

Louis xiv

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Louis XIV also known as “ The Sun King” was one of the most absolute of rulers that ever ruled France. His primary goals as king were “ One King, One Law, One Faith.” He achieved this in such ways; he declared himself his own prime minister “ I am the state”, he kept the nobility in check, disbanded the General Assembly, and the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. However, his great ambitions and lavish lifestyle would ultimately lead France into dept, and set the building blocks for the French Revolution.

When Louis ascended to the throne, he was only four, at this young age Louis would not be able to rule France effetely, so his mother chose the able Italian Cardinal Mazarin as prime minister. During this time, the tumultuous Wars of the Fronde were happening; this was an attempt by the nobility to limit the powers of the monarch and to decentralize the government to extend their own influence. However, with help from the bourgeoisie and the peasants, Mazarin was able to subdue the Frondeurs. This war left Louis uneasy; he lost almost complete trust in the nobility. When Mazarinc died in 1661, Louis declared himself as his own Prime Minister saying L’Etat, c’est moi (“ I am the state”) which justified “ One King” and the divine right theory of rule.

To amplify his power, Louis XIV disbanded the General Assembly, a legislative branch of the French government that is a prototype for modern parliaments or senates. Louis XIV believed that it was imperative that he maintain absolute control over all French military forces. This would help him to prevent a civil war that could happen because of nobles constantly struggling for power, as demonstrated in the Fronde. In addition to complete control over the French military, Louis XIV wanted complete control over the

French economy, and even the religion of the French people. This religious intolerance would cause a great uproar among the French people that would kindle the French Revolution that would eventually break out in France.

Louis XIV a devout catholic believed that France should be under one religion; Catholicism. He suppressed religious dissent, outlawing Jansenism, and revoking the Edict of Nantes. His religious intolerance had caused many Huguenots to flee France, abandoning their jobs and taking with them all their French money. This severely crippled the French economy.

After Louis XIV death in 1715, the nation of France and its monarchy began to decline. Although Louis XIV was able to establish absolute authority in France, and come very close to his goal of one religion in France, it came at a very cost high. His ambitions threw France into a debt and a public unrest that would serve as a prologue to the French Revolution.