

Chapter 23 section 1

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The French Revolution and Napoleon, 1789-1815

The French Revolution begins

The old order

The old regime

- old regime- social and political system in France during the 1770's
- estates- three social classes of France's old regime

The privileged estates

- first estate- Catholic clergy- own 10 percent land, pay for taxes
- second estate- rich nobles- 2 percent population, own 20 percent of land

The third estate

- 97 percent of people are peasants, urban workers, middle class
- have few privileges, pay heavy taxes, want change

The forces of change

Enlightenment ideas

- enlightenment ideas inspire some in third estate

Economic troubles

- high taxes and rising costs damage economy by 1780's
- king Louis XVI and his wife Marie Antoinette
- Louis doubles nation's debt: banks refuse to lend more money

A weak leader

- Louis's poor decisions and lack of patience add to France's problems
- he calls Estates General- meeting of representatives from all three estates

Dawn of the revolution

The National Assembly

- third estate has little power under old rulers
- Sieyès persuades them to make major changes in the French government
- third estate sets up National Assembly- new legislature to make reforms
- Tennis court oath- delegates decide to write new constitution for France

Storming the Bastille

- rumors fly in Paris that Louis wants to suppress National Assembly
- mob attacks and seizes Bastille, killing guards on July 14, 1789

A great fear sweeps France

Rebellion

- Rumors and panic spread throughout France
- Great fear-Attacked by peasants taking place across France
- Peasants destroy legal papers binding them into feudal system
- in October 1789, Parisian women revolt over rising price of bread
- They demand action, space forcing Louis to return from Versailles to Paris