**Nationalism: The strong belief that the interests of a particular nation-state are of primary importance. Also, the belief that a people who share a common language, history, and culture should constitute an independent nation, free of foreign domination**.  
 or **a feeling that people have of being loyal to and proud of their country often with the belief that it is better and more important than other countries  
  
The French Revolution is also significant because it helped to define nationalism and continues to raise questions concerning the use of force against an unpopular government.**  
**Nationalism in France:  
For the first time in history, the common people rose up and ripped power from the hands of the traditional power structures. Even though it turned violent and radical, the people of the Third Estate had decided that they should be in control of their own destiny—that they had the natural right to self-determination based on reason.**  
**King Louis XIV is known for his quote, "I am the state." This idea was now replaced by the idea that the people are the state. The only legitimate basis of power was rule of the people, by the people, for the people.   
France had changed entirely: the people had overthrown the king and the existing social order, taken down feudalism and brought the Church under government control. They adopted new symbols to recognize this change.   
A popular marching tune, La Marseillaise, encouraged the "children of the Fatherland" to march against "tyranny's bloodied banner" and would later become the national anthem of France.  
People adopted the tricolour as the new national flag, and did away with the powdered wigs, knee britches and tights of the upper class. People would dress more practically now and refer to each other as "Citizen."**  
**Abbe Sieyes, in his famous pamphlet *What is the Third Estate?* answered his own question with "Everything." Following the new ideas of the Enlightenment, he argued that the only legitimate source of power for a government was rule by the consent of the people. In France during the revolution, the people began referring to themselves as "the nation." From this term, historians derive the word nationalism.  
  
La Marseillaise  
Come, children of the Fatherland,  
The day of glory has arrived!  
Against us tyranny's  
bloodied banner is raised, (repeat)  
Do you hear in the countryside  
The roar of those ferocious soldiers?  
They come right here into your midst  
To slit the throats of your sons and wives!  
  
To arms, citizens,  
Form your battalions,  
Let's march, let's march!  
May a tainted blood  
Drench our furrows!  
  
What does this horde of slaves,  
Of traitors and conspiring kings want?   
For whom are these vile chains,   
These long-prepared irons? (repeat)   
Frenchmen, for us, ah! What an insult   
What fury it must arouse!   
It is we whom they dare plan  
To return to the old slavery!  
  
To arms, citizens...  
  
What! Foreign cohorts  
Would rule our homes!  
What! These mercenary phalanxes  
Would cut down our proud warriors! (repeat)  
Great God ! By chained hands  
Our heads would bow under the yoke  
Vile despots would become  
The masters of our destinies!  
  
To arms, citizens...  
  
Tremble, tyrants and traitors  
The shame of all good men,  
Tremble! Your parricidal schemes  
Will finally receive their just reward! (repeat)  
Against you, we are all soldiers,  
If our young heroes fall,  
The earth will bear new ones,  
Ready to join the fight against you!  
  
To arms, citizens...  
  
Frenchmen, as magnanimous warriors,  
Bear or hold back your blows!  
Spare these sorry victims,  
Armed against us against their will. (repeat)  
But not these blood-thirsty despots,  
These accomplices of Bouill&eacute;.  
All these tigers who mercilessly  
Slash their mother's breast!  
To arms, citizens...  
  
Sacred patriotic love,  
Lead and support our avenging arms  
Liberty, cherished liberty,  
Fight back with your defenders! (repeat)  
Under our flags, let victory  
Hurry to your manly tone,  
So that your dying enemies,  
See your triumph and our glory!  
  
To arms, citizens...  
  
(Children's Verse)  
We shall enter the (military) career  
When our elders are no longer there,  
There we shall find their dust  
And the mark of their virtues (repeat)  
Much less jealous to survive them  
Than to share their coffins,  
We shall have the sublime pride  
Of avenging or following them  
  
To arms, citizens...**  
  
​

[](https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/becoming-modern/romanticism/romanticism-in-france/v/delacroix-liberty-leading-the-people-1830)

The French Revolution was historically significant primarily because of its contribution to the evolution of rights and citizenship; the shift that led to people asserting that rights are not gifts from the state but instead are fundamental entitlements.  
In 1789, the new National Assembly enacted [**The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen**](http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/declaration.html), which formed the basis of France's new constitution. The basic principles of the revolution were enshrined in this legal document, including freedom, equality of all male citizens before the law, and the right to own property.  
  
**CLASS WORK:**Once you are familiar with the content of The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen. Read the[**UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights  
​**](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf)Using your understanding of the Historical Thinking Concept**: Continuity and Change,**compare these two documents. How have the ideas shifted and what are the main ideas surrounding the documents?   
1) Write a summary for each.  
2) Compare them. What are the obvious changes? Why do you think those changes occurred?  
​  
Class Discussion  
Should a government be able to remove the rights of its citizens in order to protect itself? Consider Canada's use of the War Measures Act in 1970, compulsory military service in democracies, and 21st century efforts to defend citizens against acts of terrorism (e.g., restrictions such as those enforced by airlines after 9/11). These are cases in which the rights of citizens have been restricted for the stated purpose of protecting the state. But how far is too far when it comes to removing rights?

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