

# France in 1795 (an overview)

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After the Terror ended in 1794, the constitution changed yet again. The JACOBIENS and the SANS-CULOTTES were forced out of power and Politicians tried to find a moderate form of government that French people would support. It was decided that there should be five directors who would see that laws were carried out. However the new government, the **Directory**, had serious problems to deal with and by 1798 were in serious trouble. They had reached crisis point...

The government were running out of money - the foreign wars they were fighting were costly.



France's armies had been badly defeated in wars in Italy.

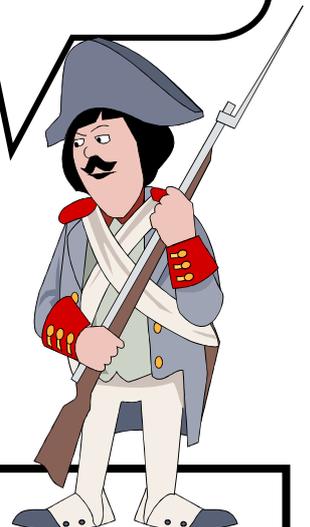
There were severe food shortages

There were plots from royalists and extreme revolutionaries.

As things got worse for the Directory in France, one of the Directors (government leaders) began to look round for a general who could control France. Throughout History army generals have tried to take control of governments in crisis, and Robespierre had even warned of a 'coup d'état' in 1792 when he said: "Put yourself on guard against your generals, or a strong citizen might gain power and one day become your master."

The choice fell on Napoleon Bonaparte - one of France's most successful military generals. (You will learn more about him next lesson) He had proved himself a brilliant general in wars across Europe and Africa and this had made him famous and popular in France. In 1799, Napoleon secretly left his armies who were still fighting in Egypt for France. When he landed, people of all opinions welcomed him. On 11<sup>th</sup> November 1799, Napoleon seized power.

A 'coup d'état' is when a military government takes over a country illegally.



## Questions.

1) Write your own overview of France's political problems between 1795 and 1799. You should write about a page including details of:

- The problems faced by the Directory
- What was decided to solve the problems

2) What do you think Robespierre meant when he warned; "Put yourself on guard against your generals...?"

3) Explain the key terms 'Directory' and 'Coup d'état'.