chapter 9

The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, 1789–1815

The French Revolution had a number of direct causes. First, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment gave birth to new ideas about the equality of man (see Chapter 8). Second, the Glorious Revolution in Britain proved that a limited monarchy was a workable system (see Chapter 6), and the American Revolution provided a unique example of a republican government founded on the idea, if not the practical reality, that its citizens were equal under the law. Third, unchecked spending by the French government caused rising prices, higher taxes, and food shortages, which led to popular demonstrations and demands for reform.

It was the combination of all these things that made the French Revolution happen when it did. When the government raised taxes to pay for war debts, the people might have grumbled and paid them—but the Enlightenment had created the new idea that if people were created equal to one another, the aristocrats should share the tax burden of the commoners.

Like all absolute monarchies, the French monarchy was inherently conservative. The king genuinely believed that he ruled by divine right and that in his person he represented all branches of the government; therefore, he did not even want advice from his ministers, much less any demands from the people.

The French Revolution was entirely unlike the English one that had taken place exactly a century before. The British Parliament had been a functioning legislative assembly for centuries; it was organized and powerful enough to subordinate the monarch and take competent charge of the realm. The French, on the other hand, had no legislative assembly worthy of the name; their attempts to establish one failed repeatedly. Both nations found themselves under military dictatorship for a time, but Oliver Cromwell's goals and ideas bore no resemblance to those of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Napoleonic era, named for its most prominent figure, was characterized by Bonaparte's attempt to take over all of Europe—something that had not occurred since the days of the Roman Empire. Napoleon fell from power as swiftly and spectacularly as he rose to it, for a variety of reasons. First, France's success in taking over other nations made it the common enemy of all Europe; as in previous historical situations, a nation that upset the balance of power would soon cause other nations to unite against it. Second, the new French nationalism that resulted from the Revolution inspired the people of other nations to the same emotion; national pride was a major motivating factor in military victories over Napoleon. Third, so many French soldiers had died in Napoleon's early wars that the French army was largely made up of foreigners by the end of the era; German and Polish soldiers felt no particular personal loyalty to the emperor, and none at all to France. Fourth, Napoleon could not be both an emperor and a general at the same time; with his attention divided between leading the army and running the government, neither could be expected to operate efficiently or effectively.

The Congress of Vienna broke new ground in its attempt to establish an international peacekeeping organization of European states. This attempt succeeded in one way: the nineteenth century was almost without wars among the major powers of Europe. However, its leaders had a more conservative bent than the mass of Europeans, and some of the provisions of the Congress would lead directly to the national uprisings that characterized the 1800s.

CHAPTER 9 OBJECTIVES

- Describe the steps that led to the end of the monarchy in France.
- Explain how the various legislative assemblies gave way to the empire.
- Describe the rise and fall of Napoleon.
- Discuss the results of the Congress of Vienna.

Chapter 9 Time Line

- **1788** Estates General meet for the first time since 1614; Tennis Court Oath
- **1789** **14 July** People of Paris storm the Bastille
- **August** Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen is written
- **1793** Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette executed
- **1804** Napoleon declares himself emperor of the French
- **1808–1814** Peninsular War
- **1812** Russians defeat French; French retreat from Moscow
- **1814** Napoleon abdicates and is exiled to Elba
- **1815** Battle of Waterloo; final defeat of Napoleon
- **1815** Congress of Vienna

Major Causes of the French Revolution

Royal policies were a major cause of the French economic crisis of the late 1700s. Foreign and domestic policies both proved ruinous to the stability of the realm.

The Economy

By 1789, France's economy was in turmoil. Ministers had raised taxes to pay for foreign wars, some of which were being fought across the Atlantic. Since aristocrats and the clergy were tax-exempt, the entire burden fell on the classes

least able to afford it: the peasants, artisans, and bourgeoisie. This caused great popular resentment. Royal extravagance and a poor grain harvest further damaged the economy.

During the French and Indian War (see Chapter 7), France spent large sums to send troops and supplies across the Atlantic. After losing the war, France immediately began improving the army and rebuilding the navy—an expensive project. In 1778, France entered the American Revolution as an ally of the colonists. By the time of the American victory in 1783, France had spent more than a billion *livres* on the military.

From 1783 to 1788, the government survived by borrowing money; the king's ministers attempted to reform the tax laws so that the wealthy landowners would have to contribute something, but the attempt failed to become law. In 1787 and 1788, a cycle of drought and then fierce hailstorms and flooding destroyed most of the nation's grain crop; this led to soaring prices, high unemployment, and conditions of near-famine by the spring of 1789. Throughout the countryside, people went on rampages, breaking into storehouses and stealing everything edible.

The Monarchy

The most important obstacle to reform in French society was the conservative nature of the monarchy. An absolute monarch, being in a position of power, had no incentive to reform society. Both Louis XIV and Louis XV believed that they ruled by divine right and that their judgment should never be questioned. Instead of embracing a system of checks and balances and a government with multiple branches of authority, the king of France believed that in his own person, he was the government—courts, legislature, and executive. *L'etat, c'est moi* (the government and I are one entity)—Louis XIV may never actually have said this, but he lived and believed it and passed the belief on to his successors.

Louis XIV died in 1715, when his heir was a five-year-old child. The Duc d'Orléans ruled France until 1723, when the king reached legal adulthood at age thirteen. Although Ivan the Terrible had taken firm hold on power in Russia at the same age, Louis XV showed no great desire to end the regency; his tutor and chief minister ruled the nation in fact, if not in name, for another seventeen years. Once Louis took over the actual business of governing in 1740, he relied heavily on the advice of his closest ministers. Their inconsistent advice led France into costly wars, with no plan for paying off the war debts besides raising taxes on the poorest classes of society, which could least afford them.

Louis XVI succeeded his grandfather Louis XV in 1774. At a time when France needed a strong, practical leader, Louis was timid and weak. His marriage to Austrian princess Marie Antoinette did nothing to strengthen his position with his subjects, as Austria and France were old enemies. His dismissal of many of the experienced government ministers certainly proved a mistake. Some of these men had attempted to reform the tax system by establishing a tax on the landed aristocracy; this chance of reform was gone when the ministers were dismissed from office.

Louis XVI and his ministers, unable to find any way to solve the problems on their own, called the Estates General to a meeting at Versailles. This was the first time the nation's only assembly had met since 1614.

The Estates General

The Estates General was a large group of officials divided into three categories by social status. The First Estate was made of clergymen, the Second Estate of hereditary nobles, and the Third Estate of commoners.

The First Estate

Members of the First Estate had two things in common: they were all employed by the Catholic Church, and they were all therefore exempt from paying taxes. Apart from that, however, they were a diverse group of men, from wealthy aristocrats to poor commoners. High-ranking bishops and cardinals lived in style and luxury, while parish priests suffered nearly as much from poverty and hunger as the peasants in their congregations. These poorer priests had a great deal of sympathy with the members of the Third Estate.

The Second Estate

The Second Estate was made up of the hereditary nobility. Like the clergy, the French nobility was tax-exempt. These aristocrats owned most of the land that did not belong to the Church or the state. Only members of the Second Estate were eligible for high government office. Many were nearly bankrupt because of the custom of the times that allowed noblemen to live on credit—to run up enormous debts that tradesmen had little power to compel them to pay. It was quite common for a French aristocrat of the time to have an empty purse but still eat well and dress expensively.

The Third Estate

The Third Estate included all French subjects who were neither aristocrats nor clergymen—a much larger group than the First or Second Estate. This group included a much greater variety of people—peasants, artists, intellectuals, and members of the French middle class, or *bourgeoisie*. Like the clergy, some members of the Third Estate were very wealthy, others very poor. The most crucial difference was that members of the Third Estate had to pay taxes. In spite of representing the greatest number of people, the Third Estate had the least power and influence over national policy.

Members of the Estates General did not vote individually; each estate received one vote on any question that arose in debate. This of course meant that the Third Estate was usually outvoted by two to one; the clergy and aristocracy were hardly likely to vote to help shoulder the tax burden or to make any other changes to a system that protected their privileges. However, some members of the Third Estate realized that the time for change might have arrived. There were important bonds between many members of the First and Third Estates. First, many of the clergy were commoners, not nobles. Second, many of them were badly off financially; like members of the Third Estate, they were aware of the desperate need for reform.

Toward a New Government

On May 2, 1789, Louis XVI met the deputies of the Estates General. His refusal to listen to the Third Estate's objection to the voting system created a stalemate at the outset. Over the next several weeks, members of the Third Estate urged the poorer deputies of the First Estate to join them in their fight for reform. Finally, on June 17, these deputies met on an unused tennis court near the palace (the king had ordered the doors of the usual meeting rooms locked). The deputies, calling themselves the National Assembly, together swore what became known as the Tennis Court Oath, vowing to remain united (thus preventing possible conspiracy, desertion in the ranks, and betrayal) until they had established a new government.

The National Assembly presented a list of demands to the king. On June 23, Louis XVI agreed to accept only those reforms that were most palatable to the Second Estate—individual liberty, freedom of the press, and a degree of tax reform. He did not accept such provisions as equal eligibility for office

or a sweeping reform of the social hierarchy. When the National Assembly expressed the intention to carry out its reforms without his consent, the king gave in. Members of the First and Second Estates who had remained loyal to the old order joined the National Assembly.

Naturally, the people of Paris were gathering every day to hear and discuss the news from Versailles, only fourteen miles away from the capital. Although reform was on the way, it was not happening soon enough to satisfy them.

When the Parisians learned that the king had dismissed minister Jacques Necker, they had had enough of waiting. Because Necker was a liberal who had always favored reform, his dismissal sent a clear signal to the people that the king was not going to help them or take care of them. On the morning of July 13, the people of Paris rose up against all authority; they took to the streets in fury, breaking into shops and stealing the goods, especially guns and ammunition.

The main reason the people of Paris were so successful in their uprising was that the forces of law and order were on their side. Control of the army and the police is essential for success in taking power. The palace guards of the Louvre and all the soldiers quartered in Paris, who suffered as much as anyone else from the scarcity of food and the inflation, threw in their lot with the commoners.

On the fourteenth of July, the people marched on the Bastille. Built as a fortress in 1370, this massive structure had served as a state prison under Louis XIV. In 1789 it was nearly empty of prisoners, but it was not long since Voltaire, the symbolic figurehead of the Enlightenment and one who had always criticized the old regime, had been imprisoned there on two occasions. This made the Bastille a hated symbol of tyranny and injustice in the eyes of the students and intellectuals; commoners who had never heard of Voltaire still considered the prison a symbol of oppression. In addition to the symbolic value of destroying it, the Parisians wanted the weapons that were stored inside.

By early afternoon on what has since been known as Bastille Day, the prison had given way. The Parisians freed all remaining prisoners, commandeered the store of weapons and ammunition, and took brutal revenge on the chief magistrate and governor. They hustled them into the streets, turned the angry mob loose to almost literally tear them to pieces, then rammed their severed heads onto sharp pikes and paraded them through the streets in triumph.

News of the riots in Paris soon reached the nearby towns. Mob rule took over France as the common people forced mayors and other officials to abandon their

offices. Throughout the countryside, peasants looted and set fire to the chateaux of their hated aristocratic landlords, often murdering them in the process.

Louis XVI summoned troops from Flanders to Versailles, hoping that this show of strength would make his subjects back down from their demands. The troops arrived at the end of September. On October 5, the women of Paris had had enough of seeing their children starve. They marched on Versailles, armed with a motley collection of sticks and kitchen knives. When they reached the palace, they shoved their way in past the guards and servants, demanding to be taken into the presence of the king.

Louis might have refused to give in to an angry mob of women, but there was a small army at their backs—thousands of members of the National Guard, fully armed, had followed the women from Paris. Louis and his Flemish troops were not proof against this small army. Louis agreed to provide bread for the people of Paris and to return to the capital as a prisoner of the National Guard. Waving the new French flag of red, white, and blue—the tricolor—the soldiers escorted the royal family to the long-abandoned palace of the Tuileries on October 6. The monarchy had been supplanted by the National Assembly.

The king and queen had no doubt about the future. They believed that the French people would no longer accept a monarchy, and therefore there would be no place for them in the new society. They worked out an escape plan. Dressed in old clothing, Louis walked out of the Tuileries one June night in 1791, boarded a waiting coach, and set out on the road to Austria, where he hoped his brother-in-law would provide shelter and perhaps troops willing to back his restoration to the throne. In a small town along the road where the coach stopped briefly, someone recognized the king in spite of his disguise. Louis was stopped in Varennes and taken back to Paris. Many members of the hereditary nobility left France around this time as well; the months of mob violence convinced them that they would soon have to pay with their lives for their ancestors' centuries of privilege. Hundreds of them fled to England, while others crossed the border into Austria, where they plotted to return to France and restore the monarchy.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

During the period of rioting and unrest, the National Assembly had begun work on a document that would set forth the rights and privileges of all French citizens. This document, known as the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of

the Citizen, bore some resemblance to the American Declaration of Independence. It included a preamble and seventeen articles that called for a society based on equal treatment for all; freedom of speech, of the press, and of religion; the right to own property and to resist oppression; and the supremacy of just and reasonable laws that would treat all citizens equally. All of these were important ideas of the Enlightenment. The king had signed the Declaration, although unwillingly.

The National Assembly had intended for Louis to rule as a constitutional monarch, with limited legislative powers and a major ceremonial role. The king's attempted escape made them change their minds. It appeared that Louis could not be trusted to play the role they had imagined for him. It seemed more likely that he would try to bring back an absolute monarchy if he were allowed his freedom.

The First Republic

In October 1791, the National Assembly was replaced by the Legislative Assembly. The deputies had agreed that no one who had served in the National Assembly would be eligible for the elections, so though the new assembly was made up of many talented and able men, none was experienced at legislation. Most of the new deputies favored either a constitutional monarchy or a republic. The king's attempted escape, and news of the schemes of the departed aristocrats, swung the balance of feeling in the assembly toward a republic.

In the fall, Parisians voted for the men who would represent them in the new government, which was called the National Convention. This legislative body comprised 750 deputies, many of whom had served in the National or Legislative assemblies. Their first tasks were to write a new constitution for France and to decide the fate of the royal family. Since most of the deputies were democratic in their political convictions, they felt no sentiment in favor of the monarch. They believed that "Citizen Louis Capet" was a traitor to the Revolution and should be executed. This attitude prevailed over the conservatives, who argued for mercy. After a brief trial in which the king behaved with dignity, he was condemned to death and executed in January 1793. By December, nearly two hundred more would take the same journey to the scaffold.

Many members of the National Convention belonged to one of two informal clubs for deputies and intellectuals who shared a political philosophy: the radical Jacobins or the more moderate Girondins. The working people

of Paris, called *sansculottes* (literally "without breeches"; breeches were tight-fitting trousers worn by men of the leisure class, while the workers wore comfortable loose-fitting trousers), supported the Jacobins, whose price-fixing and food rationing put an immediate end to the worst of the food shortages. The Jacobins soon found themselves gaining power in the Convention; the Girondins lost all political power when a mob of *sansculottes* attacked them in their meeting place. In effect, this brought about one-party rule in France.

The Terror

By June 1793, the Committee of Public Safety, established by the National Convention and headed by Maximilien Robespierre, had acquired complete authority over the government and thus over the people. A lawyer, Robespierre had been one of the deputies of the Third Estate who went to Versailles in 1789. As a Jacobin, he had favored the king's execution.

Under the Committee's rule, France underwent a period of violence known to history as the Terror. During this period, anyone denounced as an enemy of the state was imprisoned, hastily tried, and taken to the guillotine for execution. Crimes against the state included plotting, speaking, or writing anything that criticized the Revolution. In most cases an accusation was enough—no concrete evidence was necessary—and private conversations were as much of a crime as public statements. Anyone who showed sympathy for an "enemy of the state" could also be imprisoned and executed.

Many of the aristocrats of France who had not already fled to safety were guillotined, Queen Marie Antoinette among them. Fortunately, this disgraceful episode was short-lived. By March 1794, public sentiment turned against the Terror as the people realized that executing the innocent did nothing to preserve the Republic. Ironically, Robespierre was among the last to be guillotined.

With the end of the Terror came the downfall of the Committee. The National Convention had become the common enemy of all the factions—royalists, Jacobins, and moderates. It was clear that the Convention would have to give way to some strong central authority more capable of taking control. When the deputies of the Convention realized in October 1794 that it was only a matter of time before the Parisians rose up against them, they appealed for help to the army, then under the command of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The Rise of Napoleon

Born in Ajaccio, Corsica, in 1769, Napoleon had been educated at a French military academy. His extraordinary ability in mathematics and geography made him excellent officer material. In 1794, Captain Bonaparte led a successful attack against the Austrians that led to his immediate promotion to the rank of general. Charged with controlling the mob in Paris in 1794, Napoleon decided to threaten it with grapeshot—clusters of small musket-balls fired from cannons at point-blank range. The ensuing incident, known to history as a "whiff of grapeshot," wounded and killed many people and effectively ended the threat against the Convention. This efficient handling of the emergency marked Napoleon as a figure of major importance in France. He was soon leading the army to victorious campaigns in Italy and Austria. Despite a failed campaign in Egypt, he returned to Paris in 1799 to loud popular acclaim.

By the time of Napoleon's return, the Convention had given way to the Directory—yet another attempt at creating a strong, functional legislature. The Directory had five hundred deputies, of which two-thirds were elected or appointed from among the Convention members and the rest elected by the local assemblies of France. The Directory was a muddle just as the Convention had been; it had no strong leader and no internal agreement about how to shape a new government. Many ideas that had ruined the Convention returned in the Directory. It took all political rights away from members of the Second Estate who had returned to France after the Terror. It arrested and deported hundreds of members of the old First Estate. Rather than permitting religious freedom, it tried to do away with religion altogether by suppressing the Catholic Church. The Directory found itself unable to agree on provisions for a constitution, and its leaders soon realized they would have to try again to form a workable legislative assembly.

Because Napoleon was the acknowledged head of the military forces, the Directory turned to him again for help in controlling the mobs of Paris as it tried to form a new government. Over November 9 and 10, the Directory fell and was replaced by a body of three consuls, one of whom was Napoleon. He quickly became First Consul, the only one with any real power.

Napoleon Rules France

Napoleon had spent his youth and all his adult life in the military, which was famed for its organization, its clear rules, and its chain of command. He began his rule of France by organizing its government along these lines, from the local to the national level. Under Napoleon, France acquired its first national bank and public school system. Napoleon also improved the division of France into administrative *départments* (similar to British or American counties) and reestablished the Catholic Church by concordat with the pope in 1801. The concordat reorganized the Church in France administratively and gave the government greater control over it. To Napoleon, this was strictly a practical matter; he had no religious convictions of his own, but he perceived that their Catholic faith and heritage was too important to his subjects to jettison.

The Convention had attempted to write a new law code as early as 1793. Using its work as a basis, Napoleon revised and finalized what became known as the Code Napoleon or Napoleonic Code, which went into effect in 1804. The Code Napoleon set forth the basic rights of the citizens and clarified the fact that in the Republic, the laws would apply equally to all.

In August 1802, in an election of sorts, Napoleon was chosen First Consul for life. He was now a military dictator in all but name. It did not take long before he demanded another vote, this time over whether he could pass his title on to his sons. In 1804, Napoleon declared himself hereditary emperor of the French for life. In effect, France had exchanged one absolute ruler for another.

Napoleon's Military Career

From 1800 to 1809, Napoleon was spectacularly successful on the battlefield. During this period he pursued the same military strategy in every case: to identify and attack the enemy's weak point, and never to be forced on the defensive.

In 1805 Napoleon was on the march against Austria, which had formed an alliance with Russia in the hopes of securing the Rhine River and the Black Forest against future French invasions. The Austrians fought the French all through September and October while they waited for Russian reinforcements to arrive. With the goal of severing the link between the troops and their supply lines, Napoleon anticipated every move of the Austrian generals. The Austrians surrendered on October 20. Napoleon then marched his army east to meet the Russians under General Kutuzov. The armies met at Austerlitz, a town about

fifty miles north of Vienna. The French defeated the Russians and the war ended in the Treaty of Pressburg. This treaty finally abolished the Holy Roman Empire, replacing it with the French-controlled Confederation of the Rhine. This was the high point of Napoleon's military career.

In 1808, France found itself at war with Spain. First the French invaded and subdued Portugal, then moved into Spain to overthrow its monarchy. Napoleon wanted an alliance with Spain, and thus wanted to replace the hereditary monarch with someone he could trust. His army imprisoned the ruling Bourbon family and installed Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, as king. This provoked the Spanish to rise up in a burst of angry nationalism against the invaders. Napoleon, who had expected to take over Spain easily, was unprepared for this response.

Britain soon entered the war on the side of Spain and Portugal. The Duke of Wellington, head of the British army, found himself in command of a combination of Spanish, British, and Portuguese troops. Wellington, unlike Napoleon, preferred to fight on the defensive. This meant a long war of attrition.

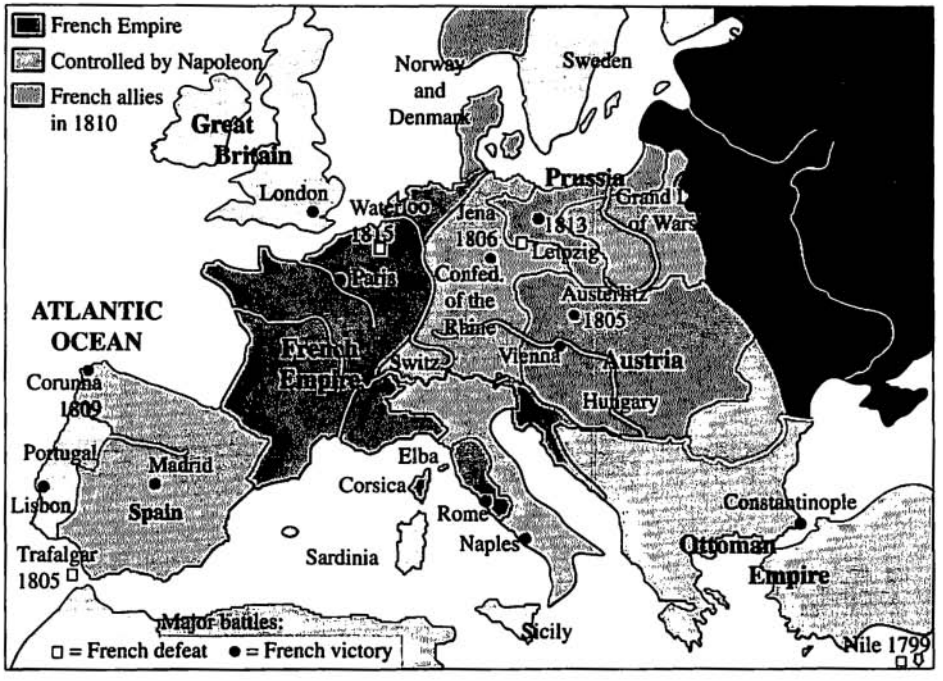
Meanwhile, Napoleon had decided to invade Russia over disagreements with Czar Alexander I. With the French army fighting on the Iberian Peninsula, Napoleon gathered an army from territories controlled by France. By June 1812, some 650,000 troops—Germans, Poles, Austrians, and Italians—had marched to the Russian border.

Crossing the barren plains of Russia in intense summer heat took a terrible toll on the Grand Army. The land provided no shade trees, no crops, and few sources of fresh water. Unable to scavenge much to eat or drink, the soldiers began falling dead by the side of the road. Eventually they began killing and eating their own horses.

In September the armies met at Borodino. Napoleon again defeated Kutuzov, but at the price of fifty thousand casualties, none of whom could be replaced because France had come geographically too far from its sources of supply.

Kutuzov ordered his troops to retreat toward Moscow. He knew that when winter arrived, the French would have to surrender. When the Russians reached the capital, they evacuated and burned it. When the French arrived, they found no food and little shelter. By October, Napoleon acknowledge that the French would have to return to the West. The Grand Army began the long retreat—only to realize the Russians had turned and were pursuing them. Thousands of Grand Army soldiers died in the retreat. The remnants of the army crossed the border in December.

Meanwhile, the Peninsular War was clearly lost. Facing enormous military defeat on two fronts, Napoleon abdicated in 1814.



The Napoleonic Wars

The End of the Napoleonic Era

Louis XVI's brother now became king of France, ruling under the name Louis XVIII (when Louis XVI was executed in 1793, the crown prince had automatically become Louis XVII, but the child disappeared; historians believe he died in prison during the Terror). The government decided to banish Napoleon to the small Mediterranean island of Elba. They promised him a budget with which to govern Elba, but it was never paid. Therefore Napoleon was unable to carry out his plan to organize Elba's administration, rebuild its roads, and in other ways repeat on this smaller scale what he had done in France. Bored with enforced idleness on Elba, he had little to look forward to but the mail, which brought him letters from old soldiers pleading with him to return to France and take over the reins of government. In 1815, Napoleon persuaded himself

that he must save France. He quietly took ship with seven hundred soldiers, arms, and money. Docking in Cannes and marching north, Napoleon's army was soon strengthened by the addition of a French infantry battalion encountered on the road.

When the news of Napoleon's escape reached the leaders of Europe, they reacted swiftly and in concert. They chose Wellington to command the allied forces—British, German, Dutch, and Belgian troops—with the Prussian army under General Blücher standing by to help him. Facing two armies about ninety miles apart, one in Belgium and the other in Germany, Napoleon decided to attack from the center to keep them separate while eliminating each army in turn.

Wellington prepared for the attack by positioning his men on the high ground above the fields of the town of Waterloo. On June 18, Napoleon's troops were ready to attack. Meanwhile, General Blücher was leading the Prussian troops into position.

After a long day of fighting, the French were defeated. This last battle ended the Napoleonic era and finished Napoleon's public career. "Meeting one's Waterloo" is still today an idiom that signifies failure. The British declared Napoleon a prisoner of war and banished him to the South Atlantic island of St. Helena, where he died in obscurity in 1821.

The Congress of Vienna

The leaders of Europe met in Vienna in September 1814 to restore the balance of power that had been so drastically upset by the conquests of Napoleon. The work of the Congress of Vienna was briefly interrupted when Napoleon returned from Elba, but the leaders resumed work after the Battle of Waterloo and completed their task by June 1815.

Each nation was represented at the Congress of Vienna by a monarch or a prominent military or political figure, as follows:

- Austria—foreign minister Prince Klemens von Metternich
- Britain—foreign secretary Viscount Castlereagh; Duke of Wellington
- France—foreign minister Charles Talleyrand
- Prussia—chancellor Prince Karl August von Hardenberg
- Russia—Czar Alexander I

The leaders had two main goals. First, they wanted to restore the balance of power in Europe by redrawing or restoring boundary lines. All territory acquired by France under Napoleon was either restored to independence or given to one of the four major powers—Austria, Britain, Prussia, and Russia. Second, the Congress was concerned not only with restoring the balance of power, but also maintaining it for the future. At the end of the Thirty Years' War, France had emerged as the most powerful nation; at the end of the Napoleonic Wars, it was clear that some other strong nation must be created as a check on any future French threat of European domination. This led the Congress to agree on the desirability of unifying the German states into one centrally governed nation. By 1819, nearly forty German states had formed the German Confederation, temporarily under the presidency of Austria.

Another aspect of maintaining the balance of power over the long term was the establishment of the Quadruple Alliance. This group, formed of representatives of the Great Powers, agreed that it would meet as often as necessary over the next twenty years to see that the terms of the peace were carried out and to discuss any matters of international concern that might arise. The members of the Quadruple Alliance believed in three principles: legitimacy, compensation, and containment.

Legitimacy

European ideas of the divine right of kings and the special qualities of royal families were very slow to die; the men of the Quadruple Alliance were not democrats, nor did they espouse republican ideals. They strongly believed that royal power properly belonged in the hands of legitimate monarchs. Napoleon stood outside this category because he was not of royal blood and also because he had seized power during a revolution rather than accepting it in an orderly transfer of authority.

Compensation

The leaders agreed that nations that had suffered from Napoleon's invasions and power grabs should be compensated. To their way of thinking, this meant giving territory rather than money to the victors. As part of the final peace settlement, five nations were given new territory: Austria, Denmark, Prussia, Russia, and Sweden. (Britain was on the winning side but was given no compensation since it had never been invaded.) Most of the Italian provinces were divided among these nations.

Containment

The third principle was that of containment: of arranging matters in a way that would prevent, or at least discourage, future French aggression on the continent. Strengthening the union of the German states was the major step taken toward checking French aggression.

The Quadruple Alliance was the first European attempt to create an international peacekeeping organization. It failed in the long run; its first meeting was also its last. However, its goals were important because they showed the trend that diplomacy was taking in history. Peace conferences after major international wars would occur again in the twentieth century, and serious international peacekeeping efforts would also be undertaken again.

QUIZ

1. **The people of Paris succeeded in overtaking the Bastille because**
   A. they had planned the attack with great care.
   B. they knew of the existence of the Declaration of the Rights of Man.
   C. they were outraged over the dismissal of Jacques Necker.
   D. the National Guard did nothing to stop them.

2. **The Legislative Assembly decided against establishing a constitutional monarchy because**
   A. the king refused to rule jointly with the legislature.
   B. the radical and republican deputies outnumbered the monarchists.
   C. Louis XVI proved by his attempted escape that he could not be trusted.
   D. the people of Paris were determined that the king should be executed.

3. **An alliance with _____ made it possible for the Third Estate to establish a new government.**
   A. Louis XVI
   B. Maximilien Robespierre
   C. poor members of the First Estate
   D. members of the Second Estate

4. **All members of the First Estate were**
   A. common working people.
   B. clergymen.
   C. hereditary nobles.
   D. soldiers in the regular army.

5. **The women of Paris marched on Versailles in 1789 to**
   A. burn down the palace.
   B. arrest and imprison the royal family.
   C. steal whatever they could find.
   D. demand an end to the food shortage.

6. **Napoleon signed a concordat with the pope and restored the Catholic Church in France because**
   A. he was a devout Catholic.
   B. he was afraid of the power of the pope.
   C. he believed that a traditional form of worship was important to the people.
   D. he wanted to maintain the French clergy in a position of power.

7. **The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen guaranteed _____**
   A. individual rights and freedoms to the people of France.
   B. a specific form of government.
   C. an end to the hereditary monarchy.
   D. the establishment of a new Fourth Estate.

8. **Which group of people was the most politically conservative?**
   A. the First Estate
   B. the Second Estate
   C. the Third Estate
   D. the armed forces

9. **Napoleon's 1812 invasion of Russia failed primarily because**
   A. the French army could not withstand the Russian winter.
   B. his army was poorly and unwisely commanded.
   C. he did not have enough troops to defeat the Russians.
   D. the Russian army was better trained than the French.

10. Why did the delegates to the Congress of Vienna recommend German unification?

A. because Prussia had played a significant role in defeating Napoleon
B. because Britain and Prussia were allies
C. because a united Germany would balance France as a strong central nation
D. because there had been too much warfare among the German states

47. What effect did the European rail system have on the Industrial Revolution?

A. It brought industrialization to areas that had not yet begun to build factories.
B. It provided efficient overland connections among industrial areas.
C. It gave rise to a new industry known today as tourism.
D. It made it possible to move armies around Europe more efficiently.

48. _____ conceived, edited, and contributed articles to the French Enlightenment's great achievement, the *Encyclopédie*.

A. Diderot
B. Montesquieu
C. Rousseau
D. Voltaire

49. All of the following were important figures in the Romantic movement in music except

A. Hector Berlioz.
B. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.
C. Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky.
D. Giuseppe Verdi.

50. The deputies at the Congress of Vienna established the Quadruple Alliance with what purpose?

A. to create a lasting peace in Europe by maintaining a balance of power
B. to establish parliamentary democracies in all European nations
C. to set up an international court of justice to try war criminals
D. to work out a plan for a common European currency