



CANMUN

Canada Model United Nations

Etats Généraux

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Diplomacy for Democracy | Diplomatie pour la Démocratie

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CANMUN Code of Conduct

Introduction

The conduct of attending delegates at the 2024 Canadian Model United Nations (hereby referred to as “CANMUN 2024” or “the conference”) reflects on their institution and the conference. To ensure a safe, professional and fun conference for all those in attendance, including but not limited to delegates, faculty advisors, conference staff and hotel staff, the following Code of Conduct has been formulated. Please ensure that you thoroughly read through this document, as all attendees are expected to abide by these policies during the duration of the conference (including but not limited to committee sessions, conference socials, committee breaks, and the opening and closing ceremonies) and, by extension, during any events or activities organized in the context of the conference. All delegates have indicated their acceptance of, and agreement to abide by, the terms of the Code of Conduct in their completion of registration at CANMUN 2024.

Harassment and Discrimination

1. All conference participants are expected to be respectful of each other. Harassment of any form will not be tolerated, which includes, but is not limited to, discrimination based on ethnicity, national origin, race, colour, religion, age, mental and physical disability, socio-economic status, gender identity, gender expression, sex and sexual orientation.
2. Harassment and Discrimination through any medium must be refrained from by participants, which includes but is not limited to:
 - a. In-person harassment, such as speech, gestures, sounds, phrases, touching etc.,
 - b. Digital mediums such as social media, text messages, email, phone calls, etc.,
 - c. Written mediums such as notes, written speeches, directives, etc.,
3. The secretariat of CANMUN 2024 reserves the right to determine what constitutes bullying and other inappropriate behaviour towards any individual and/or group.
4. The engagement of behaviour that constitutes physical violence and/or the threat of violence against any individual and/or group, including sexual violence and harassment is strictly forbidden, and may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Indecent and/or unwelcome suggestive comments about one’s appearance,
 - b. Nonconsensual sexual contact and/or behaviour among individuals or a group of individuals,
 - c. The sexual contact or behaviour between delegates and staff is strictly forbidden;
5. Cultural appropriation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, attire, accents, etc. that belong to a certain cultural, religious, or ethnic community.
6. Reported actions of harassment will thoroughly be investigated and the Secretariat reserves the right to take action (if deemed necessary).

Responsibilities and Liabilities

1. The valuables and possessions of delegates, and the safeguarding thereof, falls under the responsibility of the delegates. Neither Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel nor CANMUN 2024 and its staff shall be held liable for losses arising due to theft or negligence.
2. Delegates are responsible for the damages they cause to Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel or its property, the possessions of other delegates, staff, faculty advisors, or other hotel guests.
3. CANMUN 2024, Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel, and their respective staffs, shall not be liable towards any injury to persons, or damages or losses to property that may occur during the conference or due to a failure to comply to the rules governing said conference, including but not limited to, this Code of Conduct, Hotel rules and applicable laws, statutes and regulations.
4. Delegates are expected to present Conference identification upon request to Hotel and Conference staff.
5. Delegates must abide by Hotel rules while on Hotel premises. In particular, delegates are to refrain from the harassment of Hotel staff and other guests.

Abiding to the Laws of the City of Toronto, Province of Ontario, and Canada

1. Delegates, staff and other participants are required to abide by Ontario and Canadian laws, as well as Toronto by-laws at all times. Of particular note are laws referring to:
 - a. Theft;
 - b. Sexual Violence;
 - c. Possession of firearms and other weapons;
 - d. Trafficking and use of illegal drugs;
 - e. Public disturbances or nuisance alarms, ex. The triggering of an alarm when an emergency does not exist;
2. The legal drinking age in Ontario is 19 years of age. All participants found engaging in illegal activities may be expelled from the Conference and held criminally liable, regardless of legal drinking age of the delegate's residence.
3. All conference venues are non-smoking facilities (including cigarettes, e-cigarettes, and vapes).

Dress Code

1. All participants of CANMUN 2024 are expected to wear western business attire. Delegates, staff and other participants not maintaining an appropriate standard of dress will be asked to change their clothing to fit the dress code. If you need any exceptions to be made, or have questions about the dress code, please contact the Equity team via email, canmunequity@gmail.com.

Illness Policy

1. In light of the recent pandemic, we ask that delegates displaying symptoms of COVID-19, RSV, the Flu, or any other infectious illness to stay home, as to maintain the wellbeing and health of delegates, staff and guests.

2. In the event that you have recently (within one week of the first day of the conference) been in close contact with a positive case of COVID-19 and are not displaying COVID-19 symptoms, please use a rapid test and self-monitor for symptoms before and during the conference.
3. If at any time during the conference you begin to experience symptoms of any illness or feel unwell, **please inform your faculty advisor or a staff member, utilise personal protective gear (such as wearing a mask), and use a rapid test where possible.**
4. If you feel that your wellbeing is threatened/if you are concerned or uncomfortable, please inform a staff member or contact the Equity team via email, canmunequity@gmail.com.
5. CANMUN 2024 nor its agents accept responsibility for the effects of any illness contracted during the conference. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the individual to monitor the health and wellbeing of themselves, despite the measures put in place.

2SLGBTQIA+ Protection Policy

1. Any homophobia and/or transphobia will not be tolerated. This includes purposeful misgendering, discrimination, outing and/or use of transphobic /homophobic hate speech. All delegates are expected to treat other delegates with respect and refer to them with their preferred pronouns. If you personally feel uncomfortable as a result of the listed events above or due to similar events, please let us know in the form below.

How to Report

If you have a violation of the Code of Conduct to report, here are the following resources/procedures you can use to get in contact with a committee staff/secretariat member.

1. Communicate with a staff member responsible for you/your delegate's committee. They can be contacted via email.
2. Email the equity team at canmunequity@gmail.com. The equity team will get back to delegates in 1-3 business days for concerns before the event takes place, and will respond to delegates on the day of receipt during the conference.

Additionally, if you have any questions about the code of conduct before or during the conference, please email canmunequity@gmail.com. The Secretariat reserves the right to discipline attendees for not adhering to/violating any of the above stipulations. Disciplinary measures include, but are not limited to, suspension or expulsion from committee, removal from the conference/conference venue, disqualification from awards and/or disqualification from future events.

Director's Letter

Dear delegates, welcome to the CANMUN 2024 Etats-Generaux Committee! We are delighted to welcome all delegates. My name is Alex (he/him) and I will be your director for this committee. I am a tenth grade student at Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute in Toronto, Ontario, and I will be joined by Skylar, your chair, and Dima, your assistant director.

We will be meeting to simulate one of the less touched-upon yet critical periods of the French Revolution—the Etats-Generaux, or the Estates General (which is what I will be calling it for the rest of this background guide). This committee will be tasked with solving France's dire financial predicament, with overflowing debt, empty coffers, and a terrible taxation system among the issues. The Estates General will also be tasked with reforming the political structure in a way that increases equality and provides more rights to the Third Estate, while balancing the perspectives of the other two Estates. Success in this committee relies heavily on knowledge of the historical situation, both the period leading up to the Estates General, and also what occurred in the original timeline during and after the convening. It is absolutely critical for delegates to understand the complex political situation and the perspectives of all sides—especially their own. It would also be helpful for delegates to attain some knowledge of economics, as one of the topics is focused on fiscal policy and taxation. Delegates must also work together, crossing Estate lines in order to solve problems. In the original timeline, one of the key reasons why the Estates General was unsuccessful in its efforts was because discussion and debate occurred within Estates, and delegates were unwilling to make compromises. Finally, delegates must exhibit creative problem-solving skills and be able to think out of the box—the toughest challenge France has ever faced won't be solved by conventional methods! Delegates will be expected to follow appropriate rules of conduct and adhere to the equity policy. Inappropriate remarks towards other delegates or staff will not be tolerated.

Now, to get some more technical aspects out of the way: This committee will begin on the same date that the real Estates General began: May 5th, 1789. Every "original-timeline" event that happened prior to the starting date will remain unchanged, but what happens after the fifth of May will be rewritten by delegates in the form of resolutions. For the sake of simplicity, all rules of procedure will be the same as a typical General Assembly. Delegates will first motion for the Primary Speaker's List in order to decide on a topic, then move on to the Secondary Speaker's List, and proceed with moderated and unmoderated caucuses. Draft resolutions will be created and shared via a Google Drive that all delegates will receive the link to. Sponsor and signatory requirements/limits will be determined on the day of the committee. After motioning for a draft resolution,

delegates will be able to present the resolution to the committee and amendments will be able to be voted upon. However, there will be one large difference that separates it from a typical General Assembly.

Like the Estates General, voting will initially be conducted *by order*, meaning those of each Estate *must* decide what they will be voting for *together*. For example, when a draft resolution is proposed and someone motions to vote, each Estate will decide/vote amongst themselves, and the majority decision will be counted as one total point, making three total points amongst the three Estates. A new committee-specific motion, the *motion to change voting procedure* can be conducted, and delegates can propose to change to *voting by head*, or some other voting procedure that they see fit. This motion will count as a procedural motion, meaning *all delegates must vote*, and a simple majority will be required to pass it. This motion will take precedence over all other motions except one-time motions, such as the Primary and Secondary Speaker's Lists.

The easiest way to contact me is through Discord—my username is **excelex**. Do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this committee! I greatly look forward to the debate and discussion and hope that through this committee, delegates will be able to gain a more comprehensive understanding of historical and contemporary events.

With that said, good luck delegates!

Your director, *Alexander Zhang*

Definitions

The Etats-Genereux, or Estates-General: A legislative and consultative assembly of the three different classes of French society, typically called in extraordinary times.

Absolutism: A system of government in which all power rests in the hands of a single individual.

Ancien Regime: A name for the French political establishment before the French Revolution occurred.

Livre: The French unit of currency, used from 781 to 1794, broadly equivalent in value to the pound.

Cahiers de Doléances: The “list of grievances” drawn up by the Estates that contained feedback, complaints, and suggestions for the king.

First Estate: The class of the Catholic clergy in the Ancien Regime, including both the higher clergy (cardinals, archbishops, etc.) and the lower clergy (nuns, priests).

Second Estate: The class of the nobility.

Budget Deficit: When government expenditure exceeds government revenue.

Third Estate: The class of anyone who did not belong to the First or Second Estate and hold a title. This comprised around 98% of the population, the vast majority of which were peasants.

Ferme Generale: (English: General Farm) The Ancien Regime’s method of collecting indirect taxes, carried out by private contractors (tax farmers)

Fiscal Policy: The use of government spending and taxation to influence the economy.

Monetary Policy: Using changes in the money supply and interest rate to affect the economy, typically carried out by the central bank.

Taxation: A financial charge levied on a taxpayer by a government to fund public expenditure.

Taille: The direct land tax imposed on each household in the Ancien Regime.

Enlightenment: A period of cultural and intellectual

Philosophes: A writer or intellectual who held Enlightenment ideals.

Voting by head: A voting system in which each delegate receives their own vote.

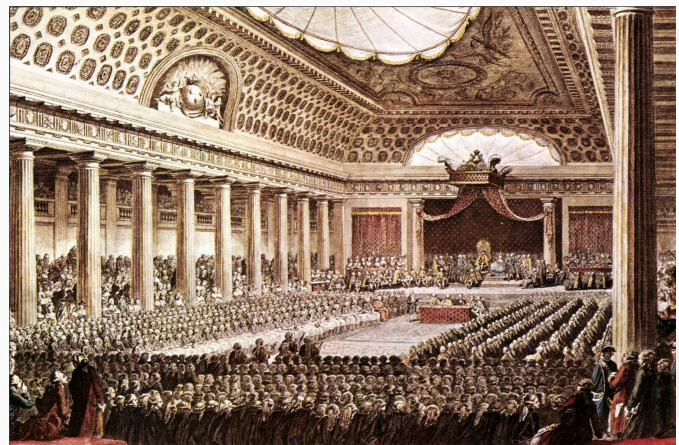
Introduction

In the Estates General committee, delegates will be meeting on May 5th, 1789, to discuss the future of France. In previous decades, warfare with Britain, an out-of-touch monarchy, and a broken taxation system, has plunged France into severe financial crisis. The nobility and upper classes live lavish and opulent lifestyles, which are unsustainably funded by the taxation of the already-struggling lower classes. With economic collapse seeming imminent, King Louis XVI has called the Estates General to find and discuss solutions.

Brief History of the Estates General

The Estates General (Etats Genereux in French) is an ancient, yet purely advisory body composed of representatives that is intended to voice the concerns of the Three Estates: 303 delegates from the First Estate represent the clergy, which has around 100,000 members who own around 10% of the land. 282 delegates from the Second Estate represent the nobility, which has around 400,000 members who own around 25% of the land. 578 delegates represent the Third Estate, who comprise a whopping 98% of the population at 28 million members. Representatives are chosen in various ways. For example, members of the clergy and nobility are rarely elected, with only the delegates of the Third Estate being chosen by election. Furthermore, although the Third Estate was supposed to be representative of the common population, only *bonnes villes*, or privileged towns, were called upon for representation, and country districts were not represented.

The most recent summoning of the Estates General occurred 175 years ago, and was conducted by King Philip IV of France in order to address a conflict with the Catholic Church. Prior to this, the Estates General's primary motive of convocation was to grant subsidies to the monarchy. These subsidies typically helped fund wars, such as when in 1355, King John II used the



Estates General to raise funds for a conflict against England. As a result, during the 14th and 15th centuries, the Estates General had a significant amount of power, at one point even controlling voting and taxation. Soon after, its influence began to steadily decline as the principle of absolutism began to take hold on France, and the

penultimate summoning occurred in 1614. After this point, the absolute monarchy was fully established and became incompatible with the Estates General.

Summoning of the Estates General of 1789

In early 1789, King Louis XVI decided to summon the Estates General to address the severe financial crisis at hand. His letter, dated January 24th, 1789, stated “We have need of a concourse of our faithful subjects, to assist us surmount all the difficulties we find relative to the state of our finances...” and prompted swift elections within judicial districts. Before the Estates General was summoned, each judicial district was required to collect a *cahiers de doleance*, or “list of grievances” that would be considered by the institution.

The Cahiers of the First Estate called for an end to bishops being allowed to hold more than one diocese (the district under the jurisdiction of a particular bishop) and also called for bishophood to be exclusive to members of the nobility. In return, they were prepared to abdicate the financial privileges of the Church, but would not give up the superiority that the First Estate held over the Second and Third. They also wished for Catholicism to be the only publicly exercised religion in France, and condemned an edict from 1789 which declared that rights be given to Protestants. However, 85% of the First Estate did call for tax reform towards equality and also proposed that the Estates General meet more regularly. Finally, on the topic of voting procedure in the Estates General, the vast majority of its members wished for voting to be conducted by order rather than head.

The Cahiers of the Second Estate were quite progressive, with the vast majority in favor of tax reform towards equality, and also limits on the absolutism of the monarchy. Some nobility even called for individual freedoms and freedom of speech.

As for the Third Estate’s *cahiers*, the majority of the grievances were regarding the taxes and financial privilege held by the other two Estates, who were exempt from paying a tithe or taille. They also called for a more fair voting system within the Estates General, as although they had double the members of the other two Estates, they still received an equal amount of votes—one. Hence, the Third wished for voting to be conducted by head (meaning one vote was assigned to each delegate), rather than by order (meaning each Estate received one vote). When the King convened the *parlement* of Paris, which was the highest court of appeal in France, to discuss the issue of voting, their edict was that the Estates General would adopt the same procedures as when it convened a century earlier. This led to outrage amongst many in the Third, and newspapers, among other media, published fiery articles regarding the selfishness of the parlement. Eventually, the King summoned the Assembly of Notables (more on this later) to reexamine the issue, but the Assembly only confirmed the initial edict of the

parlement by declaring that voting should be done by order, which led to even more outcry within the Third Estate.

The Original Timeline of the Estates General

Remark: The following events occur after the beginning of this Model UN Committee and are placed in this guide to encourage a deeper understanding.

The Estates General of 1789 was opened on May 5th, 1789 in the town of Versailles. King Louis XVI and the Keeper of the Seals of France, Charles Barentin, intended for the Estates General to immediately start finding solutions to the financial crisis by first tackling the issue of tax-reform, but this did not happen. This was because the Third Estate wanted the Estates General's voting to be conducted by head rather than by order. Hence, although the King decreed that the Third Estate would have double the delegates, the voting system would remain the same as before. The Third Estate viewed this as a "Band-Aid solution" that gave them no real power.

Before discussion began, each Estate was supposed to quickly "verify" its delegates, meaning the deputies were required to confirm the identities of their representatives and ensure they had been lawfully chosen or elected. However, a portion of the Third Estate refused to verify their representatives in protest of the voting procedure, and they claimed the act of verification would mean that they agreed to vote by order, not by head. Instead, these delegates argued that the entire Estates General should verify all delegates of all estates. Thus, the Third Estate invited the other Estates to join their process of collective verification.

Although the First and Second both rejected this offer, the Third was steadfast on its refusal to verify its own delegates. Thus, on June 10th, 1789, the Third Estate decided to proceed on their own and verify the delegates of *all* Estates, regardless of whether or not they were supported by the others. The First Estate voted against the acceptance of the collective verification invitation by the Third Estate, (within the First, 134 members voted against this proposition, while 114 voted for it) but many disgruntled members of the First Estate defected to the Third.

Events quickly escalated, and the Third Estate grew frustrated with the inaction. The conservatism of the other Estates and the ancient procedures held back any possibility for reform. Hence, on the 17th of June, they voted 490 to 90 to declare themselves the National Assembly, a revolutionary assembly intended to facilitate with the creation of a French Constitution that was "established and grounded on solid foundations." The delegates intended the National Assembly to represent the needs and interests of the French people rather than the high and

mighty. Quickly after, the First Estate voted to join the National Assembly 149 to 137. The King attempted to intervene by locking the doors of the meeting hall, but the delegates simply found the nearest building, which happened to be an indoor tennis court, and took an oath to continue meeting until the King gave in to their demands. Most of all, the This oath, signed on June 20th 1789, was known as the “Tennis Court Oath,” and marked a turning point in the balance of power, not only because of its contents, but because it intrinsically challenged the power of the King.

A few members of the National Assembly, including Maximilien Robespierre and Georges Danton, formed a radical political party called the Jacobin Club. The Jacobins weren't seeking mere reform, but revolution. They wanted the removal of the King, absolute monarchy, and Old Regime entirely. With this growing radical presence, the emotion that eventually became eponymous with the French Revolution began to take hold: FEAR. The King, who feared a revolt of the Third Estate, called in the military to surround Paris. The National Assembly in turn, created their own armed forces, and immediately, many members of the French military defected to this group.

On the morning of July 14th, 1789, a crowd gathered around the Bastille, a towering prison in the heart of Paris, which many viewed as a symbol of royal tyranny. They called for the removal of cannons from the prison walls and the release of the arms and gunpowder held within. Two members from the crowd were invited into the Bastille to begin negotiations, but the crowd became impatient and began to surge into the courtyard. Amidst the confusion and chaos, gunfire began and fighting ensued. The Governor of the prison, realizing the hopelessness of the situation, decided to surrender and was subsequently killed by the mob, who stuck his head on a pike and paraded it around the city.

The National Assembly decided to support this form of violent revolt, and in August, they adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, a document similar to the American Declaration of Independence that included a list of inalienable human rights. At this point, the king was quickly losing power, money, and support. Naturally, the other monarchies, including those of Austria and Prussia, began to fear that *their* people would revolt as well, and knowing an invasion was imminent, the National Assembly decided to declare war on Austria in April of 1792.

In the Insurrection of August 10th, 1792, King Louis XVI was arrested, and soon had all his power taken from him—the monarchy was abolished. A week later, Robespierre proposed the creation of a Revolutionary Tribunal, a board that would have extraordinary powers to impose the death sentence. On September 21st, 1792, the Ancien Regime became the First French Republic. By now, troops from Austria and Prussia began to close in on Paris, and fearing that once Paris fell, all the clergy and nobility would take revenge on the commoners,

thousands of upperclassmen were executed. Furthermore, in a proclamation known as *The Brunswick Manifesto*, the Prussian Duke of Brunswick declared that he would return King Louis XVI to the throne, prompting Robespierre and other radicals of the National Assembly to call for the former King's execution. On January 21st, 1793, King Louis XVI was executed by guillotine.

It was around this time of January 1793 that Spain and Portugal joined the anti-France alliance, and the war was beginning to go badly for the new French Republic. With the economy and war front crumbling once again, Jean-Paul Marat led a radical Sans-Culottes mob, which consisted of thousands of commoners unhappy with the squalid standards of living, and surrounded the National Convention on the 31st of May, 1793. They called for 22 moderate Girondins to be brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal. In the end, over 29 Girondin politicians fell, and the political climate turned even more radical.



On April 6th, 1793, Robespierre and eleven other radicals formed the Committee of Public Safety to silence internal counter revolutionary dissent. This committee was given an extraordinary range of powers. Tens of thousands of people were tried by the Committee, found guilty, and executed by the guillotine. Even those close to Robespierre weren't safe, and many government officials were sentenced to death, including Georges Danton, one of Robespierre's closest friends. Bertrand Barere, a member of the National Convention, famously proclaimed "Terror is the order of the day." In a speech, Robespierre remarked:

"If the basis of popular government in peacetime is virtue, the basis of popular government during a revolution is both virtue and terror; virtue, without which terror is baneful; terror, without which virtue is powerless. Terror is nothing more than speedy, severe and inflexible justice; it is thus an emanation of virtue; it is less a principle in itself, than a consequence of the general principle of democracy, applied to the most pressing needs of the *patrie* [fatherland]"

During this Reign of Terror, the National Convention initiated price controls on a wide variety of goods, which made farmers reluctant to sell their goods to Parisians. Soon, Paris began to suffer severe shortages of food, while spiraling inflation and war debt continued to plague the French economy. On the 29th of June, three members of the Committee of Public Safety accused Robespierre of being a dictator, and in response, Robespierre refused to attend Committee meetings. On July 26th, Robespierre declared that several members of the National Convention

had committed treason. However, he refused to reveal the names of the “traitors”, and so his opponents, fearing they would be sentenced to death, decided to arrest Robespierre. On July 28th, 1794, Robespierre became the final victim of the Reign of Terror.

After Robespierre’s death, the more moderate government of the Thermadorians took power. Their policies quickly became unpopular and the people grew frustrated once again. On September 9th, 1799, a young general by the name of Napoleon Bonaparte who gained glory and fame during the wars of the Revolution took over in a military coup. He appointed himself the First Consul of France. This is where most historians mark the end of the French Revolution and the beginning of the Napoleonic era.

Topic A: Taxation, Debt and Fiscal Policy

“I shall easily show that it is impossible to tax further, ruinous to be always borrowing and not enough to confine ourselves to measures of economy.” -Charles Calonne, 1787

Introduction: It is the year 1789, and the once-prosperous, once-powerful nation of France, is plagued by a terribly inefficient taxation system and debt riddled coffers. It is in this topic which delegates shall debate and discuss solutions to the unprecedented financial crisis at hand. Each delegate should represent their personal interests, while also considering how to benefit the nation at large. Compromises will have to be made on all sides in order to receive a favorable solution, and resolutions should take into account all parties.

Foreign Conflict & Debt



One of the main causes of France’s fiscal nightmare is the massive spending incurred by their involvement in a multitude of foreign conflicts. In the late 1600s, France was a global superpower whose power and influence could only be rivaled by Britain. Their territories included vast portions of land in Eastern North America, West Africa, and Southeast Asia, and these contributed greatly to France’s economy. However, this growth prompted heavy military spending by Louis XIV, who used conflict as a way to increase his power abroad and at home.

What followed were a string of conflicts that successively drained the royal treasury, including:

1. The War of Devolution, fought between France and Spain in 1667, costing 18 million livres.
2. The Nine Years War, fought with the Dutch in 1672, costing more than one billion livres. At this point, taxes were only recouping around half of the money spent, and France’s budget deficit began to pile up.

3. The War of the Spanish Succession, fought with most of the great powers of Europe from 1701 to 1714 brought France's debts to unprecedented highs, forcing the government to borrow heavily and raise taxes on the Third Estate. In 1710, the *dixieme* was introduced, a 10% income tax for all except the clergy.
4. The War of the Austrian Succession, fought against multiple great powers of Europe from 1744 to 1748, took place on a global scale, thus requiring heavy mobilization of troops on many continents. This increased the French debt by another two hundred million livres.
5. The Seven Years War, fought against Britain, Austria, Russia, and Spain, among others in the year 1756, also took place on a global scale, with considerable fighting occurring in the North American colonies. During this war, France spent around 1.3 billion livres, an incredible sum at the time. Due to their defeat, they were also forced to give up large portions of foreign territory, mainly in North America. This raised the French debt from 1.2 billion livres to 2.3 billion livres, a figure that does not even include the economic consequences and lost trade.
6. The American Revolutionary War was fought between Britain and the American Colonies, starting in 1775, and although France did not directly participate, they did provide massive sums of aid in the form of money, guns, and ships, which cost 1.3 billion livres and increased the debt to more than 3.3 billion livres.

Throughout these conflicts, France's budget continued to sink into deeper and deeper deficits, primarily because the wealthy nobility refused to pay taxes themselves while forcing the peasants to bear the financial brunt. Once Louis XV passed away in 1774, this financial predicament was handed to Louis XVI, who continued his father's legacy of financial incompetence. Some examples of this incompetency included spending enormous sums of money on his palace at Versailles and supporting the perfunctory lifestyle of those around him (e.g. when his wife, Marie Antoinette, decided to make her hair into a boat).

All this was made worse by the fact that the French economy was being crippled by archaic institutions which decimated competition amongst businesses. For example, "guilds" were collections of merchants/artisans who oversaw and regulated their trade, and these guilds only allowed those within the guild to do business. This put a chokehold on innovation, free trade, and competition, and greatly hindered economic recovery. Two thinkers in particular, Rousseau and Adam Smith, were vocal and outspoken critics of the guild system.

Inefficient and Ineffective Taxation

Underlying France's debt was a taxation system that was fundamentally inefficient.

The French taxation system had, for a long time, consisted of two types of tax: Direct and indirect tax. Direct taxes made up a third of government revenue and were collected by government officials on a per person basis, while indirect taxes, which made up the rest of revenue, were in the form of excises on goods and were collected by "tax farmers." These "tax farmers" were simply individuals who were granted the right to collect taxes for the government. However, the farmers all levied a commission on top of the original tax in order to make a profit, which promoted corruption and inefficiency, making trade and business increasingly difficult. Furthermore, there were simply too many types of taxes, on everything from property, to the amount of members in one's family. Below are some examples of taxes.

1. The *taille* was the oldest and most lucrative tax, having first been created in the 15th century. It was supposed to be "payment" for the military and was calculated based on land ownership and income. Additionally, because the Second Estate fought and the First Estate could not fight, it was only levied on the Third Estate. This made it the most hated tax for its inconsistency and inequality—the brunt of the *taille* fell on the shoulders of the peasants and rural landowners.
2. The *capitation* was the "head tax," levied on all citizens of France, and was first introduced in 1695. Like the *taille*, it was also highly unequal, because the First Estate was exempted and the Second Estate often found ways to avoid or greatly reduce the amount of tax paid.
3. The *vingtieme* was a 5% French income tax. It replaced the *dixieme*, a 10% tax, in the year 1749, and although it was originally enacted as a wartime measure, it was continually renewed despite widespread opposition.
4. The *gabelle* was a salt tax, and as the name suggests, it was a tax on one of the most essential commodities—salt. Like many other taxes, this one varied greatly depending on where the salt was bought and some provinces were entirely exempt from this. However, it did comprise 10% of the government's total revenue, around 55 million per year by the 1780s.
5. Other taxes:
 - a. The wine tax was the *aide*.
 - b. The tobacco tax was the *tabac*.
 - c. The *traits* were taxes on domestic trade between provinces.
 - d. The *octroi* was a tariff on goods entering cities.
 - e. The *cens* was a royalty on the land for peasants on *seigneuries*.
 - f. The *champart* was a share of the harvest paid by a peasant to their lord.

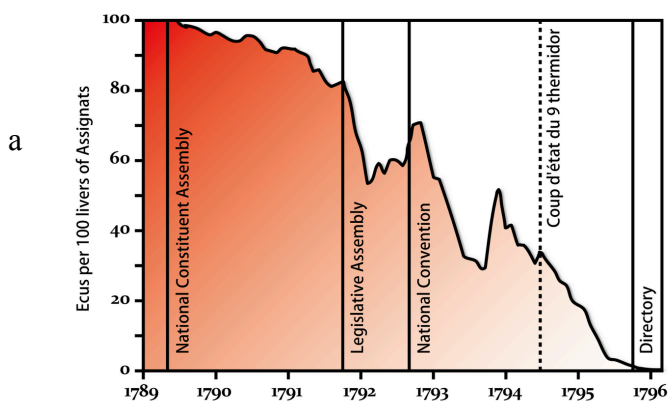
- g. The *corvée* was an obligation for peasants to work unpaid on particular days of the year to fix infrastructure.
- h. The *tithe* was a share of the harvest given by a peasant to the Catholic Church.

When King Louis XIV was in power around the mid-17th century, government expenditure had started to rapidly increase. Fortunately, the Sun King's controller-general of finances, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, implemented clever and innovative ideas that greatly strengthened France's financial situation.

Colbert created the *Ferme Generale*, or "General Farm" in 1680 to try to reduce the amount of these tax farmers and thus increase the efficiency of the bloated system. He also helped decrease French expenditure by abolishing sections of government that did little to nothing and also passing new legislation that regulated trade. These reforms more than tripled the net revenue, from 32 million to 93.5 million livres. However, after his death, things returned back to normal and his successors were unable to handle the precarious predicament.

In 1783, King Louis XVI finally came to the realization that France was in a fiscal nightmare, and appointed Charles-Alexandre de Calonne as controller general of finances. After attempting some minor reforms that barely made a dent on the mountainous debt, Calonne knew the only solution was to make major changes to the France taxation system. In 1786, he submitted a proposal to the Assembly of Notables, a group of upperclassmen specially summoned for situations like this one. Unfortunately for him and the French economy, his propositions, which would either force the nobility to agree to a new taxation system or remove their exemption from the current ones, were quickly denied.

Case Study: The Assignat of the Original Timeline



In the original timeline, French monetary policy took wrong turn that led to spiraling hyperinflation. In 1789, the economy of France grinded to a standstill, with industrial and agricultural output dropping significantly. At this point, France's expenditure still far outstripped revenue, and the Revolutionary government decided to issue *assignats*, intended to be bonds with 5% interest that

would fund spending. However, by 1790, the National Assembly redefined the assignat as a fiat currency, in the

hopes that it would address the liquidity crisis and stave off bankruptcy. Smaller denominations of the paper bill were created for use within daily life. As one might expect, the value of the assignat fell by 5% when they started to circulate. Many influential figures spoke out against the introduction of the assignat. For instance, Necker argued that the assignats would bankrupt France, while Du Pont de Nemours feared that they would increase inflation to the point where the price of bread would double. Unfortunately, these fears were valid. Although the assignats initially stimulated growth, as revolutionary governments repeatedly printed more assignats in order to fund expenditures, their rapid depreciation (see figure to left), among other factors, would cause inflation in 1794 to rise to around 3500%.

Questions for Consideration

1. How can France's system of taxation be remodeled into something more efficient?
2. How can reforms be enacted without completely upending social norms and plunging France into anarchy? Is there a path other than all-out revolution?
3. What should the immediate next steps be to pull France out of the financial crisis?

Topic B: Voting and Political Reform

The Enlightenment

The Enlightenment, sometimes referred to as “The Age of Reason,” was an intellectual and philosophical movement that began in the 17th century and ended in the late 1700s. Throughout this period, prominent thinkers continually challenged the norms and conventions that had been accepted for centuries, relying on the tools of logic and science rather than superstition and religious doctrine. This will be covered in two sections.

A. *The “Scientific” Enlightenment*

Throughout this period, scientists, which increasingly began to value empiricism and rational thought, went on a spree of discovery and invention. From Galileo’s telescope to Franklin’s work on electricity to Isaac Newton’s theory of gravity, the Enlightenment saw an incredible amount of practical as well as theoretical advancements. In particular, an ever-growing proportion of the population was becoming literate, and many of these ideas were being disseminated to the public. Even amongst the humanities, important works were published. For example, the first theory of modern economics, Adam Smith’s *The Wealth of Nations*, immediately began to impact fiscal and monetary policy within Britain.

B. *The “Social” Enlightenment*

The Enlightenment is widely regarded as the birthplace of the Western liberal democracy. Rulers had always justified their absolute power through “divine will,” claiming that God had bestowed them with the right to rule. Defiance of the King was equivalent to defiance of God’s will. Thinkers such as Locke and Rousseau challenged these archaic ideas, primarily through the concept of a *social contract*. This was a theory on the relationship between government and the individual, and many ideas were put forth. These thinkers called themselves the



RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité

philosophes, French for philosophers. In his influential work, Rousseau asserts that only the will of the people has the right to power. This, he argues, is because a person's right to freedom is inalienable, and thus, the only way for a legitimate power to be compatible with this inalienable right is if the power obeys the will of the individual. In other words, the only way for a person obeying authority to be free is if the authority is the person itself. The idea that every human had "natural rights," meaning everyone had an inalienable right to life, liberty, and property (with a few major exceptions on "everyone") was proposed by John Locke.

Another major paradigm shift occurred on the topic of religion in relation to the state. In particular, a thinker, Voltaire, was an outspoken advocate of the separation and removal of the Church from matters of law. He stated "No ecclesiastical law should have any force except it has the express sanction of the government. It is by this means that Athens and Rome were freed from religious quarrels."

Rights and Freedoms

Most importantly, people of this period wished for their rights to be *inalienable* and to maintain their quality of life. Many in this era believed that many issues with the regime stemmed from the ignorance and neglect of the rights of men. Even still, the concept of rights and freedoms was foreign. Although the American Constitution, written by Thomas Jefferson with the help of the Marquis de Lafayette had already been written, no such French document existed that solidified the rights of the people. In the original timeline, the National Assembly created the "Declaration of the Rights of Men," which established rights for all *men* (women were excluded). Five deputies were tasked with writing this document and its articles, which were voted upon one by one, included the following:

- *Article 1: Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.*
- *Article 2: The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of Man. These rights are Liberty, Property, Safety and Resistance to Oppression.*
- *Article 6: The Law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to take part, personally or through their representatives, in its making. It must be the same for all, whether it protects or punishes. All citizens, being equal in its eyes, shall be equally eligible to all high offices, public positions and employments, according to their ability, and without other distinction than that of their virtues and talents.*
- *Article 11: The free communication of ideas and of opinions is one of the most precious rights of man. Any citizen may therefore speak, write and publish freely, except what is tantamount to the abuse of this liberty in the cases determined by Law.*

Delegates should seek to create a resolution which details rights and freedoms for the people.

Structure of Government and Voting

France has been in a state of absolute monarchy for centuries, and it is important for delegates to consider what changes must be made to the Ancien Regime.


A. Distribution of Power

Currently, all the power rests in the hands of one individual, King Louis XVI. The absolutist Ancien Regime has ruled this way for centuries, but it was not always this way. Louis XIII was widely considered to be the first king to establish an absolute rule, but he had to overcome a wide variety of obstacles. For example, military power lay in the hands of nobles, who raised private armies and built fortifications. Other noblemen acted as representatives to the people, collecting taxes and administering justice. Louis XIV decided to weaken competitors for power in many ways. First, the castles and strongholds of nobility were demolished in the name of budgetary reform. Second, nobility were required to spend a portion of the year in the Palace at Versailles, allowing them to come under the surveillance and control of the monarchy. Finally, positions of nobility were replaced by those from the better educated merchant class, and thus the titles could be revoked at any time. It was in this fashion that absolutism was established, and it has received heavy opposition from prominent thinkers, most notably the *philosophes*.

B. Voting in the Estates General

Within the original timeline, one of the most divisive topics was how voting in the Estates General would be conducted. In fact, this topic was so controversial among delegates that the Third Estate decided to split and form an entirely separate committee, the National Assembly. There are two competing structures of voting that delegates should consider. Voting by order is the original voting system, in which each Estate receives one vote. The Third Estate was heavily opposed to this, as the First and Second could consistently outvote the Third Estate 2-1. Voting by head is thus the desired voting system of many members in the Third Estate, as it means each delegate receives one vote.

Questions For Consideration

1. Should France fundamentally change its distribution of power? (e.g. should it turn into a constitutional monarchy)
 2. How can a compromise be struck such that more voting rights are given to the Third Estate while still satisfying the First and Second?
 3. What inalienable rights and freedoms should be bestowed upon the regular citizen regardless of class?
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Below are the Estates of each character.

First Estate:	Second Estate (Nobility):	Third Estate (Commoners):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jean-Baptiste de Talleyrand-Périgord - Henri Jean-Baptiste Grégoire (AKA Abbé Grégoire) - Louis-Alexandre Expilly de La Poipe - Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord - Jean de Dieu-Raymond de Boisgelin - Jean-Sifrein Maury - Alexandre-Angélique de Talleyrand-Périgord 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Louis Philippe II - François Alexandre Frédéric de La Rochefoucauld - Mathieu Jean Félicité de Montmorency - Adam Philippe - Louis-Michel le Peletier - Marquis de Lafayette - Gérard de Lally-Tollendal - Antoine Destutt de Tracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximilien Robespierre - Jean-Sylvain Bailly - Honoré Gabriel Riqueti - Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès - Georges Danton - Jean-Paul Marat - Antoine Barnave - Bertrand Barère de Vieuzac - Dominique Joseph Garat - Joseph Ignace Guillotin - Pierre-Louis Roederer - Jean-Paul Rabaut Saint-Étienne - Adam Philippe - Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin - Pierre Samuel du Pont de Nemour

Further Reading

Websites:

[Alpha History Summary of the French Revolution](#)

[The Social Contract](#)

[Declaration of the Rights of the Man](#)

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