

*1793-1799 (Year Two to Year Eight)*



## **NATIONAL (Constituent) ASSEMBLY** *constitutional monarchy*

June 20, 1789 Tennis Court Oath  
July 14, 1789 Storming of the Bastille

## **LEGISLATIVE (National) ASSEMBLY** *constitutional monarchy*

Aug. 10, 1792 monarchy abolished

## **NATIONAL CONVENTION** *single chamber "Representatives of the People"*

Sept. 22, 1792 Republic declared  
Sept. 5, 1793 Paris sections march on Convention;  
October 1793 "republican calendar" introduced  
December 1793 Toulon recaptured from British by Bonaparte & Dugommier  
July 27, 1794 fall of Robespierre  
(Thermidor 9, year 2)  
Nov.-Dec. 1794 Jacobin Clubs closed; wage-and-price controls (the Maximum) lifted;  
Paris sections prohibited from meeting  
April-May 1795 Convention represses popular uprisings in Paris  
(Germinal-Prairial, year 3)  
October 1795 Royalist uprising in Paris repressed by Barras & Bonaparte  
(Vendémiaire, year 4)

} The Terror

## **DIRECTORY** *5 man executive; 2 house legislative (Council of 500;*

April 1796 Bonaparte named Commander of Italian Army *Council of Ancients)*  
Spring 1797 major victory of the Right in elections  
Sept. 1797 *fructidor* (year 5) *coup* annuls elections;  
Spring 1798 Bonaparte invades Egypt  
Nov. 9-10, 1799 *18<sup>th</sup> of Brumaire*; claiming to protect the Councils from a Jacobin uprising,  
Bonaparte stages military *coup* (planned with Sieyes and Talleyrand)

Why was there so much experimentation with forms of government?

Why did one of them result in 15,000 death sentences?

popular insurrection — representatives of the people

political polarization — national sovereignty

weak state — the militarization of society



June 20, 1789  
Versailles

political elite  
demands to write a constitution  
“no taxation without representation”

Luc Olivier Merson after  
J-L David, *The Tennis Court Oath*



July 14, 1789  
Paris

ordinary Parisians  
looking for weapons

others create city-based militia  
(National Guard)

Jean-Baptiste Houël, *Storming of the Bastille*  
watercolor, 1789

national  
sovereignty

popular insurrection — representatives of the people

The indignation was so general that it was breaking out without fear or restraint... Yesterday the fears intensified; nevertheless, there seemed to be no real threat, so just after midnight we [the Legislative Assembly] went to bed... When I entered the Assembly Hall the next day, I was greatly surprised to find the King, the Queen, the Prince [etc.] all very carefully dressed and with their heads lowered like wet hens...they had taken refuge in the Assembly, it was no longer safe in the palace...

The Assembly sent a deputation to speak to the people. [In the Palace, heavy fighting had broken out between the Swiss Guards and the crowd, with the latter getting some support from the National Guard.] A mass of sabers, pikes, and bayonets rushed at us from all sides... our brave guards swooped us back into the Assembly. There, the brave *sans-culottes* had appeared at the rail and demanded to speak. They explained to us that the sovereign people, making use of that sovereignty, had charged them to tell us of its respect ... and that we were the only constituted authority. There was no other authority in existence.

Corpses covered the ground... The palace had been pillaged, though the people scrupulously carried everything of value to the Assembly.

Michel Azema, letter dated August 10-11, 1792 at midnight.



Jacques Louis David, "design for the uniform of a Representative of the People" (1794/Year 2)



anonymous, "a sans-culottes"

popular insurrection — representatives of the people

# The Event: September 5, 1793

Paris sections march on Convention, demand that “terror” be made “order of the day”

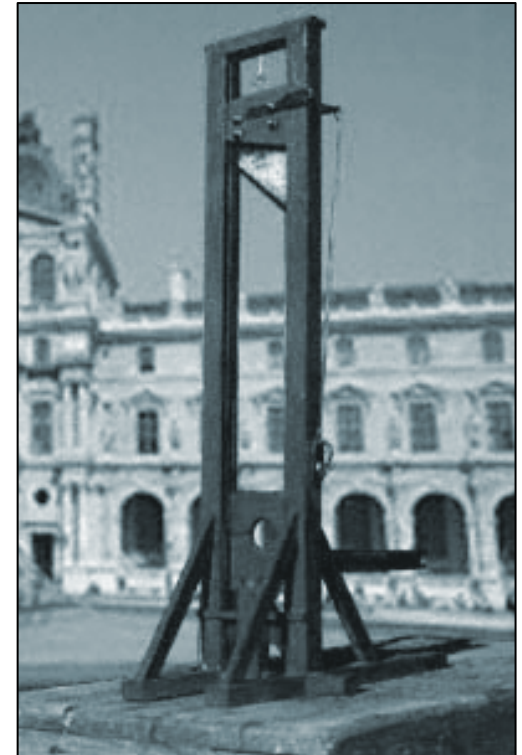
The Convention does *not* declare “Terror” but it does:

pass Law on Suspects—anyone suspected of opposing the Republic can be jailed indefinitely

send Representatives on Mission from the Convention to the rest of France to combat counter-revolutionaries

impose General Maximum—wage-and-price limits

declare government to be “revolutionary” until peace is achieved



## The Event: May 30-June 1, 1793

Girondins: deputies from Bordeaux and their friends  
early enthusiasts for war  
voted for “appeal to the people” rather than  
immediate death sentence for King

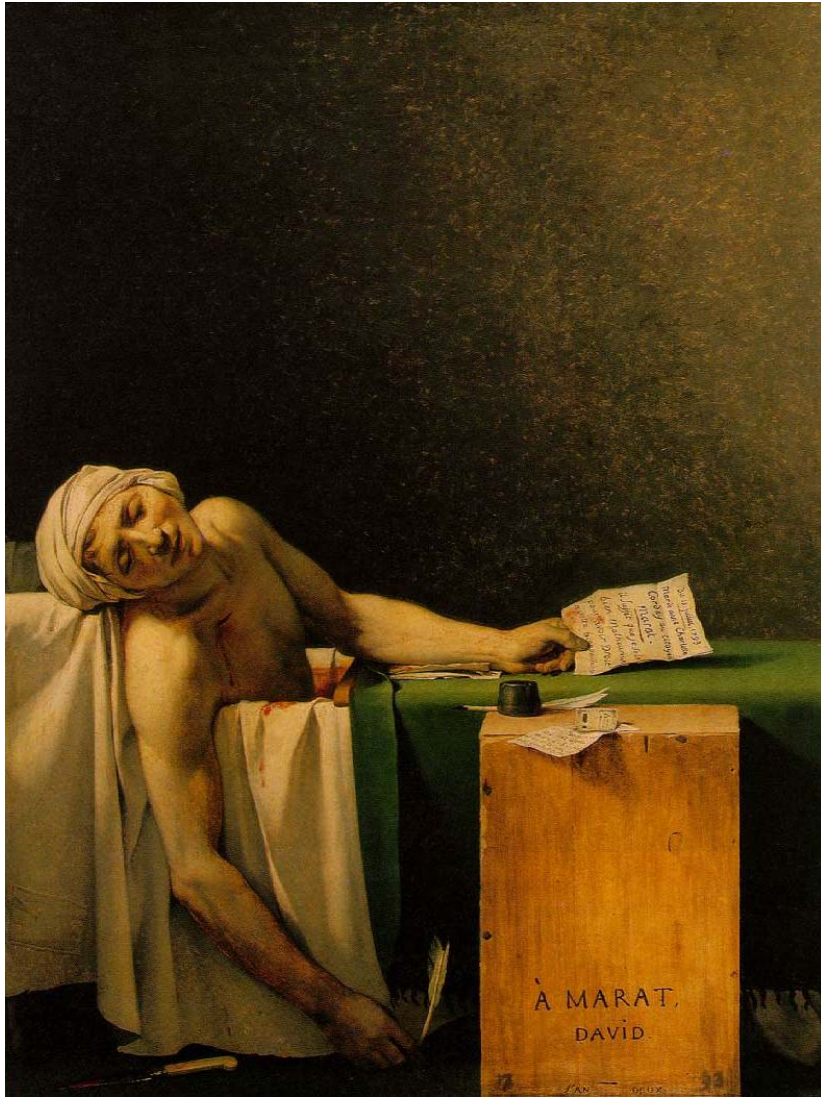
April 1793: General Dumouriez defects to Austrians  
Girondins call for arrest of Marat, “the friend of the people”

*sections* demand:

fixed price for bread  
aid for poor and families of soldiers  
arrest of suspects  
Girondins excluded from Convention

Purge of the Girondins:

29 deputies (including Brissot, Buzot, Pétion, Vergniaud)  
and Ministers including Roland and Clavière



Jacques Louis David, *The Death of Marat* (1793)





# Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (August 26, 1789)

3. The principle of all sovereignty rests in the nation. No body and no individual may exercise authority which does not emanate from the nation.



political polarization—national sovereignty



Areas of open resistance to the National Convention, 1793-1794

political polarization—national sovereignty



“A trial for Louis XVI! Louis has already been deposed for his crimes. He called the French people rebels and he called for the support of his fellow tyrants. Victory and the people have decided that he alone was the rebel. He cannot be judged, he has already been condemned.”

Maximilien Robespierre, 1758-1794

attended Paris school on scholarship

lawyer in Arras

elected to “Estates General”

very active in Jacobin Club

elected to Convention

purged on 9 thermidor II

guillotined



“We must take far sighted precautions to return the destiny of liberty to truth, which is eternal, rather than to men, who are transitory.... if the mainspring of popular government in peace is virtue, amid revolution it must be at the same time virtue and terror. Virtue, without which, terror is fatal; terror, without which, virtue is impotent. Terror is nothing but prompt, severe, and inflexible justice”  
Report on Political Morality, 5 February 1794.

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## Credits

1. Toulon harbor; photograph, 2009; <http://www.flickr.com/photos/luliloz/>
5. Azema's letter from <http://chnm.gmu.edu/revolution/d/319/>
6. sans-culottes—anonymous engraving, 1790-1792? photo from [gallica.bnf.fr](http://gallica.bnf.fr); David, "The Representative of the People at Work," 1794; engraving by Denon; [gallica.bnf.fr](http://gallica.bnf.fr)
9. Jacques Louis David, *The Death of Marat* (1793), oil on canvas, 65 x 50.5 inches; Musée Royaux des Beaux Arts de Belgique (Brussels, Belgium); [www.artchive.com](http://www.artchive.com); print, *Charlotte Corday, after a Miniature by C.W. Bock* (1793), [gallica.bnf.fr](http://gallica.bnf.fr)
10. *The Triumph of Marat in Hell* and *Charlotte Corday* both from [gallica.bnf.fr](http://gallica.bnf.fr)
11. JJF Le Barbier, the elder, *Declaration of the Rights of Man* (179?), oil on wood, .71 x .56 meters; Musée Carnvalet, Paris (France), [www.photo.rmn.fr](http://www.photo.rmn.fr)
12. *M.J. Robespierre, Head of the Committee of Public Safety*, print; drawn by Guerin, engraved by Neidel; Augsbourg, 1794; [gallica.bnf.fr](http://gallica.bnf.fr)