

# Historical investigation paper essay



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Imagine living during a time where if you thought something was wrong then you would be gruesomely executed by having your head sliced straight off your head. During the French Revolution there was a time where thousands of people were being executed using the infamous guillotine. This period of time was referred to as The Reign of Terror. During this time a group of extremists were in charge of the country.

These extremists were not to be mess with because they ordered over 15,000 people to be executed with the guillotine. The revolutionist would execute anyone who was suspected of speaking against the revolution and the action the extremists were taking. The Reign of Terror started in September 1793 and ended in July 1794. In some ways this was justified by the way the peasants were treated. But at the same time it was very hypocritical of them to do these acts.

The Reign of terror had aspects of being justified but of course was not completely right, it was justified because they needed to resolve to violence to get their point across, because they were in desperate times and needed to resolve to drastic measures in order to get what they wanted, and the king needed to be taken down however killing many people went against what they were fighting for. The citizens of France had been living in awful times for many years while the King lived with no problems and neglected the citizens; this caused them to act violently in order to catch the King's attention.

From this point of view it makes the acts during the Reign of Terror more justifiable. The majority of the nation was starving and with the amount of

bread decreasing, the price of bread would continue to rise. In February 1794 Maximilien Robespierre gave one of his most famous speeches on why the Reign of Terror was justified. In it he says “ If the spring of popular government in time of peace is virtue, the springs of popular government in revolution are at once virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is fatal; terror, without which virtue is powerless.

Terror is nothing other than justice, prompt, severe, inflexible; it is therefore an emanation of virtue; it is not so much a special principle as it is a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to our country’s most urgent needs. ” To summarize this exert, Robespierre is blaming the government for the executions. Robespierre is saying terror is nothing more than serving justice for the way the peasants were being treated by the King. He is saying that when a country is in urgent needs then it is necessary and acceptable to destroy the peace of the nation.

You might ask yourself however, is it really necessary to perform these awful acts just because the citizens are not happy. The bad food harvest cause anarchy and the King never responded to it, driving the citizens into a time of urgent needs. “ The harvest of 1788 had been poor, and the cost of food was high. Matters were not helped by the hesitant policies of the government, which was in the middle of reorganization. Food riots in both urban and rural centers resulted.

As more and more farmers were unable to meet their commitments, the number of homeless indigents on the roads of France increased. Those who lived in rural areas were concerned for their safety and that of their crops. ”

Riots were being caused because of the food shortage and the government never did anything to fix it. The extremist had many reasons that justified executing people in the Reign of Terror. However the extremist did kill thousands of people, many of who may have been quite innocent.

During the Reign of Terror thousand of people were executed, many of these people may have been innocent. Ruthlessly executing anybody who stood in the extremist way did not reflect what they were trying to change. Their acts could be described as very hypocritical. Many of the articles in Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen which was approved by the National Assembly of France on August 26, 1789. The very first article is one of the best examples. " Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good."

Their goal is to have every man be equal in rights, but why wasn't this addressed in The Reign of Terror. Prior to people execution the victims were given no fair trial in court. This means that the victims are not given the same rights as others, thus not being treated equal. This also violates article 9 " As all persons are held innocent until they shall have been declared guilty, if arrest shall be deemed indispensable, all harshness not essential to the securing of the prisoner's person shall be severely repressed by law."

The extremists were almost going against everything said in the Declaration, but another one that sticks out is article number 10. It states " No one shall be disquieted on account of his opinions, including his religious views, provided their manifestation does not disturb the public order established by law. "

This was being broken because many of the people being executed were

being killed for speaking out against the extremist and saying what they believe. They were being punished for stating their opinion in no way that disturbed public order.

It is an awful thing that many people died innocently but the citizens of France had to do what was necessary, but the extremist proved to be hypocritical in their acts as they went against what they were fighting for in the first place. The Reign of Terror was justified for many reasons because of the way they had been deprived of food or any attention, however their many executions went against what they were fighting for in the first place. They had been starving for many years and the government neglected to help in any way.

At the same time killing thousands of people, many of who were innocent went against The Declaration of the Rights of Man. This includes many articles in it including, not being treated equally, not given a fair trial and being persecuted for their opinions that did not hurt society. The Reign of Terror made a mark on the French Revolution and on history its self. A lesson taught by these extreme events is to go at your problems civilly. When your fighting for what is right you cannot get carried away with violence and forget what you were fighting for in the first place. Or else you will become no different than who your trying to take down.