

The trial and execution of louis xvi essay sample



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During the late 1700's, France found itself at a major turning point in its history. King Louis XVI, the successor to the throne from Louis XV was at rule. A favored king at first, his reign first appeared to follow through with the monarchy, though as time passed, the public found and soon sought reasons which garnered controversy and hate towards his name. Leading to the end of his rule, he faced numerous accusations on different charges and the hatred of the public and government amounted to his execution. There are multiple reasons for which he was executed.

Louis XVI was known to be very weak-minded, and indecisive. He was seen as a weak king who could not make proper decisions and this caused the public to doubt his rule as a stable king. As he faltered to make decisions, his wife Marie-Antoinette made the decisions for him, which were usually not beneficial for the French citizens - another reason which caused the public to dislike him.

His wife brought much dislike to him, as she was always very unpopular with the public. This is because even though she rules as queen of France, she was not of French birth, but was born in Austria - a rival nation of France, and had a strong Austrian background.

In addition to this, the king strongly disliked the National Assembly, and was forced into acknowledging the Decrees of the 4th. The Decrees of the 4th was the lords surrendering their power due to the threat of uprising within common folk. The public acquired even more hatred for King Louis XVI as the National Assembly began to over rule him, and emphasize his weakness even more. For example, someone began sending the Cardinal letters

impersonating the king's wife Marie-Antoinette, demanding the purchase of an extremely expensive necklace. This outraged the people of France, since their lifestyles had hit rock-bottom and they were barely able to survive. The King and Queen of France were furious when they discovered the scandal, and took the Cardinal to court. He appeared to be guilty, but nevertheless wasn't convicted of conspiracy against the royal family, but the National Assembly placed the blame on Marie-Antoinette. This only increased public and government revulsion against the royal family.

King Louis XVI was then found guilty for two acts treason. Once the king had lost power to the National Assembly, he attempted to reclaim the power by fleeing from Paris to Eastern France in order to rally troops and forcefully regain control. He was caught however and forced back into Paris then stripped of all power. Meanwhile, France declared war on three of its major monarchies: Austria, Prussia and Sardinia. Once he had lost power, Louis turned to the three monarchies for aid. He agreed to contribute his support if they would place him on the throne as king of France once again. Through this decision, it is quite apparent and evident that he did not expect France to succeed in the war. France did win however, and the success gave the National Assembly enough power to overthrow his position as king, trial him and execute him, which led up to his final day in which he faced the guillotine on January 21, 1793.

These are the reasons and events which amounted to the King's execution. The beginning of his loss of power may be at the source of the public's hate for his Austrian-born wife Marie-Antoinette, though through this the cycle of different allegations and accusations continued and amounted with time,

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causing him to make two acts of treason against France. His execution marked the end of the French monarchy, and helped it to evolve into the country it has become today. The metamorphosis of monarchical France to the republican country it is today has been quite immense, but generally quite beneficial to both the nation and its people.