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The restored Bourbon French Monarchy 1814-1830

Questions to ponder

1. To what extent were the policies of the restored Bourbon (Aristocrats) in France Unrealistic?
2. "The policies of Charles X were unrealistic and caused the downfall of the Bourbon Monarchy 1830." Discuss.
3. "The restored Bourbon Monarchy learnt nothing from the French Revolution and fort nothing of the Ancient Regime." Discuss.
4. Why was the restored Bourbon Monarchy short-lived?
5. Justify the view that the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty was like putting old wine in new bottles.
6. Discuss the methods the restored Bourbons used to consolidate power up to 1830.
7. How did the restored Bourbons consolidate their power in France from 1814-1830?
8. Account for the failures of the restored Bourbon to restore glory of the French monarchy.
9. "The unrealistic policies of Charles X were primarily responsible for the downfall of the restored Bourbons." Discuss

Louis XVIII



Louis XVIII (1755-1824), born **Louis Stanislas Xavier**, was the King of France from 1814 to 1824, except for a brief interruption during the Hundred Days in 1815. Here are some facts about his life and reign:

1. **Early Life:** Louis XVIII was the younger brother of King Louis XVI and the last French king to die while still reigning.
2. **Exile:** During the French Revolution, he fled France and spent 23 years in exile, living in various European countries such as Prussia, Great Britain, and Russia.
3. **Bourbon Restoration:** After Napoleon's defeat in 1814, Louis XVIII was restored to the throne, marking the beginning of the Bourbon Restoration.
4. **Constitutional Monarchy:** He established a constitutional monarchy with the Charter of 1814, which granted civil liberties and created a bicameral legislature.
5. **Hundred Days:** Louis XVIII was briefly deposed when Napoleon returned to power in 1815 during the Hundred Days, but he was restored after Napoleon's final defeat at the Battle of Waterloo.
6. **Reign:** His reign was marked by efforts to reconcile revolutionary ideals with the monarchy, although he faced challenges from both ultra-royalists and liberals.
7. **Death:** Louis XVIII passed away in 1824, and his brother Charles X succeeded him.

The 1814 Constitutional charter

The **Charter of 1814**, also known as the **Constitutional Charter**, was a constitutional text granted by **King Louis XVIII** of France shortly after the Bourbon Restoration. Here are some facts about the Charter:

1. **Establishment:** It was issued on **June 4, 1814**, following the demands of the Congress of Vienna for a constitution before Louis XVIII was restored to the throne.
2. **Nature:** The Charter was a royal charter that established a constitutional monarchy, balancing the authority of the king with a bicameral legislature.
3. **Civil Liberties:** It preserved many of the civil liberties won during the French Revolution, such as equality before the law, due process rights, religious toleration, freedom of the press, and protection of private property.
4. **Religious Tolerance:** While it acknowledged Catholicism as the state religion, it also allowed for religious toleration.
5. **Bicameral Legislature:** The Charter created a bicameral parliament consisting of the Chamber of Peers (elected by king) and the Chamber of Deputies (politically elected).
6. **Abolition of Conscription:** It abolished conscription, which had been a significant burden during the Napoleonic Wars.
7. **Legacy:** The Charter remained in effect until 1830, when it was revised, and continued to influence French politics until 1848.

Achievements of Louis XVIII

Louis XVIII had several notable achievements during his reign that contributed to the stability of France after the tumultuous Napoleonic Wars and laid the groundwork for future political developments.

1. **Bourbon Restoration:** He successfully restored the Bourbon monarchy in France after the fall of Napoleon, marking the beginning of the Bourbon Restoration.
2. **Charter of 1814:** Louis XVIII issued the Charter of 1814, which established a constitutional monarchy and granted civil liberties, religious toleration, and a bicameral legislature.
3. **Peaceful Transition:** He managed a relatively peaceful transition from the Napoleonic era to the Bourbon Restoration, avoiding major conflicts and uprisings.
4. **Economic Reforms:** His reign saw efforts to stabilize the French economy, including measures to reduce national debt and promote economic growth.
5. **International Diplomacy:** Louis XVIII played a significant role in European diplomacy, participating in the Congress System (Concert of Europe) to maintain peace and stability in Europe.
6. **Louis XVIII managed to pay war reparation (indemnity) imposed on France.** This was after the defeat of Napoleon.
7. **Louis XVIII allowed peasants to retain the land acquired during the 1789 French revolution.** This minimized opposition to his restoration.
8. **Louis XVIII improved the army through training and on merit promotion.** The military capacity of French army was improved through recruitment, training and redeployment of army officers. By law promotions in the army was based on merit.
9. **Louis XVIII promoted religious Tolerance:** While it acknowledged Catholicism as the state religion, it also allowed for religious toleration.
10. **Louis XVIII promoted education reforms.** Louis encouraged all round education and that of females.

Failures of Louis XVIII

Louis XVIII faced several challenges and failures during his reign:

1. **Hundred Days:** His reign was briefly interrupted by Napoleon's return to power during the Hundred Days in 1815, which led to a temporary exile for Louis XVIII.
2. **Political Instability:** Despite his efforts to establish a constitutional monarchy, political instability persisted, with frequent changes in government and conflicts between ultra-royalists and liberals.
3. **Economic Difficulties:** The French economy struggled to recover from the Napoleonic Wars, and Louis XVIII faced difficulties in implementing effective economic reforms.
4. **Suppression of Revolts:** His attempts to suppress revolutionary movements, such as the White Terror, led to further unrest and opposition from various factions within France.
5. **Limited Reforms:** While the Charter of 1814 granted civil liberties, it did not fully satisfy the demands of liberals and reformers, leading to ongoing political tensions.
6. **Nomination of members of the chamber of peers and ministers from the nobles more than the middle class.** This caused to dissatisfactions from the middle class.
7. **Abolition of tri-color flag.** This seen as failed reconciliation among revolutionists and royalists.

8. **Louis XVIII censored the press.** In most cases he suppressed the views of extremists and imposed restrictions on political liberties and freedoms.

Reign of Comt D'Artois (Charles X), 1824-1830

Charles X (born **Charles-Philippe, Count of Artois** on October 9, 1757, in Versailles, France – died November 6, 1836, in Gorizia, Austrian Empire) was the King of France from **1824 to 1830**. He was the younger brother of **Louis XVI** and **Louis XVIII**, and the uncle of **Louis XVII**. Charles X's reign highlighted the challenges of reconciling traditional monarchical principles with the democratic spirit that emerged from the French Revolution.

Here are some facts about his reign:

1. **Ultra-Royalist Policies:** Charles X was a staunch ultra-royalist who sought to restore the absolute monarchy and the traditional privileges of the nobility and clergy.
2. **July Ordinances:** His attempt to reassert royal authority through the July Ordinances in 1830, which dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, limited the franchise, and imposed press censorship, led to widespread discontent and the July Revolution.
3. **Abolition of Feudalism:** His reign saw the compensation of former landowners for the abolition of feudalism, which was largely at the expense of bourgeois holders of government bonds.
4. **Increased Church Power:** He increased the power of the Catholic Church and reinstated the death penalty for sacrilege.
5. **French Conquest of Algeria:** Charles X approved the French conquest of Algeria as a way to distract from domestic problems.
6. **Abdication and Exile:** The July Revolution of 1830 forced Charles X to abdicate, and he went into exile in the Austrian Empire, where he died in 1836.

Achievements of Charles X, 1824-1830

Although, his was marked by significant challenges that led to his abdication following the July Revolution of 1830, **Charles X** had a few notable achievements during his reign from 1824 to 1830:

1. **Compensation for Émigrés:** His government compensated former landowners for the abolition of feudalism, which was largely at the expense of bourgeois holders of government bonds.
2. **Increased Church Power:** He increased the power of the Catholic Church and reinstated the death penalty for sacrilege.
3. **French Conquest of Algeria:** Charles X approved the French conquest of Algeria, which began in 1830, as a way to distract from domestic problems. Algeria was profitable to France for industrial raw materials and market.
4. **Restoration of Monarchical Authority:** He attempted to restore the authority of the monarchy and the traditional privileges of the nobility and clergy.

5. **He promoted transport, agricultural and industrial sector.**
6. **He succeeded at maintain his reign for the period of 6 years.**

Failures of Charles X, 1824-1830

Charles X faced several significant failures during his reign from 1824 to 1830 that led to his abdication following the July Revolution of 1830 :

1. **July Revolution:** His attempt to reassert royal authority through the July Ordinances in 1830, which dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, limited the franchise, and reinstated press censorship, led to widespread discontent and the July Revolution.
2. **Unpopular Policies:** His conservative policies, including the restoration of the death penalty for sacrilege and increased power for the Catholic Church, alienated many French citizens.
3. **Economic Struggles:** His reign saw economic difficulties, including the compensation of former landowners at the expense of bourgeois holders of government bonds, which caused financial strain.
4. **Suppression of Liberties:** His efforts to suppress liberal movements and restrict civil liberties led to constant political tensions and unrest.
5. **Abdication and Exile:** The July Revolution forced Charles X to abdicate and go into exile in the Austrian Empire, marking the end of the Bourbon Restoration.

How the restored Bourbons Monarchy consolidated power, 1814-1830

The Bourbon Monarchy consolidated power between 1814 and 1830 through several key strategies:

1. **Charter of 1814:** Louis XVIII issued the Charter of 1814, which established a constitutional monarchy and granted civil liberties, religious toleration, and a bicameral legislature. This helped to stabilize the political landscape and gain the support of moderate factions.
2. **Restoration of Legitimacy:** The Bourbon Restoration aimed to restore the old order and the principle of legitimacy, which appealed to traditionalists and the nobility.
3. **Economic Reforms:** Efforts were made to stabilize the French economy, reduce national debt, and promote economic growth.
4. **International Diplomacy:** The Bourbon Monarchy participated in the Congress System (Concert of Europe), which helped to maintain peace and stability in Europe and bolstered the monarchy's legitimacy on the international stage.
5. **Suppression of Revolts:** The monarchy took measures to suppress revolutionary and liberal movements, such as the White Terror, to maintain control and order.
6. **Compensation for Émigrés:** The government compensated former landowners for the abolition of feudalism, which helped to secure the loyalty of the old aristocracy.

7. **Right to vote.** The Bourbons granted the right stand for election and vote to all people. Although those who wanted to be elected had to pay a nominal fee. The fee eliminated many democrats that wished to participate.
8. **State sponsored killings.** Extremists were eliminated.
9. **Building of a strong army.** A strong army was built through recruitments, training merit promotions and strategic deployments which helped to protect the government.
10. **Provision of Amnesty.** Louis XVIII minimized opposition by granting amnesty to nobles, Catholic Church Official and member of loyal family in exile.
11. **Reforms in education generated public support.**
12. **Abolition of arbitrary arrest and imprisonment without trial** restored public confidence in the government
13. **Censoring of press reduced opposition propaganda.** Severe laws were passed on those that wrote against government.

Reasons or factors for the collapse of the restored Bourbon Monarchy in 1830

The collapse of the restored Bourbon Monarchy in 1830 was due to several key factors:

1. **Unpopular Policies:** Charles X's ultra-royalist policies, including the July Ordinances of 1830, which dissolved the Chamber of Deputies, limited the franchise, and reinstated press censorship, led to widespread discontent among the French population.
2. **Economic Hardships:** Economic difficulties, including the compensation of former landowners at the expense of bourgeois holders of government bonds, caused financial strain and dissatisfaction.
3. **Rise of Liberalism:** The spread of liberal and nationalist ideas continued to challenge the conservative order established by the Bourbon Monarchy, leading to increased demands for political reform.
4. **July Revolution:** The July Revolution of 1830 was a direct response to Charles X's authoritarian measures, resulting in his abdication and exile, and the end of the Bourbon Restoration.
5. **Failure to Adapt.** The monarchy's inability to adapt to the changing political and social landscape, and its reliance on traditional monarchical principles, contributed to its downfall.
6. **Restoration of the influence of Catholic Church in government annoyed French people.** For instance, the appointment of teachers in elementary schools by Catholic Bishops.
7. **Political corruption such as rigging elections.** For example, in 1830 having failed to get his targeted number of Ultra-royalists in the chamber of deputies, Charles X decided to dissolve the assembly and organized fresh elections.
8. **Internal disputes in government,** led to the downfall of the government.
9. **Loss of support from the royal troops contributed to the eventual collapse of the restored Bourbons.** The royal troop connived with the middle and working classes to get free of Charles X in 1830.

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