

with Louis XVI in his hour of trial, and those who favored the revolution. The government was alarmed; the archbishop led his clergy in denouncing the revolution as monstrous and atheistical. Censorship and spying intensified. In Turin, agents of the Vicario reported on subversive conversations, and tried to uncover the underground clubs of revolutionary sympathizers that began to proliferate. These tensions burst into the open in June 1791, when the arrest of a university student provoked a riot. Protesting at his arrest, students rampaged through the streets, supported by crowds of workmen and artisans. To calm the disturbance the government disavowed the arrest and dismissed the official who had ordered it. An uneasy calm returned to the city, but the outbreak of war between revolutionary France and Austria in April 1792 raised political tensions to a new pitch. A fresh wave of émigrés arrived from France, among them some members of the royal family, whom Victor Amadeus welcomed to his court. His government was now determined to take a firm line against the revolution, both abroad and at home. This determination hardened in September, when the French revolutionary armies attacked Savoy and the county of Nice, and quickly occupied them. Victor Amadeus III's government now found itself in a state of open war with France. In January 1793 the occupation of the transalpine Savoyard territories was followed by the execution of Louis XVI, a calculated act of defiance by the French revolutionary government against the crowned heads of Europe. In the spring of 1793 Victor Amadeus III joined the coalition of powers that Great Britain was forming to crush the revolution.

With the outbreak of war against revolutionary France the atmosphere in Turin became even more highly charged. Repression increased, for in addition to the political dangers confronting it, the government now faced a fast-deteriorating economic situation, aggravated by the mounting costs of the war. The army was deployed to guard the Alpine frontier, while detachments of soldiers were stationed in the cities of Piedmont to suppress revolutionary agitation. As in previous conflicts, Turin was called upon to play its part: the Monte issued state bonds, and the municipal authorities raised a company of gentlemen volunteers to defend the city and the crown. The civic elite remained staunch in its support of the monarchy, but among the citizens there was growing disaffection. Grain prices continued to rise, and unemployment was increasing. The silk trade, still not recovered from the crisis that had hit it a few years earlier, was seriously damaged by the war, which cut off its main export market in France. Economic distress created a ready audience for revolutionary propaganda. By the end of 1793 two under-