French Revolution

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Monarchy to Constitutional Monarchy in France

The clergy and nobility are supreme! In order to pay our debts we must increase the taxes on the third class!

Yes we are! The church imposed tithes on the peasants and look at the money I made.

When king Louis the 16th ascended the throne in 1774, he found an empty treasury still with a lot of debts to be payed off. Many years of war and maintenance of the palace of Versailles had drained the treasury. So in order to reduce the burden on him, king Louis had increased the taxes and kept a tax for even small commodities.

The struggle of peasants

Your honour here is the money and agricultural produce (grains) as tax. Please forgive me, I also have to pay taxes to the church.

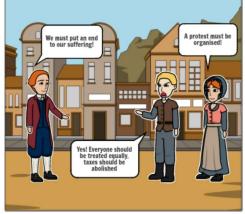Why did you not pay the complete tax last week! As a punishment you will be sent to prison!

The poor peasants had to pay a lot taxes in the form of tithes and taille to the clergy and the king. Eventhough he gave the king a lot of grains and money in form of taxes but the king still refuses to look at the person! The third estate were burdened with taxes.

Subsistence Crisis

Yes!, we will have to face the scarcity of food again!

Oh! look at the crops, they are all covered in snow and ruined, again the price of food will rise

The population of france rose from 23 million in 1715 to 28 million in 1789. A subsistence crisis had occured due to the increasing population and high taxes. Food grains and basic items like bread were becoming scarce and the prices rose. However, the wages of the peasants hadn't increased which made it a hard time for them to get food.

Growing Middle class

We must put an end to our suffering!

A protest must be organised!

Yes! Everyone should be treated equally, taxes should be abolished

A new class called the middle class emerged who go their money through overseas trade and manufacturing of goods. Slowly ther were educated and other officials like lawyers thought everyone should be treated equally in the society. Many philosophers like John Locke and Rousseau put forward these ideas in their writings.

Proposals for taxes

Arrange for the meeting of the estates general!

Yes my king!

On may 5 1789 King Louis calleed together for a meeting of Estates General to pass new proposals for taxes. It was taken place in the palace of versailles. The first and second estatates brought 300 represenatatives each, wheeras the third estate brought 600 representatives. Women artisans and peasants weren't allowed. However their grievances were put in the 40,000 letters the represengtatives of the third estate brought with them.

The Tennis Court Oath

We are the national Assembly and will not leave till we get justice!

YES!

Woting in the estates General was done unfairly, given one vote per estate. When the third estate demanded a vote per person, the King denied it and the third estate walked away in protest. On 20 June the third estate organised an assembly in the hall of a tennis court in Versailles.They were led by Mirabeau and Abbe Sieyes who gave many prominent speeches to the third estate.

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