Revolutions 1830 and 1848

Revolution of 1830

France had fought hard to gain democratic rights. Under Louis XVIII's Constitutional Charter of 1814, the French continued to enjoy such rights as freedom of the press and parliamentary representation. When Louis XVIII died in 1824, his brother Charles X came to the throne. Charles X wanted to restore the absolute monarchy of pre-revolutionary France. This angered French liberals, as did Charles' support of some very unpopular laws. One of these laws ordered payments to be made to nobles that had lost lands during the revolution. The money for nobles came mainly from the middle class. Another law soon restricted freedom of the press.

In 1830, Charles X and his ministers issued the July Ordinances. These laws dismissed the legally elected lawmaking body. They also took the right to vote from most of the eligible French voters. They also placed the press under government control. A revolution broke out in Paris. The people set up barricades in the streets and fought against the king's soldiers. After three days, the government collapsed, and Charles gave up the throne. Although many in France wanted a republic, a committee of liberals chose Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, to be the new king. A new constitution limited the power of the king and gave the vote to more of the middle class in France. As a result, the middle class became the dominant group in France.

1. What caused the revolution of 1830?

2. How did the new government limit the king's power?

Revolution of 1848

Trouble came again in France in 1848. A poor economy and reports of government corruption caused unrest among liberals. They were also disappointed that restrictions on voting continued. Although most wealthy men had gained the right to vote, most doctors, lawyers, teachers, artists, and workers could not. Dissatisfaction with the government of King Louis Philippe grew.

In February 1848, the government ordered reformers to cancel a political meeting. Protesters gathered in the streets of Paris and riots broke out. Unwilling to use the army to restore order, Louis Philippe abdicated the throne and fled to Great Britain. The revolutionaries set up the Second Republic.

Under a new constitution, an elected president and legislature governed the Second Republic. In December 1848, Louis Napoleon, a nephew of Napoleon Bonaparte, was elected president. He wanted to follow in his uncle's footsteps as a glorious ruler of France. In 1852, he turned the Second Republic into the Second Empire. 1852 Louis Napoleon issued a new constitution which made him absolute ruler in France. President Louis Napoleon became emperor Napoleon III.

As ruler over the Second Empire he began to push a vision of rapid industrial and urban development in France--to make it the military equal of Britain to the West and fast-rising Prussia to the East. He pushed for the development of a national network of trains needed to unite the country commercially. He also redesigned the banking system to compete with economic powerhouses like Great Britain.

It was in the area of diplomacy that Louis Napoleon was finally undone--when the Prussian Chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, drew him into the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. The war was fought over the French-German borderlands in Alsace and Lorraine. In short order France was humiliated by Prussia/Germany. Louis Napoleon ruled until 1870 and was captured by the Prussian Army in 1871, and he died in 1873.

1. List two reasons why France revolted again in 1848?

2. How did Louis Napoleon help reform and rebuild France?

Revolutions in Europe

In both 1830 and 1848, the revolts in Paris inspired uprisings elsewhere in Europe. As Metternich said, "When France sneezes, Europe catches a cold." Most uprisings were suppressed, but here and there rebels did force change on conservative governments. Even when they failed, they frightened rulers badly enough to encourage reform later in the century.

One example of success for Europe's revolutionaries in 1830 took place in Belgium. In 1815, the Congress of Vienna had united the Austrian Netherlands (present day Belgium) and the kingdom of Holland under the Dutch king. The Congress had wanted to create a strong barrier against French expansion. The Belgium's resented the new arrangement. The Belgium's and Dutch had different religions, languages and economic interests. The Belgium's were Catholic while the Dutch were Protestant.

In 1830, news of a Paris uprising ignited a spark in Belgium. Students and workers threw up barricades in Brussels, the capital. The Dutch king turned to Austria, Prussia, and Russia for help, but they were too busy putting down revolts of their own to become involved. As a result, in 1831, Belgium became an independent state with a liberal constitution. Nationalists in Poland also staged an uprising in 1830. Unlike the Belgium's, the Poles failed to win their independence. The Congress of Vienna had divided up Poland and most of it was handed to Russia. In 1830, Polish students, army officials and landowners had risen in revolt. They were brutally crushed by Russian forces.

In 1848, when revolts in Paris sparked again, revolutions in Europe were also unleashed. Grievances had been piling up for years. Middle class liberals wanted a greater share of political power, as well as protection for the basic rights of all citizens. Nationalists of all classes wanted to throw off foreign rule. By 1848, discontent was so widespread it was only a matter of time before it exploded into a full scale revolution.

In Austria revolutions first broke out in Vienna. Metternich tried to suppress the uprisings, but eventually resigned and fled. Revolutions quickly spread to other parts of the empire. The Austrian army soon regained control of Vienna and many rebels were imprisoned or exiled. Italy too, suffered from revolutions. Nationalists wanted to end domination of Italy by the Austrian Hapsburgs. From Venice in the north to Naples in the south, Italians set up independent republics. However, Austrian troops ousted the new governments.

In the German states, students desperately wanted national unity and reforms. Through 1848, delegates from many German states met in the Frankfurt Assembly. They decided to offer King William of Prussia the crown of a united Germany, but the king rejected it. The assembly was dissolved under the threat of the Prussian military. The French uprisings inspired revolt in other parts of Europe. Many of the revolutions failed because they were put down by military force and because they lacked widespread support.

1. Why were there so many revolutions during 1830 and 1848?

2. Why did so many revolutions fail?

<u>The Overthrow of the French Monarchy</u>

The provisional government established in Paris after the mob had attacked and overthrew in government. On February 24, 1848, the new government immediately issued the following proclamation.

In the name of the French people:

A reactionary and oligarchical government has just been overthrown by the heroism of the people of Paris. That government has fled, leaving behind it a trail of blood that forbids it ever to retrace its steps.

The blood of the people has flowed as in July; but this time this noble people shall not be deceived. It has won a national and popular government in accord with the rights, the progress, and the will of this great and generous nation.

A provisional government, the result of pressing necessity and ratified by the voice of the people and of the deputies of the departments, in the session of February 24, is for the moment invested with the task of assuring and organizing the national victory. We will form a committee with representatives from all areas.

These citizens have not hesitated a moment to accept the patriotic commission which is imposed upon them by the pressure of necessity. With the capital of France on fire, the justification for the present provisional government must be sought in the public safety. All France will understand this and will lend it the support of its patriotism. Under the popular government which the provisional government proclaims, every citizen is a magistrate.

Frenchmen, it is for you to give to the world the example which Paris has given to France; prepare yourselves by order and by confidence in your destiny for the firm institutions which you are about to be called upon to establish.

The provisional government wishes to establish a republic,--subject, however, to ratification by the people, who shall be immediately consulted.

The unity of the nation (formed henceforth of all the classes of citizens who compose it); the government of the nation by itself; liberty, equality, and fraternity, for fundamental principles, and "the people" for our emblem and watchword: these constitute the democratic government which France owes to itself, and which our efforts shall secure for it.

1. What happened in France in 1848?

2. What does this document call for in France?

3. What reasons would a country have to demand these changes?