



French Revolution (Part one)

France at the end of the eighteenth century

The state was experiencing a profound crisis due to:

**LARGE MILITARY
EXPENSES**
(he had helped
England
in the war against
the American
colonies)

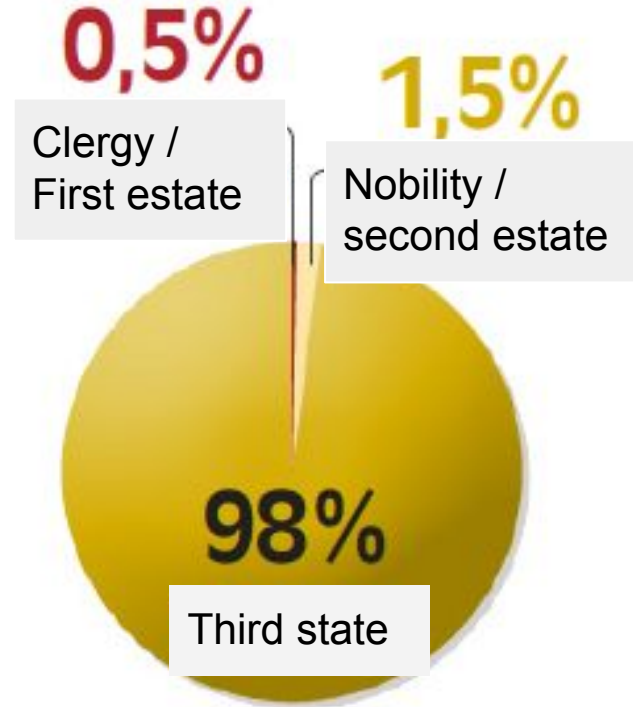


**ORGANIZATION
POLICY
INADEQUATE**
(the monarchy had
lasted for almost a
thousand years and
was now
marking time)

The French society

The bourgeoisie, which had acquired importance in the economy, was excluded from politics.

Clergy and nobility do not pay taxes, which fall on the peasants (forced to pay tithes) and on the artisans.



The percentage of members of each order calculated on the total population

1 september 1715

Louis XIV died four days before he turns 77. The cause of his death was gangrene, for a complication from gout.

Before expiring, to the courtiers who were around the bed he said: *"Why are you crying? What did you think, that I was immortal?"* .



Louis XV, the Beloved

Nephew of Louis XIV, he was much loved by the people. He inherits the throne of his great-grandfather at the age of 5, but his kingdom goes into the hands of some regents. In the meantime he grows up, surrounded by tutors and cultivating a taste for culture. He took over the leadership of the state when he came of age. His weakness made him fall out of favor in the eyes of the people. He squandered the fortune on women and parties. It is said that the French celebrated his death (in 1774).



Louis XVI and the economic crisis

- When he ascends the throne, the state is in deep crisis due to:
- huge expenses to maintain the army
- exaggerated expenses to maintain the luxuries of the court of Versailles
- taxes too heavy for the population
- no taxes for the nobles and the clergy



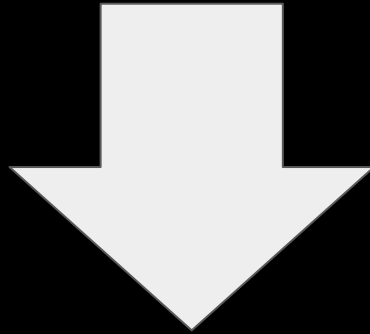
Necker Minister of Finance

- He tried to heal the situation as much as possible by introducing:
- fairer taxes
- administrative reforms (cuts of state officials)
- social reforms (improved living conditions in hospitals and prisons)
- financial reforms (reduction of expenses for royals, lower salaries for officials).



IMMEDIATE REACTIONS

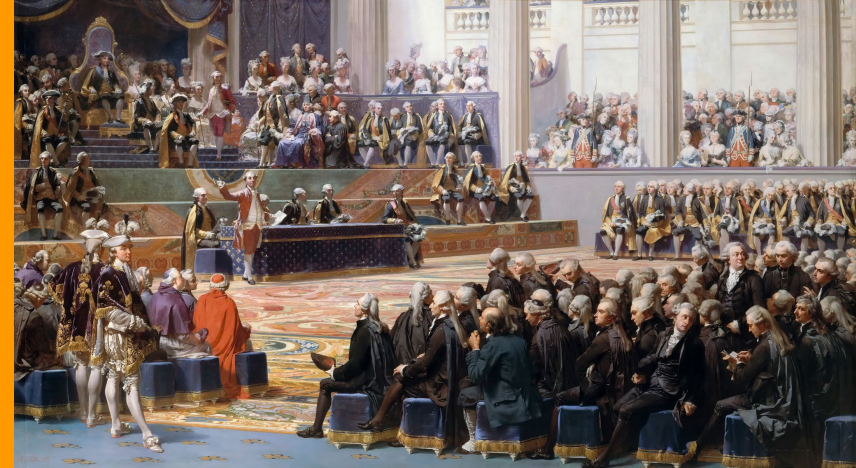
The clergy and nobles immediately rose up.



The King decided to sack the Necker, but immediately the situation worsened and he was forced to call him back.

The convocation of the States General

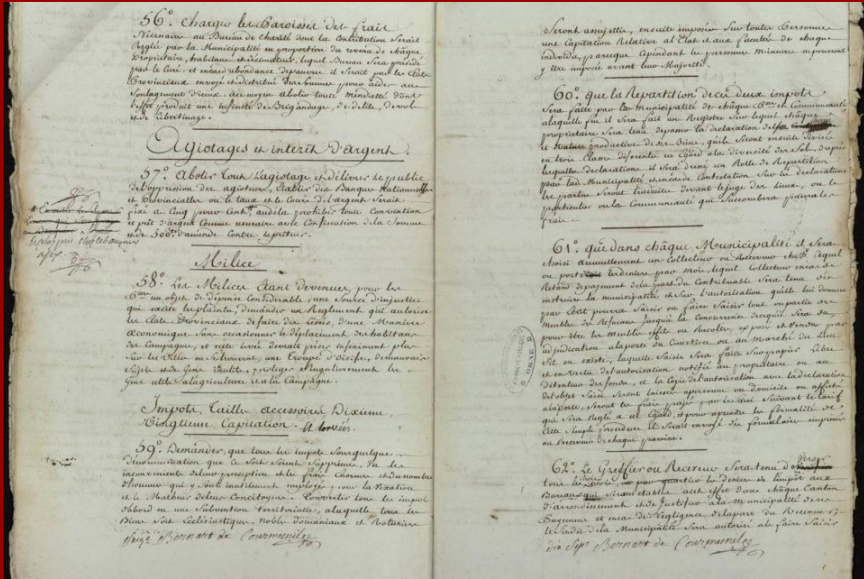
- ❖ This Consultative Assembly was introduced in France around 1300
- ❖ The three orders were represented: Nobility, Clergy and Third Estate
- ❖ They were last summoned in 1615 by Louis XIII



Louis XVI summoned them

on May 5, 1789

LES CAHIERS DES DOLÉANCES



They were registers where the three states collected problems, proposals, suggestions.

The third state presented the list of injustices and abuses. He was asking for justice.

The notebooks (historians are aware of about 60,000) are still partly preserved.