource Program)
Walter Theodore Scheele	German Empire	German Army/intelligence officer and explosives expert associated with the development of incendiary devices used by German saboteurs. (Intelligence Resource Program)
Paul Hilken	German Empire	German agent and shipping executive who acted as a financial/logistical figure in the German sabotage network. (National Archives)
Friedrich Hinsch	German Empire	German sabotage operative associated with the Baltimore-based network that supplied and coordinated saboteurs. (ODNI)
Fred Herrmann	German	Worked with the Baltimore sabotage network and manufactured incendiary devices. National Archives records connect incendiaries from this network with Black Tom. (National Archives)

One important correction

Franz von Papen, Count Johann Heinrich von Bernstorff, there have been historical allegations connecting some of them to the broader German sabotage campaign.

The **strongest identification is Jahnke and Witzke**, with **Michael Kristoff** being a particularly interesting alleged local participant. The FBI's historical account says that the perpetrators were eventually identified as German agents and that Germany was ultimately held responsible for the sabotage, leading to reparations. ([FBI](#))

Also, **Kristoff's nationality matters**: he was a **Slovak immigrant from Austria-Hungary**, not German. So it would be inaccurate to describe every person involved as ethnically or nationally German simply because the operation was conducted on behalf of Imperial Germany.

It is clear that in the U.S. today, we do have modern forms of “Bolsheviks,” as well as “Black Toms.”

The U.S. has many allies, as well as enemies.