



The French Revolution – Overview Notes





The French Revolution

Phase I—Old Regime



Long-term Problems of France

- ★ France has HUGE debt by late 18th century
 - Military expenses
 - Extravagant lifestyle of king and nobles
- ★ A sharp rise in taxes – peasants pay most
- ★ Poor harvests
 - Price of bread SOARS!



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“King Louis XVI”



SYSTEM OF TAXATION





The French Revolution

Phase II-National Assembly



Meeting of the Estates General

- ★ King L calls meeting of Estates General
 - Estates General: a medieval representative body. It had not met since 1614
- ★ Divided France into 3 estates:
 - First estate: clergy
 - Second estate: nobility
 - Third estate: peasants



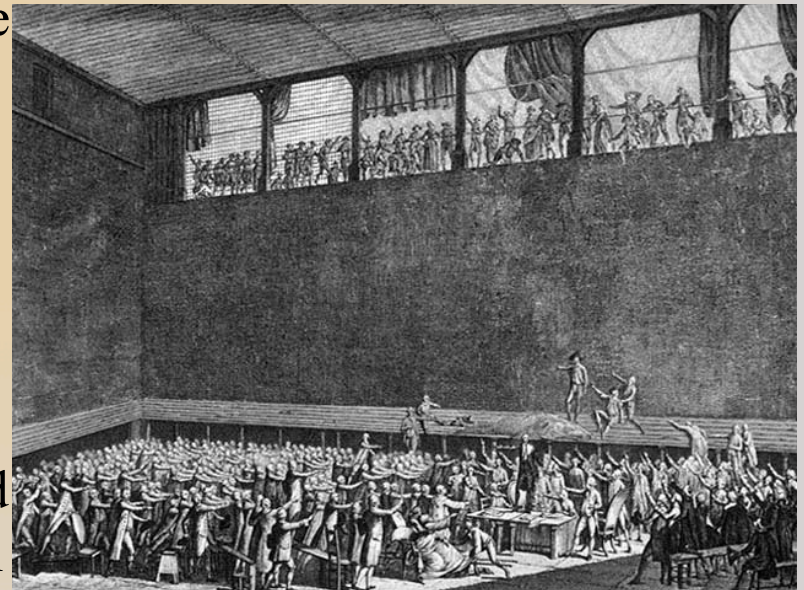
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“The Third Estate Awakens”



The Tennis Court Oath

- ★ Fed up with voting by order, the Third Estate adopts the title “THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY” and declares itself the true representative body of France!!!!!!
 - Majority of clergy joined
- ★ June 20, 1789 – Tennis Court Oath: pledged never to disband until a constitution was written



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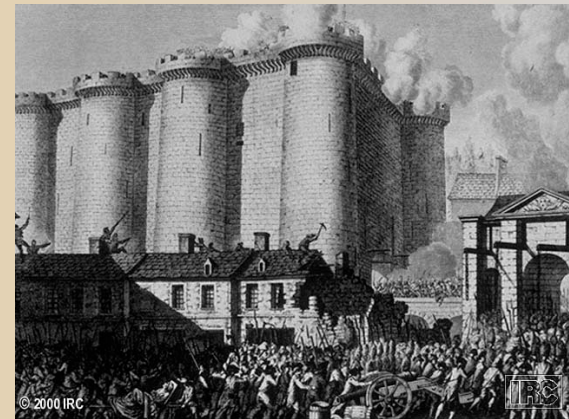
“The Oath”



The Storming of the Bastille



- ★ By July 1789 – ¼ people unemployed
- ★ Bread prices soared – many without food
- ★ Rumor – king's troops coming to attack Paris
- ★ JULY 14, 1789 – hundreds march to the BASTILLE (medieval fort and prison)
 - Soldiers fire on crowd from the Bastille
 - Crowds take over and news spreads.....the peasants REVOLT
- ★ The French Revolution officially begins (July 14, 1789)



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The March on Versailles



- ★ Continued financial crisis
- ★ 7,000 women march 12 miles to Versailles and invade palace
- ★ King promises bread and returns to Paris with women
- ★ King and family will never return to Versailles!



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“Girl Power!”



The Constitution



- ★ National assembly est. a CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY
 - Law-making power = national assembly
 - King is head of state and could VETO
 - Solve financial crisis = seize land of church and nobles that fled France
- ★ King L eventually accepts the constitution in 1791





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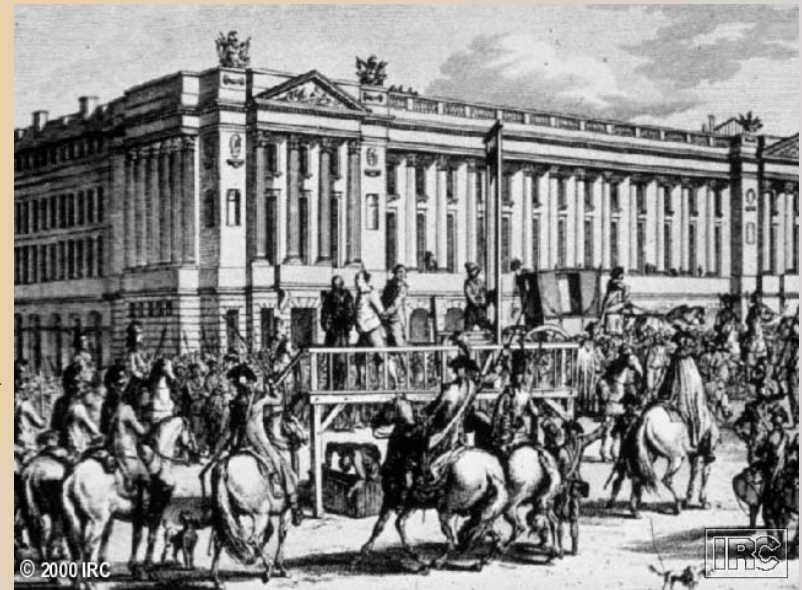
Phase III-The Reign of Terror



The Execution of King Louis XVI



- ★ King agrees to constitution 1791
- ★ vetoed revolutionary decrees
- ★ 1792 National Convention established
 - more radical (Jacobins and sans-culottes)
- ★ France at war – Austria (Marie's bro) and Prussia
- ★ 1792 incriminating documents found
 - King and Queen guillotined 1792, 1793



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“I die innocent of all the crimes of which I have been charged”



The Reign of Terror



- ★ France at war
 - Committee of Public Safety -- absolute power
 - success!
- ★ Maximilian Robespierre
 - used drastic measures to “save the revolution” from “enemies of the nation”
 - 40,000 executed in two years
- ★ Robespierre executed in 1794

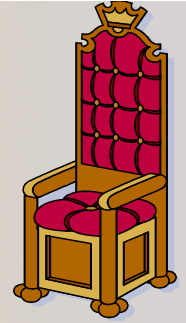


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“Max”



The Coronation of Napoleon Bonaparte



- ★ Directory established
 - 5 man executive
 - Napoleon member
 - ineffective
- ★ Napoleon takes over - Autocrat
- ★ Kept some reforms
 - abolished privileges of nobles
 - secured advances of middle class and peasants



“The Little Dictator”