

- 3 Since loans necessarily lead to an increase of taxation, none will be contracted without the consent of the Estates-General but with the proviso that in case of war or other national peril, the sovereign will be able to borrow up to 100 million francs without delay. For it is the king's express intention never to allow the safety of the realm to be dependent on anyone.
- 5 A statement of revenue and expenditure will be published annually in a form proposed by the Estates-General and approved by His Majesty.
- 6 The sums assigned to each ministry will be determined in a regular and permanent manner and the king submits to this general rule even the sums assigned for the upkeep of his household.
- 8 The representatives of a nation which is mindful of the laws of honour and probity will in no wise violate public confidence and the king expects them solemnly to underwrite the debt of the state.
- 9 When the explicit intentions of the nobility and clergy to renounce their fiscal privileges have been given deliberative effect, the king's intention is to implement them so that there should no longer subsist any form of privilege or distinction in the payment of public taxation.
- 12 All forms of property without exception will be respected for all time and His Majesty expressly includes as property: tithes, *cens*, *rentes*, feudal and seigneurial rights and duties and, in general, all rights and prerogatives, both useful and honorific, belonging to lands and fiefs and categories of people.
- 14 His Majesty's intention is to determine, on the advice of the Estates-General, what employments and offices will continue in future to have the privilege of conferring and transmitting nobility. Notwithstanding, His Majesty, in virtue of the rights inherent in his crown, will continue to grant patents of nobility to those of his subjects who show themselves to be worthy of this reward through service to the king and the state.
- 5 The king, desirous of guaranteeing the personal liberty of every citizen on a permanent basis, invites the Estates-General to suggest the most workable way of abolishing the orders known as *lettres de cachet* whilst yet preserving the public safety and taking the precautions necessary to safeguard, in certain cases, the honour of families, to nip sedition in the bud and to preserve the state from the harmful effects of criminal intelligence with foreign powers.
- 6 The Estates-General will examine and communicate to His Majesty the most satisfactory way of reconciling freedom of the press with the respect due to religion, morality and the honour of the citizen.
- 7 In the various provinces or *généralités* [the unit administered by an *intendant*] of the kingdom provincial Estates will be established with the following composition: two-tenths clergy – with some seats automatically reserved for the episcopal order – three-tenths nobility and five-tenths Third Estate.

- 18 The members of the provincial Estates will be freely elected by the respective orders and some property qualification will be necessary to vote or be elected.
- 19 The deputies to these provincial Estates will deliberate in common on all matters, in accordance with the usage observed in the provincial assemblies which these Estates will replace.
- 29 The king desires that the laws which he promulgates whilst the Estates are in session and in accordance with their desires and wishes should not meet with any delay or obstacle in their registration and execution throughout the kingdom.
- 35 His Majesty, having summoned the Estates-General to join him in deliberating great matters of public welfare and everything capable of contributing to the good of his people, declares most expressly that he wishes to preserve intact and unimpaired the organization of the army and also all authority and disciplinary powers over the soldiers which the French monarchs have always enjoyed.

[In other articles the king invited proposals for abolishing the *taille* (art. 10), *franc fief* (art. 11), internal customs barriers (art. 25), the *gabelle* (art. 26), *aides* (art. 27), the *corvée* (art. 30), *mainmorte* (art. 31), and *capitaineries* (art. 32). He concluded with the following speech:]

Gentlemen, you have just heard a statement of my provisions and my objectives; they conform to my lively desire to act for the good of all and if, by a remote mischance, you were to abandon me in such a fine enterprise, I should effect the good of my peoples alone; alone I should consider myself their true representative and knowing the content of your *cahiers*, in the knowledge of the perfect harmony subsisting between the wishes of the vast majority of the nation and my own beneficent intentions, I will have all the confidence which so rare a harmony should inspire; and armed with this I will go forward courageously and steadfastly towards my goal.

Reflect once more, gentlemen, that none of your projects, none of your arrangements can have the force of law without my explicit approval; thus I am the natural guarantor of your respective rights and all the orders of the state can rely on my equity and impartiality; any mistrust on your part would be a great injustice. So far it is I who have done everything for the welfare of my peoples and it is perhaps rare that the solitary ambition of a sovereign should be to persuade his subjects to agree together at last so that they can accept his gifts.

I order you, gentlemen, to disperse immediately and each of you to proceed tomorrow morning to the chamber assigned to his order, there to resume your deliberations. In consequence whereof I order the grand master of ceremonies to prepare the chambers.