THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA

Vocabulary: shambles, alliance, reactionary, legitimacy, compensation, alliance.

Napoleon’s defeat left Europe in a SHAMBLES. The Congress of Vienna was called in 1815 in order to put Europe back together again. The Person who led the Congress of Vienna was Prince Metternich of Austria. The other countries which were part of the Congress were England, Russia, Prussia and France. France was invited because after the defeat of Napoleon, a new king, Louis XVIII was given power.

Metternich took charge almost immediately. He wanted to return Europe to the old days, before the French Revolution and Napoleon. A person who wants to return to the good old days is called a REACTIONARY. The period after the Congress of Vienna was called the Age of Reaction.

The leaders of the Congress of Vienna wanted LEGITIMACY of rulers. This meant that the correct ruler, usually a king, should be put back on the throne of their country. If a king could not be put back on his throne, the Congress of Vienna wanted COMPENSATION. This meant that the kings should be paid with money, land, or something of value. The Congress of Vienna wanted legitimacy and compensation for all of Europe.

Those who were reactionaries also were against the ideas of democracy and nationalism. They believed that wherever the ideas of democracy and nationalism appeared, the armies of the nations at the Congress of Vienna should destroy them. To do this they formed a military ALLIANCE. In this way, the reactionaries tried to "turn the clock back" to the days before the French Revolution.
Directions: Answer the following questions based on the reading “Congress of Vienna.”

1. Why did the congress of Vienna meet?

2. Explain what the Congress of Vienna meant by “Legitimacy and Compensation.”

3. Why can we say that the leaders of the Congress of Vienna were reactionaries?

4. How successful do you think Metternich and the other reactionaries were when they tried returning Europe to the way it was before the French Revolution and Napoleon? Explain.