

Topic 3.6

The French Revolution Begins



A discontented mob stormed and seized control of the Bastille in Paris on the afternoon of July 14, 1789.

MAIN IDEA: With the American Revolution as their inspiration, the people of France clamored for change. The poor economic policies of Louis XIV had left France deeply in debt. As the gap between rich and poor widened, the French government borrowed more money and the crisis deepened. By 1789, the hungry, unemployed, poorly paid people of Paris were taking up arms against their own government. Throughout France, the people called for an end to the ancient regime, or old order.

1. France, like the rest of Europe, clung to an outdated social system that had emerged during the _____.
2. Under this _____, or old order, everyone in France belonged to one of three social classes, or _____.
3. The First Estate was made up of the _____. The Second Estate was made up of the _____. The Third Estate comprised the vast _____ of the _____.
4. Church leaders such as _____ and _____ were nobles who lived very well.
5. Members of the Second State, or nobles, were given exclusive rights by French Kings. Those rights included top jobs in the _____, the _____, the _____, and the _____.
6. The bulk of the Third Estate consisted of _____.
7. From rich to poor, members of the Third Estate _____ the privileges enjoyed by the other Estates.
8. Because of traditional privileges, the First and Second Estates paid almost no _____.
9. Along with social unrest, France faced _____ woes. The crisis was caused in part by years of _____.
10. Throughout the 1700's, the lavish French court soaked up millions. The government _____ more and more _____.
11. The heirs of Louis XIV pursued pleasure before business and ran up more _____.
12. The political crisis of 1789 coincided with the worst _____ in memory.
13. _____ peasants roamed the countryside or flocked to towns, where they swelled the ranks of the _____.
14. On July 14, 1789, more than 800 angry Parisians took control of a Medieval prison and fortress known as the _____.
15. The storming of the Bastille signaled the end of the _____ and a step toward _____ for the people of France. By 1791, the National Assembly completed its task of writing a _____.



The storming of the Bastille, on July 14, 1789, is considered to be the opening event of the French Revolution.