

The Enlightenment and the French Revolution

Key Terms:

- **bourgeoisie**
 - In French society – the middle class
- **deficit spending**
 - situation in which a government spends more money than it takes in



Summary of French Revolution

Toward the end of the 1700s, the reign of France's monarchs came to a violent end. Several forces—Enlightenment ideas, terrible economic conditions, and a bourgeoisie anxious for more power—combined to spark a momentous revolution in 1789 that swept out the old regime and ushered in a new government. However, the revolutionaries soon battled each other, and terror gripped France for several years. Into this chaos stepped a French army officer, Napoleon Bonaparte.

Napoleon seized control of the country and then built an empire that dominated much of western Europe. The other European powers eventually defeated Napoleon and convened the Congress of Vienna in 1814. There, they reestablished order and balance among the nations of Europe.

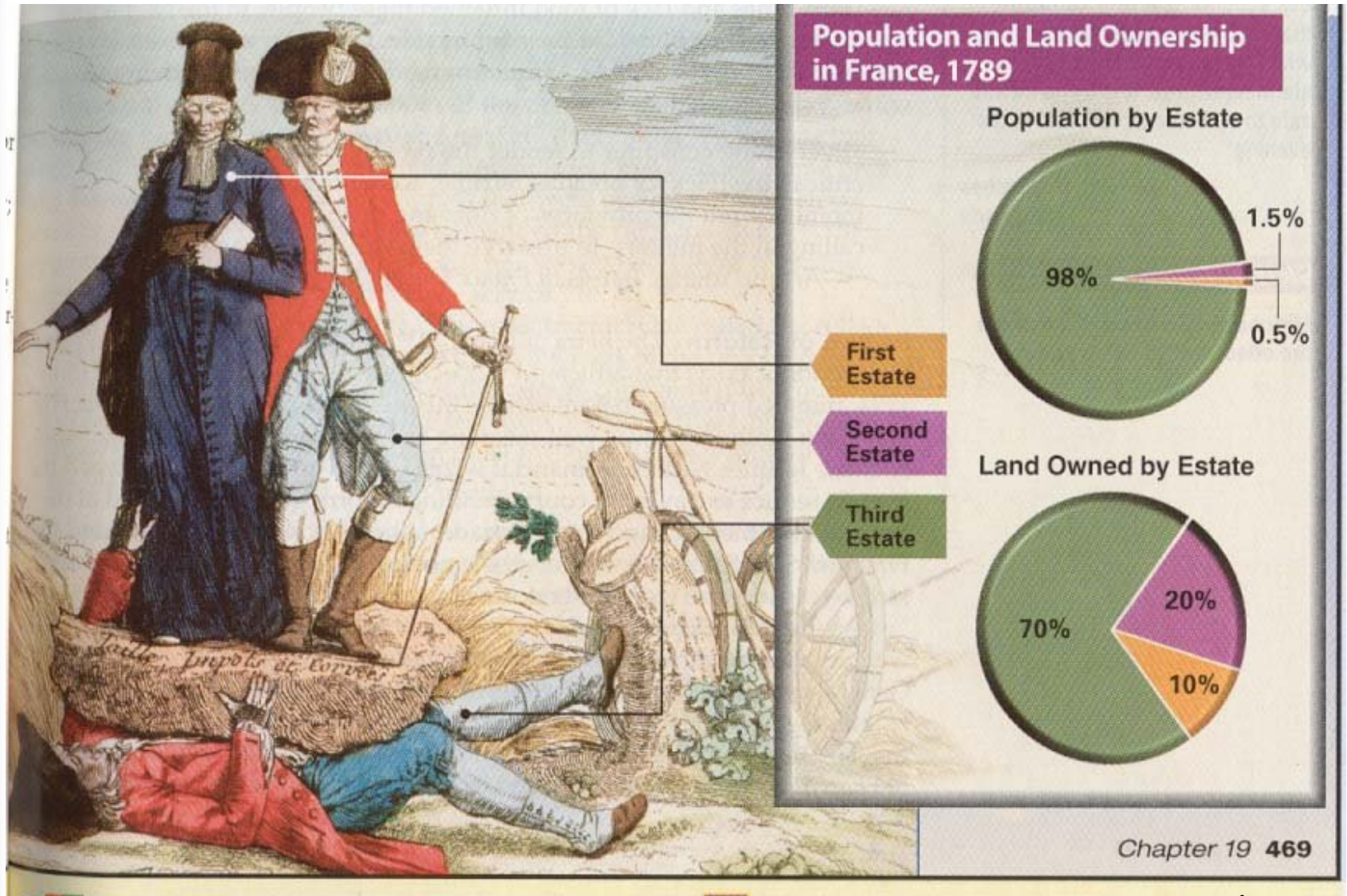
French Estates in the Old Regime

- **First Estate – Catholic clergy:**
priests, nuns and church leaders.
Less than 1% of the population.
Owned 10 % of the land.
- **Second Estate – Nobility.**
1.5 % of the population.
Owned 20% of the land and
controlled over half of the labor
force.

French Estates in the Old Regime

- **Third Estate – Diverse group of French citizens. 98% of population. Divided into three groups. Owned 70% of the wealth**
 - ❖ **bourgeoisie – wealthy middle class. Bankers, merchants, manufactures, lawyers, doctors, etc.**
 - ❖ **city dwelling laborers, artisans and servants**
 - ❖ **peasants – 90% of the population. Rural workers and farmers.**

Three Estates



Which estate is represented by the man under the stone? What is the picture saying about this estate?

Louis XIV – The Sun King

1643-1715



- “l’etat, c’est moi”
I am the state
- Built France into one of the most powerful nations in Europe
- Disbanded Estates General
- Spent vast amounts of money on arts
- Created extensive military
- Built Versailles
- Left France deeply in debt

Louis XV: 1715-1774



- Continued deficit spending
- Taxed the third estate unmercifully
- Pursued pleasure before the business of the state
- When warned that France was in serious danger of collapse, he replied, “For now, all is well. After me, the deluge.”

Louis XVI – The Last King

1774-1793



- Inherited a huge economic crisis
- Starvation was very real in the cities
- France deeply in debt
- Called Estates General to try to raise funds by enticing bourgeoisie to raise taxes on themselves.
- Third Estate objected to unfair conditions and demanded reform

Versailles



Royal Family at Home in Versailles



The Revolution Begins - 1789

- **Estates General meets May, 1789**
- **Voting rules unfair to Third Estate**
- **Declared themselves the National Assembly**
- **Invited delegates from other two estates to help write a new constitution, much like the one completed in America**
- **Locked out of Versailles**
- **Meet on tennis court**
- **Pledged “Tennis Court Oath” – not to disband until a new constitution had been written.**
- **King gathers troops in Paris and on June 14, 1789 a Paris mob storms the Bastille.**
- **The Revolution begins**

Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen

- **A new “declaration of independence” created**
- **Modeled after American Declaration**
- **“All men were born free and equal in rights.”**
- **Freedom of religion**
- **Taxed according to ability to pay**
- **“Liberty, Equality, Fraternity”**
- **A new constitution created.**
- **Royal family attempts to flee to Austria. Captured and imprisoned in Paris.**

Marie Antoinette



- Nicknamed “Madam Deficit”
- Daughter of Marie Teresa of Austria
- Had little understanding of the conditions of the lower classes
- Confused by march on women on Versailles.
- When told that the masses had no bread, she is said to have declared, “Let them eat cake!”

Causes of the French Revolution

Long Term Causes:

- Enlightenment ideas—liberty and equality
- Example furnished by the American Revolution
- Social and economic injustices of the Old Regime

Immediate Causes:

- Economic crisis—famine and government debt
- Weak leadership
- Discontent of the Third Estate

REVOLUTION

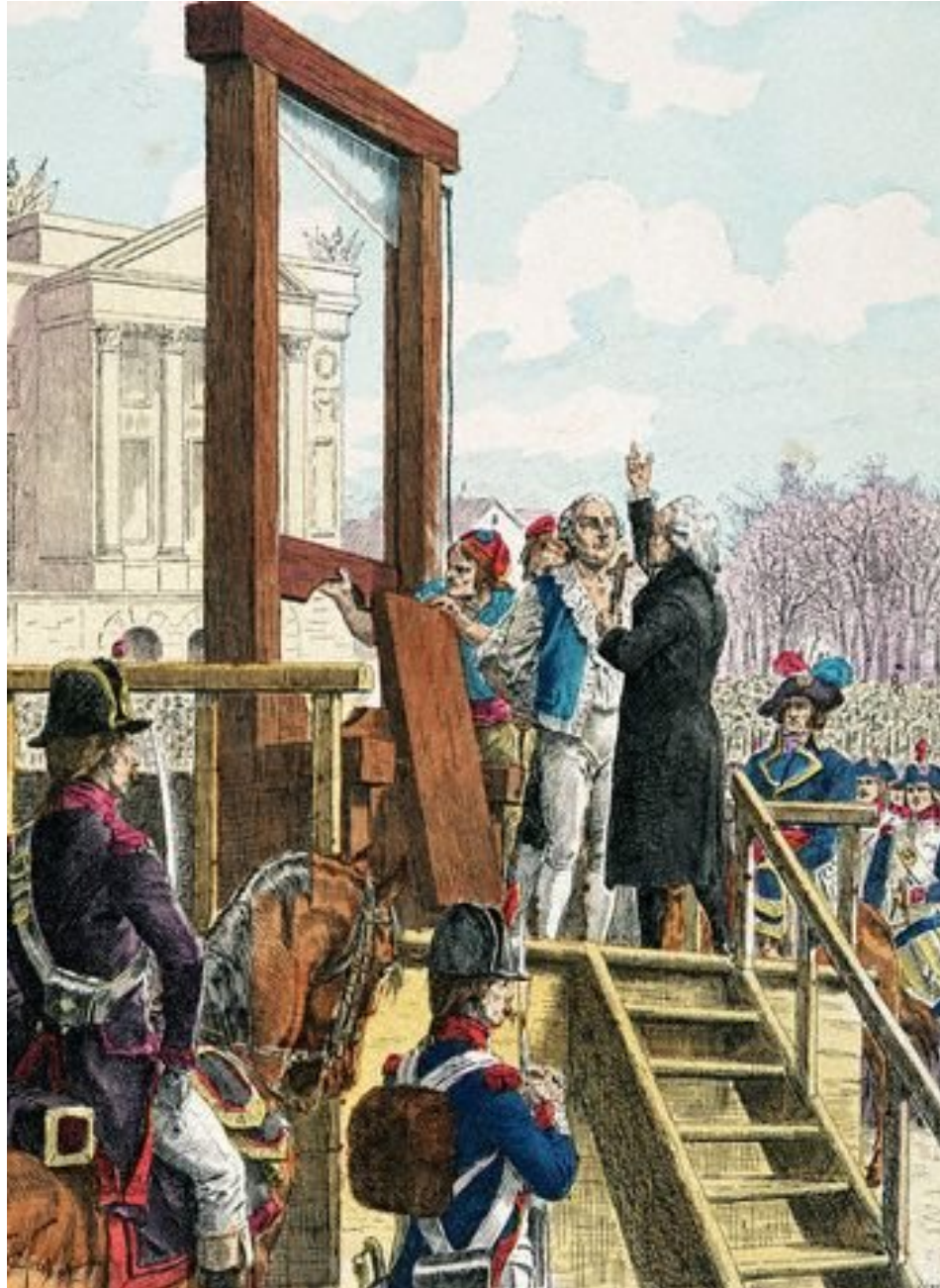
- Fall of the Bastille
- National Assembly
- Declaration of the Rights of Man and a new constitution

Robespierre

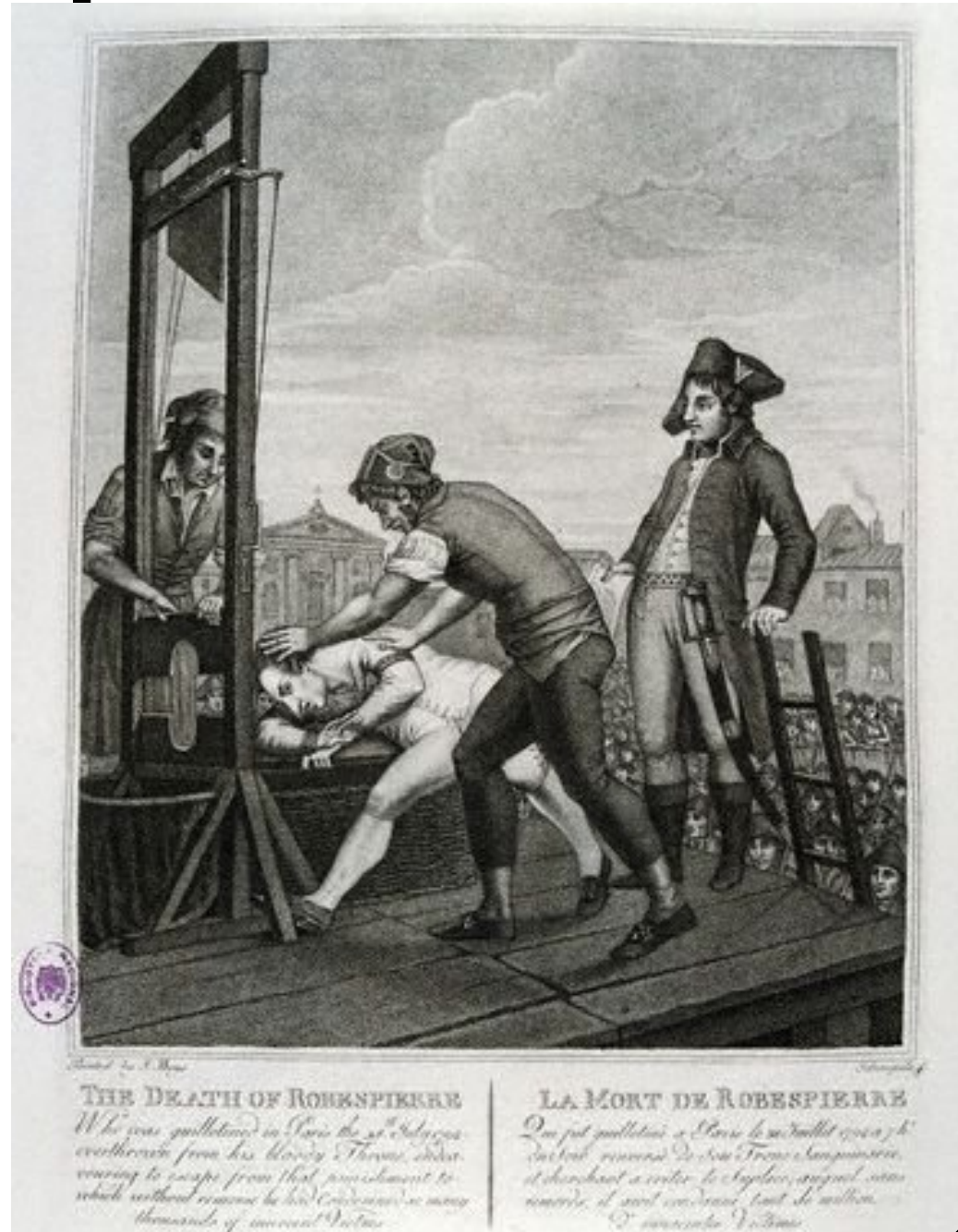


- **Leader of the Revolution**
- **Become dictator of France**
- **Institutes Reign of Terror**
- **Enemies of the Committee of Public Safety sent to the guillotine**
- **Robespierre is himself eventually beheaded as well**

Louis XVI is Guillotined



Robespierre at the Guillotine



The French Revolution and Napoleon

Revolution

- Fall of the Bastille
- National Assembly
- Declaration of the Rights of Man and a new constitution

Immediate Effects

- End of the Old Regime
- Execution of monarchs
- War with the First Coalition
- Reign of Terror
- Rise of Napoleon

Long-Term Effects

- Conservative reaction
- Decline in French power
- Spread of Enlightenment ideas
- Growth of nationalism
- Rise of international organizations (Congress of Vienna)
- Revolutions in Latin America

Napoleon Becomes Emperor of France

