

# THE REIGN OF TERROR

## 1793- 1794

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION



# THE EXECUTION OF THE KING



- English example: Charles 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Treason no longer something people do against the king but against the nation.
- The Big Argument: kill the king or put him on trial. After putting him on trial another argument arises over whether to execute him or not.
- Executed 21<sup>st</sup> January 1793.  
Robespierre: "Louis must die, so that the country may live".

(Louis XVI died before the Terror began)

# ISSUES RESOLVED?

- Debate was over whether France was going to be limited monarchy or democracy.
- Issue decided and France becomes a republic.
- So why the violence?
- Other issues also motivating people.
- What to do about the church, the currency and food crises, power struggle, the war going badly.



# ENEMIES WITHIN

- Many start to believe the real enemies are not without but within and that they need to be dealt with.
- The Prussians and Austrians are on their way to Paris.
- The people have to be armed (having been wisely disarmed).
- The revolutionary crowd come back into politics with a vengeance.
- The sections of Paris turn the guns not on the Prussians but within and have the king executed.

# REVOLUTION AND COUNTER-REVOLUTION

## THE BEGINNING OF THE TERROR

- March 7: Outbreak of rebellion against the Revolution: War in the Vendée.
- March 11: **Revolutionary Tribunal (type of court for the trial of ‘public offenders)** established in Paris.
- Trials were often unfair--- guilt was assumed
- Not everyone who went to the guillotine got a trial.
- April 6: **Committee of Public Safety** established.  
(12 man oligarchy, collective dictatorship)
- May 30: A revolt breaks out in Lyon.



# REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNALS

- 8% of victims were aristocrats.
- 14% were middle class.
- 72% were workers or peasants accused of hoarding, rebellion, avoiding the draft, desertion, etc.

