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Napoleon III & 2nd Empire

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Intro -

French 2nd Empire - Nap. III. Political opportunist. Difficult to pin down. Marx- saw Nap III as a farce, comic. Enigmatic character. Hortens was mom, romantic, sentimental, filled with memories of Nap. I. LeBas- Swiss tutor, man of enlightement, believer in progress, math, science, discipline. Rational thought process. Mom was lazy dreamer. Nap III was part of both. One consistancy - wanted to recreate French power. Dominant like under Nap I- 1848- 2nd Republic - Louis Nap. wins election on law & order platform. Name had magic. Had to work with conservative partiment. Held to conservative views. Sent French troops to support Pope. Falloux law of 1850- allowed church to enter school system. Liberals wanted state schools. Solidified state with catholics.

Restricted right to vote & other civil rights like freedom of press. Needed support so he could change const. to allow for a 2nd term. Inclination was to push for innovation like railroads & canals. Dreamed of becoming emporer. 1851- Coup d'etat. Proclaims himself president for 10 years. Dec. 2nd- Austerlitz anniversary. 1 year later declares himself emporer. Crowned himself like 1st Nap.

Some resistance but few people willing to put their bodies on the line. Several hundred killed, 26,000 arrested, 10,000 deported to Algeria. Nap. III was harsh on opposition.

1852- 2nd Empire. Authoritarian, disguised with liberal window dressing. Had a constitution with a bill of rights. Most power to executive branch.

Parliament closed to public - no transparency. Govt. determined who candidates were.

Nap. III set up a police state. Controls on press. Books, plays, newspapers were censored. Intellectuals upset → many went into self exile. Victor Hugo exiled himself for 20 years. Abolished National Guard. Relied on reg. army. Added imperial eagle to tri-color flag.

Supporters - business class - brought economic prosperity to France. Ind. production doubled. Growth in railroads + steam energy. Guaranteed interest on railroad bonds. Authorized creation of first investment bank in France. Stimulated building trade by rebuilding Paris as we know it today. Haussmann was the engineer. Large boulevards created. Made city healthier. Also for the army. Changed class structure. Poor moved to suburbs! Later + today that is an immigrant belt.

Peasants - supported Nap III. Urban radicals were cracked down upon. Church supported Nap. III too. Army supported him too via money into army + talk of military glory.

Nap. III chose people based on skill rather than connections or parentage.

Foriegn Policy was successful. - Crimean War helped get the country out of isolation it was put in 1815. Increased his prestige. Invited to London to be knighted by Queen Victoria. Italian War - built his reputation. Backed out of war at crucial moment. Old inconsistencies rose

Cost him support from Liberals.
Decided to stage an imperial venture - Catholic empire in Mexico. Leader Maximillian was Finally executed. Was a Fiasco. Revolution grew against Maximillion. Nap wavers & withdraws support. May 5th, 1862 - monarchy is overthrown. Showed his inconsistancies - wanted adventure but changes mind when things get tough.

Foreign Policy - 1860-1870. Domestic policy becomes more liberal. Trade Unions were legalized. Paternalistic social reforms - govt. paid pensions, accident insurance, legal aid, free burials, - beginnings of welfare state. Bismark was Prussian ambassador ~~de~~ to Paris during this time. Supporter of Free Trade - chevalier - Cobden - treaty that opend trade to England. Many French business could not compete so British took over many markets. Lost support among business class. Late 1860s - regime is shaky. Free Press attacked him. Time for a foreign political success. Franco-Prussian war. EMS

Spanish throne vacated. Bismark edits telegraph & insults France. Nap. III declares war. Fell into Bismark's trap. Bismark brought in all German states to Fight against France. Prussia had superior firepower. Bloody & nasty conflict. Laid seige to Paris. Empire falls, assembly declares a republic. End of second empire & beginning of 3rd republic.

Welfare state, economic boom, remodeling of Paris were all a part of his legacy. Left behind a distrust of strong leaders. Resistance to strong executive power. Disadvantaged France in 20th century.