The French Revolution (Liberal Phase)

CHY4U Review: The French Revolution (Liberal Phase)

The Estates General (May 1789 – July 1789)

➔ The Meeting
• King was still in charge
• **Third Estate** had twice as many representatives (mostly lawyers and government officials)
• Voting disputes – Third Estate wanted to meet with the other two; refused – Third Estate felt slighted and refused to sit alone; other Estates invited to meet with it (June 1)
• **King did not want all Estates meeting together** because they may unite against the king

➔ Early Events
• **Third Estate** declared itself the National Assembly (June 17)
• Tennis Court Oath (June 20, 1789) – king opposed it, but majority of clergy and nobility joined
• June 27 – king capitulated - showed the king had no real power
• National Assembly changed name to National Constituent Assembly

People vs The King

<table>
<thead>
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<th>People</th>
<th>King</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Third Estate</td>
<td>Foreign help (family connections)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some members of First and Second</td>
<td>Little First and Second</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign help (enemies of the king)</td>
<td>Mercenaries</td>
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<td>Protestants (Huguenots)</td>
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The King's Fatal Decision

• Louis tried to re-assert authority and stationed an army near Versailles – worries supporters in the process
• King **abandoned bourgeoisie** after years of support and supported the nobility
• King/nobility vs middle/lower class – Third Estate had to revolt against the nobility and the king

Poor of Paris Revolt

• **Rising bread prices** (1788-89) caused riots
• Paris politicized by elections to the Estates General – rivalry districts
• Paris mob **stormed the Bastille – July 14, 1789** (first day of the revolution) – unused prison, raided for weapons; troops fired on the crowd killing 98 – crowd stormed fortress and killed the soldiers
• Symbolic – Revolution becomes more violent, similar uprisings happen in other cities
• Local militias unite under Lafayette to become the National Guard
• **Tricolor** becomes new flag – blue and red for Paris, white for Burbon dynasty
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Peasant Revolts
- Began spring (1789)
- Great Fear – fear of royal troops (mercenaries)
- Destruction of medieval documents (contracts)
- Forced National Assembly to abolish feudal dues; peasants assume a lesser role in the Revolution because they got the land that they wanted - Revolution now run by radicals (Paris) and bourgeoisie

National Constituent Assembly
- August 4 laws – French citizens subject to the same laws
- Declaration of the Rights of Man
- Ideas of equality before law, liberty, property, security and resistance to oppression, freedom of religion, freedom of speech
- Control problems; would not forget France's debt because members were wealthy and owned property (were owed debt money from the king)
- Provinces became departments; uniform courts and laws throughout France; removed tariffs; restricted guilds

The King Moves To Paris
- Poor made government function out of fear of riots; kept peace for 3yrs (1789-92)

Debt Problems
- Solution – attack Church and claim Church land and wealth; alienated Church supporters and made the Revolution unpopular
- Emigres – left France because of the Revolution
- Bonds were printed, based on the value of Church land, and used as money

Reforming The Church
- Civil constitution of the clergy
- Priests and bishops would be elected and paid by the state; anyone could vote – including Protestants and atheists; no separation of Church and state
- Pope condemned the Revolution, liberalism, the Rights of Man – attack on liberalism continued for a century

Constitution of 1791
- One Chamber House – only elected members
- Only paying men could vote
- Members of the National Assembly were not eligible for election

The King's Reaction
- King was becoming powerless
- Louis XVI tried to flee, but was stopped at Varennes and brought back as a vital prisoner; Louis' apathy towards the Revolution undermined the 1791 Constitution's monarch sympathy (constitutional monarchy); an alternative to the Constitution was needed
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Legislative Assembly
- A constitutional monarchy with a strong executive
- War is promoted to solve domestic problems (divert attention)
- Still a state Church and official religion
- Ineffective; led to the radicalization of the Revolution

Reaction to the Revolution
- Intellectuals including Adam Smith (growing free market) and Beethoven supported it
- Edmund Burke (England) and conservatives opposed it – people are not good and things will not change overnight
- Most monarchs were upset but were pleased at France's weakening; did not want Revolution to spread
- End of enlightened despotism; attempts were made by governments to stop reform movements

War
- 1791 – Declaration of Pillnitz; threatened invasion of France by Prussia and Austria, not a major threat because Britain would not join; France declared war on Austria as a result
- Radicals supported war as a way to gain popularity
- Louis XVI supported the war because some would want to restore his power if France lost
- April 1792 began a period of war for 30yrs

New Enactments
- Monarchy abolished
- France a republic
- Churches (religion) abolished – now called “Temples of Reason”
- Old calendar abolished – replaced with Republican calendar
- Jacobins and Cordeliers assume power and rule by decree – say that the war needs direction
- Abolishing the monarchy and the church turned many citizens against the Revolution and transformed France into a period of civil war
- January 1793 – Louis XVI found guilty of treason and executed. September 1793 – Marie Antoinette executed. Louis XVII dies in prison

Foreign Policy
- France goes on the offensive to “export” the Revolution; created new enemy – Britain
- Dumouriez – against war, deserted to Austria to unite emigres against France
- Jacobins and Cordeliers more radical; Girondins viewed with suspicion and persecuted under the Committee of Public Safety
- Maximillien Robespierre rises to power

Why was Danton ousted?
Danton was a lawyer and gifted speaker. He was removed from power because he was a political rival to Robespierre.

What were Robespierre's beliefs? How did he want to achieve them?
Robespierre wanted to create a democratic “Republic of Virtue” along the ideals of Rousseau where citizens would work towards the common good. Robespierre resorted to violence to suppress opposition.
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What were the benefits of Robespierre's “Reign of Terror”?
- Centralized government
- Deterred major riots (killed 20 000 people)
- Created an army of 750 000 (to Spread the revolution)

Why was Robespierre executed?
He was executed because his own supporters feared him. His creation of a new state religion centered around himself also alienated the religious French citizens.

What changes did the Constitution of 1795 signal?
Changes caused rioting and the threat of civil war as the National Guard turn against the Convention. Napoleon's control of the Convention's forces signaled his rise to power and the new military regime France would have.