

**THE FRENCH
REVOLUTION****READING:** *Revolution Brings Reform and Terror*

Ch. 7 Sec. 2 (pages 222–228)

I. The Assembly Reforms France (pages 222–223)

What reforms resulted from the revolution?

In August 1789, the National Assembly took steps to change France. It made a revolutionary statement called the **Declaration of the Rights of Man**. One new law ended all the special rights that members of the First and Second Estates had enjoyed. Another law gave all French men equal rights. Though women did not get these rights, it was a bold step. Other laws gave the state power over the Catholic Church.

The new laws about the church divided people who had supported the Revolution. Catholic peasants remained loyal to the church. They were angry that the church would be part of the state. Thereafter, many of them opposed the Revolution's reforms.

For months, the assembly worked on plans for a new government. During this time, Louis was fearful for his safety. One night, he and his family tried to escape the country. They were caught, brought back to Paris, and placed under guard. This escape attempt made the king and queen more unpopular. It also increased the power of his enemies.

II. Divisions Develop (pages 223–224)

What groups called for different kinds of changes?

In the fall of 1791, the assembly drew up a new constitution. It took away most of the king's power. The assembly then turned over its power to a new assembly, the **Legislative Assembly**.

This new assembly soon divided into groups. Radicals wanted sweeping changes in the way government was run. Moderates wanted some changes in government, but not as many as the radicals. Conservatives upheld the idea of a limited monarchy and wanted few changes in government.

There were groups outside the Legislative Assembly who wanted to influence the government, too. One group wanted an end to revolutionary changes. This group included the **émigrés**, nobles and others who had fled France during the uprisings. Another group wanted even greater changes. This group included the **sans-culottes**. These wage-earners and small shopkeepers wanted a greater voice in government.

III. War and Execution (pages 224–226)

What caused the French people to take extreme measures?

At the same time, France faced serious trouble on its borders. Kings in other countries feared that revolution would spread to their lands. They wanted to use force to restore control of France to Louis XVI. Soon foreign soldiers were marching toward Paris. Many people thought that the king and queen were ready to help the enemy. Angry French citizens imprisoned them. Many nobles were killed in other mob actions.

The government took strong steps to meet the danger from foreign troops. It took away all the king's powers. In 1792, the **National Convention**—another new government—was formed. **Jacobins**, members of a radical political club, soon took control of this new government. They declared Louis a common citizen. He was then tried for treason, declared a common citizen and convicted. Like many others, the king was beheaded by a machine called the guillotine. The National Convention also ordered thousands of French people into the army.

IV. The Terror Grips France; End of the Terror (pages 226–228)

What was the Reign of Terror?

Maximilien Robespierre became leader of France in 1793. He made many government changes. He created & headed the **Committee of Public Safety**. It tried and put to death “enemies of the Revolution.” Thousands were killed. Robespierre's rule, which began in 1793, was called the **Reign of Terror**. It ended in July 1794, when Robespierre himself was put to death.

The French people were tired of the killing and the unrest. They wanted a return to order. Moderate leaders drafted a new, less revolutionary plan of government.