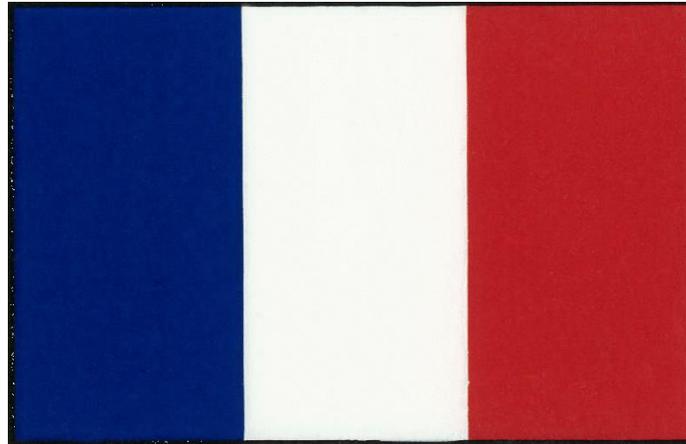


The French Revolution



Constitution of the Year III of the Republic (1795) The Directory

- With the foreign invaders vanquished and the Reign of Terror at an end, the Convention was finally able to inaugurate its new constitution
- Constitution of the Year III of the Republic (1795) created the **Directory**

The End of the Reign of Terror

- Curtailed the power of the Committee for Public Safety.
- Closed the Jacobin Clubs.
- Churches were reopened.
- 1795 freedom of worship for all cults was granted.
- Economic restrictions were lifted in favor of laissez-faire policies.
- August, 1795 a new Constitution is written
- More conservative republicanism.

Government under the Directory

Executive

- 5 directors appointed by the Legislature

Legislature

- Lower house (500 members) proposed laws
- Upper house (250 members) voted on these laws
- 2/3 of the Legislature would initially be filled by members of the Convention

Qualifications

- Girondists (middle-class party) had defeated the Jacobins (working- and peasant-class party)
- Girondists' constitution stated that **suffrage** (the right to vote), as well as the right to hold office, were limited to property owners

Other Parting Reforms Passed by the Convention

Adopted the metric system

Dealt the final blow to feudalism by abolishing primogeniture (the system whereby the oldest son inherited all of his father's estate)

Drew up a comprehensive system of laws

Ended debt imprisonment

Ended slavery in France's colonies

Established a nationwide system of public education

Directory Fails (1795-1799)

The Directory suffered from corruption and poor administration.

The people of France grew poorer and more frustrated with their government.

Despite, or perhaps because of, these struggles, the French developed a strong feeling of **nationalism** – they were proud of their country and devoted to it.

National pride was fueled by military successes.

It would be a military leader – **Napoleon Bonaparte**, coming to power through a **coup d'état** – who would end the ten-year period (1789-1799) known as the French Revolution.

Review Questions

1. Who controlled the executive branch in the new Directory?

2. How did the legislature of the new Directory work?

3. What other social changes does the Directory make?

4. Why does the Directory fail? Who takes over?