

WORLD HISTORY notes

Day 1

French Revolution

1780 France = strongest, most prosperous nation in Europe

- 26 million people
- **OLD REGIME**
 - Absolute Monarchy
 - **King Louis XVI** [1774-1792]
 - Privileged, inherited power of the nobility
 - 3 Estate system based on birth
 - control of France by Catholic Church

Louis XVI Inherited a HUGE **debt**

- moving towards economic disaster

Louis XVI married **Marie Antoinette**

- she was not very well liked
- daughter of Maria Teresa from Austria
 - French hated Austria
- Marie Antoinette spent a lot of money
 - “Madam Deficit”

3 ESTATES OF “OLD REGIME”

First Estate - Clergy

- Upper Clergy (Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots) – \$\$\$\$\$\$
- Lower Clergy (Priests, wandering pastors) – poor (enjoy none of privileges of upper clergy)
- 130,000 (.5%)
- Paid **NO** taxes
- Gave 10% “gift” to the state

Second Estate - Nobles

- 400,000 (1.5%)
- “Old Money”
- **Inherited privileges**
- held the highest positions in the Church, army, and government
- collected rent and dues from peasants living on their lands
- have little actual power under the absolute monarchy
- Paid **NO** taxes

Third Estate - Commoners

- 98% of population (+25 million of 26 million)
- Owned 30 and 40 percent of the land
 - but all peasants, whether landowners, tenants or share-croppers, paid feudal dues to the lord of the manor
 - peasants also paid tithes to the church
 - peasants paid to use the lord’s mill, bread oven and wine press

3 CLASSES OF THE 3RD ESTATE

(3A) Bourgeoisie

- Urban, middle class
- Basically **equal** to nobles except born to wrong momma/dada and treated differently by French law
- Wealthy and educated
 - Bankers, merchants, lawyers, doctors, etc...
- Inspired by success of **American Revolution**

(3B) Sans-Culottes

- Poor
- Artisans, factory workers, wanted higher wages

(3C) Peasants

- largest group
- 24 million
- Own some land
- Sharecroppers
 - rent and work on land for a share of crops
- Still under feudal obligations from Feudalism

“PERFECT STORM” of CAUSES LEADING TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

1) Debt

- Wars - American Revolution
- Versailles - Louis XIV
- **POOR TAX STRUCTURE**
 - **3rd estate paid all taxes**
 - Structure had been set up under Louis XIV to gain support of nobles
 - **Jacques Necker** (Financial Minister) had proposed taxing the 1st/2nd Estates because the current system was unfair and failing
 - Louis fired Necker under pressure from 1st/2nd Estates
- Extravagant spending by Royal family

2) Enlightenment

- Pushed ideas of freedom, social justice, humanitarianism, equality
- Success based on **merit** and **education** not Birth
- **John Locke** – *Two Treatises of Government*
 - right to overthrow government if it did not preserve the rights of life, liberty and property

3) Success of American Revolution

- Provided motivation to French
- **Salons** in Paris = “live chat rooms”

4) Poor leadership of Louis XVI / Marie Antoinette

- France was an “Absolute Monarchy” with a weak monarch
- easily persuaded
- spent a lot of money

5) Population explosion

- France grew to 10 million in last 100 years (population had only grown 1 million in last 200 years)
- Increased pressure for more food / \$

6) Drought and Famine

- severest winter in 80 years
- increase in English imports, which increased French unemployment by decreasing French manufacturing
- bread prices increased, but at Versailles still “living the good life”

7) Third Estate

- Division of society into 3 estates
- paid **All** Taxes
 - 1ST / 2ND Estates paid no taxes
- Inequality (Bourgeoisie)
 - Wanted equality to the 1st / 2nd estates
- still under feudalism (Peasants)
 - obligated to serve nobles (lords)
 - paid rent, dues, worked land (Corvee)
- NO political power or ability to change laws because of class they were born into

FRENCH REVOLUTION

January 1789 **Abbe Sieyes** expressed the complaints of the 3rd Estate – “**What is the Third Estate**”

- What is the 3rd Estate? Everything
- What has it been so far? Nothing
- What does it want to be? Something

May 5, 1789 Louis XVI called a meeting of the **Estates General**

1st and 2nd Estates wanted to vote “Traditionally”

- each estate gets one vote

3rd Estate proposed that each delegate gets one vote

June 17, 1789 3rd Estates formed the **National Assembly**

- speak for majority of France / “Representatives of the Nation”
- pledged to establish a **Limited - Constitutional Monarchy**

June 20, 1789 National Assembly showed up at meeting and found doors locked

- N.A. felt they were intentionally being locked out
 - met on a tennis court
 - **Tennis Court Oath** agreement to remain together until a new government was formed

July 1, 1789 Louis ordered thousands of troops to Versailles and Paris for protection

- Increased fear that soldiers were assembling to end the National Assembly

July 14, 1789 Overthrow of the Bastille

- “Paris Mob” raided the Bastille for **guns / ammo**
- **BEGINNING OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION**

July 18, 1789 Louis XVI acknowledged the National Assembly

- Louis was losing power

Emigres

- French Nobles fleeing France for protection and to plot to overthrow the revolution

European monarchs did not want revolution to spill over to their countries

- **“French Plague”**

Great Fear

- rumors that nobles hired “hitmen” to kill peasants and destroy their crops
- Peasants began arming themselves for protection and began attacking nobles and destroying any records that tied them to feudalism

August 5, 1789 **August Decrees**

- National Assembly passed laws to reduce the peasant rebellion – *“Help us, Help you”*
- privileges of the nobility were reduced
- **Old Regime = DEAD!!**

August 27, 1789

Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen

- French version of the Declaration of Independence
- SLOGAN - **“LIBERTY, EQUALITY, FRATERNITY”**

October 5, 1789

Women's March to Versailles

- 8 thousand women rioting over the lack of bread and the high price of bread
- Royal family at Versailles still dining on fine food and throwing parties
- Louis XIV and his family were forced back to Paris

Day 2 Notes

1789-91

National Assembly began making new laws

- divided France into 83 Departments
- no privileged areas
- each would elect administrators to execute laws, keep order, collect taxes, and provide education
- “nationalized” Church lands

July 1790

Civil Constitution of the Clergy

- power of church was reduced and placed under the control of the government
- Catholic Church seen as symbol of power, corruption, and privilege of Old Regime

June 20, 1791

Louis XVI and **Marie Antoinette** tried to flee France...FAILED!!

- many viewed this as **treason**

August 1791

Declaration of Pillnitz

- Austria / Prussia promised to launch “counter-revolution” and restore absolute monarchy in France

September 13, 1791

Constitution of 1791

- Louis XVI reluctantly signed
- created a **Constitutional Monarchy**
- **National Assembly ended**

September 30, 1791

Legislative Assembly formed

- **Girondins (Moderates)** controlled the Legislative Assembly

Legislative Assembly was divided on how to govern France:

Conservatives

- sat on **RIGHT**
- wanted a **STRONG MONARCHY**

Moderates

- sat in **MIDDLE**
- supported a **CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY**
 - power limited by a constitution

Radicals

- sat on **LEFT**
- wanted a **REPUBLIC**
 - NO KING

Although these 3 groups had different domestic ideas they did agree on defending France against foreign invasion

April 20, 1792 **Legislative Assembly** declared war on **Austria** and **Prussia**

- Revolutionaries
 - supported the revolution and wanted to spread “revolutionary” (Enlightenment) ideas
- Royalists
 - hoped Austria/Prussia would win and then put Louis XVI back into power
 - stop the “French Plague”

French army was unprepared and had little success

- people began losing faith in the “moderate” government to solve France’s problems and win the war
- Radicals began to gain power and popularity in the Legislative Assembly

July 28, 1792 **Brunswick Manifesto**

- Duke of Brunswick threatened if the royal family was harmed, the French citizens would be harmed
- meant to intimidate the government, but it motivated the government to fight harder

August 10, 1792 Radicals arrested Louis XVI on grounds of treason

September 1792 **September Massacres**

- while military was away fighting, rumors developed of a “Royalist Revolt” to take control
- radicals killed around 1200 “enemies of the revolution”

September 20, 1792 **Battle of Valmy**

- French forces push Austria/Prussia back

September 21, 1792 **National Convention** forms

- Radical Jacobins controlled the government
 - **Robespierre**, Danton, Marat
- abolished the monarchy
- set up a **Republic**
- charged Louis XVI with **treason**
 - found Louis XVI guilty
 - January 21, 1793 Louis XVI beheaded – “FRENCH RAZOR”

Day 3 Notes

Jacobins established the **Committee of Public Safety**

- defend France against any “**enemies of Revolution**”
- essentially a “war dictatorship”
- established Revolutionary Tribunal
 - court to try “enemies of Revolution “

REIGN OF TERROR

Robespierre begins killing anyone associated with the “**counterrevolution**” or “**Old Regime**”

- could only be on “suspicion” of guilt
- uses “**Martial Law**”
- suspends the new constitution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man
- Marie Antoinette**

By 1794 France had eliminated almost all threats inside and outside of France

Danton (leader with Robespierre) called for an end to the “**Reign of Terror**”

- it had achieved what it needed to achieve
- Robespierre wanted to continue the “Terror”
- Robespierre had Danton executed

Robespierre is out of control

- Robespierre no longer had justification for “extreme” actions since French Army was in control
- people were tired of the “Terror” and wanted Peace
 - Robespierre viewed as a “terrorist”

Thermidorian Reaction

- STOP Robespierre and the “Terror”
- July 28, 1794 - Robespierre executed

1795 **Directory** created

- 5 Directors
- corrupt, backstabbing, and power hungry
- did not fix problems
- people wondered if a return to a monarchy would be the best thing

November 9, 1799 **Napoleon** overthrows (coup de'tat") the French government

- born on Corsica
- attended military school
- Artillery Officer at age of 16