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THE EUROPEAN POLITY: BIOGRAPHY OF AN IDEA

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The struggle for Europe which rages at present between Russia and the West is significant, historically and politically, not only as a fight over a geographical area. Europe, in modern times, has come to be more than merely a geographical concept—politically the idea of Europe stands for a supranational system within the framework of which Europe's states are loosely associated. For centuries this European state system played a leading role in shaping the fate of the Western and large parts of the rest of the world. Only the emergence of great non-European Powers during the nineteenth centry deprived it gradually of its pre-eminence. The First World War gave added impetus to its decline. And as a result of Hitler's rise to power and the Second World War this disintegration has now reached the point where Europe is no longer master in its own house. Forced to stand by while outside Powers seek to determine its future, the European state system has come to a turning point in its history. This seems a proper time therefore to take stock of this history and to survey the evolution of an idea which left its indelible impact on the Western world. Conceivably such an analysis may provide some clues concerning the future of the European polity.

The political concept of Europe is much younger than the geographic one. The latter goes back to antiquity which already divided the world into three parts—Europe, Asia, and Africa. As a political system, on the other hand, Europe grew out of the breakdown of the Holy Roman Empire and the concomitant secularization of Western civilization. Church and Empire ceased to provide the universal organization wherein the Western world could find a basic spiritual and political unity. A new framework had to be

created in which that world could organize itself. It was found in the political idea of Europe.[1]

As an organizing principle Europe had to reconcile the need and desire for a supranational association with a centrifugal separatist-nationalist tendency to which Renaissance and Reformation gave impetus and which rendered the universalism of the Church politically ineffective. It met the peculiar needs of those whom the breakdown of Church and Empire had cast adrift by developing a system whose component parts joined with each other in order to preserve their independence and individuality. Unlike the medieval Church and Empire it no longer sought to fuse these parts into one unit, but saw its fundamental task in the preservation of their diversity. As it gradually evolved, the political concept of Europe envisaged the coexistence of sovereign states endowed with equal rights and joined by the realization that their individual survival depended on a common order. As early as the sixteenth century contemporary publicists pointed out that it was the task of the new system to prevent any one of the participating states from becoming so strong as to endanger the security of the others.[2] It has remained the principal task of the European polity ever since.

To be sure, Europe did not always live up to this task, and the principles for which it stood were often enough ignored. Unequal distribution of power led frequently to a highly discriminatory discharge of its functions in favor of the great Powers and at the expense of the small ones. Yet the idea of Europe was more than a convenient but meaningless slogan. "Faith in a European solidarity of a society of equal states did not serve merely to cover power political interests. Rather, ideal elements were closely interwoven with political objectives and awareness of a Euro-

[1] Werner Fritezmeyer, "Christenheit und Europa," *Historische Zeitschrift,* Beiheft 23 (Munich and Berlin, 1931).

[2] Ernst Kaeber, *Die Idee des europäischen Gleichgewichts in der publizistischen Literatur vom 16. bis zur Mitte des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1907).

pean community was inseparably blended with individual political concerns." [3]

The Peace Treaties of Westphalia, after the Thirty Years War, made the first attempt to create something like a concrete European state system. Under the impact of the devastation wrought by three decades of almost continuous warfare the negotiators at Muenster and Osnabrueck endeavored to evolve a community of states within which the individual members could live in peaceful cooperation.[4] Looking upon the signatories as members of one body, the Treaties sought to safeguard their sovereign equality, regardless of size and power. The German historian Leopold von Ranke hailed them as the "fundamental laws, as it were, of a general republic in which all [states] participated." Yet while the Westphalian Treaties were based on the assumption that any change in the status of any one of the signatories might directly affect the status of all others by changing the existing power relationships, they did not yet explicitly make the maintenance of a European equilibrium their primary task.[5] The attempts of Louis XIV to establish France's hegemony in Europe, however, convinced the latter that its political survival was irretrievably tied up with the maintenance of a balance of power. The Treaty of Utrecht which ended Louis' campaigns raised its realization expressly to the foremost objective of European diplomacy.[6]

[3] Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, *Metternich: Der Staatsmann und der Mensch* (Munich, 1925), Vol. 2, p. 91; Friedrich Meincke, *Die Idee der Staatsräson* (Berlin, 1924), pp. 22-23, 320-24; Wolfgang Windelband, *Die auswärtige Politik der Grossmächte in der Neuzeit, 1494-1919,* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1922), pp. 140-42.

[4] See Arts. 114-16 of the Treaty of Muenster and Art. 17, Sects. 4-6, of the Treaty of Osnabrueck.

[5] As early as 1655, however, the maintenance of the "balance of Europe" became a matter of diplomatic concern; Johann Gustav Droysen, *Geschichte der preussischen Politik* (Leipzig, 1868-86), Vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 235.

[6] Charles Dupuis, *Le Principe d'équilibre et le concert européen de la paix de Westphalie à l'acte d'Algésiras* (Paris, 1909), pp. 22-31.

By this time, too, the European community was shaking itself loose from certain limitations to which it had fallen heir as the successor of the Church in its capacity of supranational organizer of the Western world. The transition from the Christian universalist community to the diversified European state system had been a rather gradual one. It had evolved over centuries as Church and Empire had receded into political impotence. As a result, Christian ecclesiastic traditions continued to prevail in the emerging European polity. For a long time only "Christian" states were accepted into it. Neither Mohammedan Turks nor Russians, who as Orthodox Christians remained outside the pale of the Roman Church, had qualified as members.[7] This spiritual identification of the European community with the medieval Church came to a gradual end after the Thirty Years War. For some time already the Turks had come to be looked upon as acceptable allies of the Christian Powers. Whatever fears of the "infidel" remained became meaningless after the Turkish threat to the Western world had finally and permanently been averted. By 1700 the idea of Europe as a community of Christian states designed to ward off all attacks by non-Christians on Christianity had become obsolete.[8] Early in the seventeenth century, Sully's "Great Design" for an all-Christian universal republic had still insisted on the exclusion of Russia from the organization he envisaged unless she embraced

[7] Fritzemeyer, pp. 91-94; Meinecke, p. 203; Richard Wallach, *Das abendländische Gemeinschaftsbewusstsein im Mittelalter* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1928), p. 51. For a long time the terms "Europe" and "Christendom" were used as interchangeable synonyms. Cf. *Lettres, instructions diplomatiques et papiers d'Etat du cardinal de Richelieu* (Paris, 1856), Vol. 2, pp. 78-80; Vol. 4, p. 280; Duke Henri de Rohan, *De l'Interest des Princes et Etats de la Chrestienté* (n.l., 1638); *Oeuvres choisies de Fénélon* (Paris, 1872), Vol. 4, pp. 360-68.

[8] This development was reflected also in the terminology of the times. The identification of Europe and Christendom ended; the latter term assumed a primarily religious meaning. Fritzemeyer, pp. 24-25; also Institut International de Coopération Intellectuelle, *L'Avenir de l'esprit européen* (Paris, 1934), pp. 56-57.

either Catholicism, Lutheranism, or Calvinism.[9] But William Penn, at the end of the century, wanted to see both Russians and Turks inculuded in the peace federation he proposed.[10] Europe could now receive into its polity any state which was able to help in the maintenance of a power equilibrium. In pursuit of this balance, Orthodox Russia along with Prussia was accepted into the European community in the course of the eighteenth century.

While the European community outgrew its spiritual limitations and expanded eastward into Russia, it also expanded westward beyond the Atlantic into the New World. This latter development was as revolutionary as the former. Far into the seventeenth century the Western Hemisphere had been considered as outside the European community, *extra legem,* unaffected by any treaties and agreements binding European Powers in their mutual relations. Europe as a legal system was strictly separated from the overseas world, regardless of the existing political and economic ties.[11] The power-political importance of the latter was realized only in the course of the eighteenth century. The Treaty of Utrecht, after the war of the Spanish Succession, had, in accordance with traditional policies, attempted to restore a new balance of power in Europe by contenting itself with territorial and political arrangements in Europe proper. Little attention was paid to the redistribution of overseas possessions. As a result, Britain which obtained substantial accretions to its empire became so powerful as to constitute in turn a threat to the European system. French policy now saw its task in integrating

[9] *Memoirs of the Duke of Sully* (Edinburgh, 1819), Vol. 5, pp. 156-59.

[10] William Penn, "An Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe," in *The Peace of Europe: The Fruits of Solitude and Other Writings* (London and New York, n.d.), p. 11.

[11] Violet Barbour, "Privateers and Pirates of the West Indies," *American Historical Review,* Vol. 16, p. 539 (1911-12); Adolf Rein, "Uber die Bedeutung der überseeischen Ausdehnung für das europäische Staatensystem," *Historische Zeitschrift,* Vol. 137, pp. 43-46 (1927-28).

the New World into that system as the only way by which a true balance of power could be restored.[12]

The attempt proved a failure. France, which in line with this policy supported the American Revolution, found herself disappointed in her hopes of obtaining in the independent United States a new member for the European state system willing to help balance the growing power of Britain. The United States refused to be drawn into the "European vortex," and Britain's remarkably speedy recovery after the War of Independence rapidly offset the effects of her American defeat. If anything, these efforts to strengthen the European system by extending it to the Western Hemisphere led to its eventual weakening, for they paved the way for the emergence of a strong non-European Power.

As a political reality the European polity did not of course always possess the same importance. France, preoccupied with the problem of Britain's power, repeatedly turned her back on the rest of Europe during the eighteenth century. Similarly, Austria, Russia, and Prussia cared little about the equilibrium along the shores of the Atlantic and concentrated their attention on developments in the East. The system, which assumed significance only when common interests appeared to be threatened, did not always have to cope with such a challenge during the eighteenth century. As a result, its eastern and western members at times went into their separate ways.[13] It reasserted itself, however, as soon as an overwhelmingly strong Power began to threaten its existence anew. When Russia conquered the Crimean Peninsula, a new awareness of European solidarity made itself felt. The conclusion of the Paris Peace Treaty of 1783 was hastened by fears of the growing pow-

[12] E. S. Corwin, *French Policy and the American Alliance of 1778* (Princeton, 1916), pp. 28-34; Max Savelle, "The American Balance of Power and European Diplomacy, 1713-78," in Richard B. Morris (ed.), *The Era of the American Revolution* (New York, 1939), pp. 158, 162-63; Rein, pp. 61-71.

[13] Windelband, pp. 232-33; Dietrich Gerhard, *England und der Aufstieg Russlands* (Munich and Berlin, 1933), pp. 152-56.

er of Russia and Austria in Eastern Europe.[14] And a few years later the challenge of the French Revolution to the existing dynastic system forced Europe's monarchies once more into closer co-operation.[15]

After the rise of Napoleon demands were revived for a strengthening of the European system to offset the threat of France's hegemony and to safeguard the independence of the remaining European states. Untiringly the Prusso-Austrian publicist Friedrich von Gentz sought to persuade those countries which had not yet come under the Napoleonic yoke to unite in a common front against the French Emperor, in defense of "Europe."[16] Gentz knew that whatever its shortcomings, the European state system which had its *raison d'etre* in the diversity of Europe's nations, was the best safeguard of the independent survival of these nations. Few men, in fact, have been more keenly aware of the true nature of the European community whose vitality was derived from the diversity of its members than this diplomatic adviser of many a contemporary statesman.[17] Czar Alexander I likewise played with the idea of creating a European federation to curb

[14] Windelband, *loc. cit.*; Gerhard, pp. 166-69.

[15] See the appeal of the Austrian Chancellor Prince Kaunitz in July, 1791, to "Europe," whose prosperity and common interests he saw threatened by the Revolution, in Alfred Ritter von Vivenot, *Quellen zur Geschichte der deutschen Kaiserpolitik Österreichs* (Vienna, 1873), Vol. 1, p. 209.

[16] See his *Fragments on the Balance of Power* (London, 1806), and "Mémoire sur les moyens de mettre un terme aux malheurs et aux dangers de l'Europe et principes d'une pacification générale," *Aus dem Nachlasse Friedrich von Gentz'* (Vienna, 1868), Vol. 2, pp. 1-99.

[17] See, for example, his *On the State of Europe Before and After the Revolution: Being an Answer to the Work Entitled, "De l'Etat de la France à la Fin de l'An VIII"* (London, 1804); also Golo Mann, *Secretary of Europe: The Life of Friedrich Gentz, Enemy of Napoleon* (New Haven, 1946), and my review of this book in *Journal of Modern History,* Vol. 18, pp. 354-55 (1946).

Napoleon's power.[18] But Alexander's plans proved as unrealizable as did Gentz'. For a long time Europe failed to understand that the fate of each of its members was tied up inseparably with the fate of every other. As a result, almost every one fell victim to the conquering French.[19]

In his plans to establish a European federation strong enough to resist the rapidly expanding French Empire, Gentz looked far beyond Europe's geographical boundaries. In accordance with the trend of the eighteenth-century European community which had integrated a number of outside Powers into its system to achieve a new equilibrium, he proposed the acceptance of South America (after having been freed from the Spanish) and of the European parts of Turkey (after their liberation from the Turks) into the European system.[20]

Surprising as this plan of making South America a part of the European state system may seem today, it did not strike Gentz's contemporaries as such. Some of them proposed quite similar policies. Alexander I, for example, undismayed by France's previous failures, thought, after the Napoleonic wars, of inviting the United States into the European system to balance Britain's power.[21] France, too, hoped at that time to see the United States become a

[18] George Vernadsky, *A History of Russia* (New Haven, 1945), p. 139.

[19] Significantly enough, however, when Prussia was forced to go to war against Napoleon in 1806, the Prussian War Manifesto of October 9, 1806, acknowledged the "wisdom of a system which considers all states of Europe as members of one and the same family, calling upon everyone of them to come to the defense of everyone else." Friedrich von Gentz, *Ausgewählte Schriften* (Stuttgart, 1836-38), Vol. 4, p. 257.

[20] *Aus dem Nachlasse,* Vol. 2, p. 91n.

[21] Count Nesselrode to Pierre de Politica, Nov. 21, 1818, "Correspondence of the Russian Ministers in Washington, 1818-25," *American Historical Review,* Vol. 18, pp. 315-16 (1912-13); John Quincy Adams to Henry Middleton, July 5, 1820, *Writings* (New York, 1913-17), Vol. 7, pp. 49-51.

member of the European state system.[22] To the true European these proposals contained nothing unusual. As the unchallenged political and cultural leader of the world, Europe, in his eyes, had long outgrown its geographical limitations. To him, it was the center of the world, and the latter's affairs could consequently be rearranged in accordance with Europe's needs.[23] Since a stabilization of Europe's power distribution seemed no longer possible within the framework of the continent, the obvious conclusion was to integrate such parts of the rest of the world into its state system as were needed to restore the European equilibrium. When therefore the United States proclaimed the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, declaring formally and permanently its intention to remain outside of the European system, it stated not only its opposition to a specific European policy of the day, but, in a larger perspective, also challenged the world leadership of Europe.[24] Obviously the European system was reaching a turning point in its history.

This became immediately clear only to a small group of exceptionally sensitive observers.[25] Outwardly the European polity, finally united against the French Emperor, seemed to emerge stronger than ever from the ordeal of the Napoleonic Wars. At the Congress of Chatillon, at which peace negotiations with Napoleon were begun in

[22] Edward Howland Tatum, Jr., *The United States and Europe: 1815-1823* (Berkeley, 1936), pp. 87-111, esp. 93-94.

[23] See, for example, Mann's interesting observations on Kant's attitude towards the foundation of the United States, *op. cit.*, p. 274; also Fritzemeyer on Leibniz, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-61. An interesting twentieth century remnant of this attitude can be found in the following definition of the term "European": "We call European those peoples which extend the range of their political and cultural influence beyond their national boundaries . . . It might well be asked, for example, when America became or will become European." Hans Ehrenberg and Martin Bubnoff (eds.), *Östliches Christentum* (Munich, 1925?), Vol. 1, pp. 343-44.

[24] Mann, pp. 273-75.

[25] *Ibid.*

February, 1814, the Allied delegates declared solemnly that they were the representatives of Europe rather than of individual states and proposed to negotiate with France in Europe's name.[26] The men who dominated the proceedings of the Congress of Vienna, Metternich, as well as Alexander I, Castlereagh, and Talleyrand, in various ways and for different reasons, aimed at the establishment of a European organization. Meternich, ably seconded by Gentz, saw in the creation of a European federation the prerequisite of a balanced stable order on the continent which alone could block effectively the continued spread of the revolutionary ideas of nationalism and liberalism.[27] Castlereagh advocated a supranational organization of the continent as the best safeguard of Britain's security.[28] Alexander I again saw in the Congress a new opportunity to work for the establishment of the European confederation of which he never ceased to dream.[29] Talleyrand finally saw in a strengthening of the European idea the best way of securing for France an adequate place in world affairs; for a European order, to become workable again, would have to accept France as a full-fledged member into its ranks, as became evident soon.[30] Thus sponsored by the main participants, a new European system crystallized out of the

[26] Comte d'Angeberg, *Le Congrès de Vienne et les traités de 1815* (Paris, 1863), Vol. 1, p. 105.

[27] Srbik, Vol. 1, pp. 390, 227; Werner Näf, "Versuche gesamteuropäischer Organisation und Politik in den ersten Jahrzehnten des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Staat und Staatsgedanke* (Berne, 1935), p. 16.

[28] C. K. Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815-1822* (London, 1925), pp. 47-59; also his circular dispatch of Jan. 1, 1816, *ibid.*, pp. 509-12. Castlereagh also proposed the admission of Turkey into the European state system to assure a better equilibrium. *Idem;* "Some Aspects of Castlereagh's Foreign Policy," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* 3rd. Ser., Vol. 6, pp. 68-75 (1912).

[29] Leonid I. Strakhovsky, *Alexander I of Russia* (New York, 1947), pp. 166-68; Harold Nicolson, *The Congress of Vienna* (New York, 1946), pp. 248-51.

[30] Guglielmo Ferrero, *The Reconstruction of Europe* (New York, 1941), pp. 152-55; Nicolson, pp. 141-42.

deliberations at Vienna. It found its expression in the Holy and Quadruple Alliances which pledged the great Powers of Europe to work jointly for the welfare of the peoples of Europe and the maintenance of the established order.[31]

But the European order which the treaties and alliances of the Congress of Vienna proposed to revive and foster, with its absolute monarchies, a privileged aristocracy, and the suppression of all national and liberal forces unloosed by the French Revolution, had no longer any place in the nineteenth century.[32] As soon as the Napoleonic threat to the European order, that is, to the independence of the individual European states, had passed, the European system, once more, gradually disintegrated. The Powers which had pledged themselves to guide the fate of the Continent in common consultation and deliberation displayed a disturbing lack of what the French historian Charles Dupuis once called the "European instinct."[33] Metternich used the alliances to suppress revolutionary movements whose success might have threatened the Austrian monarchy. Britain, anxious to devote herself to her imperial interests, again withdrew from too close involvements in continental affairs. Russia used them to curb Britain's growing power and France to regain her one-time position. The first serious cleavage occurred when Britain refused to join the other Powers in their plan to recapture the former Spanish colonies for Spain. Shortly afterwards,

[31] Angeberg, Vol. 4, pp. 1636-38; Dupuis, pp. 136-51.

[32] Napoleon I sensed the fundamental weakness of Metternich's system. Discussing the problem of Europe's future with Las Casas at St. Helena, he expressed his conviction that the union of Europe was inevitable, but he felt that this new order would have to draw its strength from the peoples of the Continent rather than from a small group of monarchs and noblemen. Count de las Casas, *Le Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* (Paris, n. d.), Vol. 4, pp. 152-57. During his own rule, however, he refused, after some auspicious beginnings, to be guided by these popular wishes. See Richard Munthe Brace, "Bonaparte and the Dominion of Europe," *Pacific Historical Review,* Vol. 14, pp. 57-63 (1945).

[33] *Loc. cit.,* p. 495.

when the majority of the European Powers decided not to support Greece's independence movement against Turkey, Alexander I openly rejected the decision and stated that his policies would be determined by Russia's, not Europe's, interests.[34] The success of the Belgian independence movement, the passage of the First Reform Bill in England, and the accession of Louis Philippe to the French throne further widened the breach within Metternich's European system.[35] While the European Concert continued to exist and even expanded by admitting Turkey to the "advantages of international law and the European Concert" after the Crimean War,[36] the rise of liberalism which the Austrian Chancellor had worked so hard to suppress ended all hopes of a continued close collaboration of the European Powers.

Yet the idea of a closely integrated Europe did not die. As it lost its attraction for international diplomacy, it became the rallying point of the emerging national and liberal forces. Mazzini's "Young Europe" movement was to be the counterpart of the Holy Alliance of Kings—a Holy Alliance of Peoples. Just as Metternich had been convinced that monarchical absolutism could survive only on a European scale, Europe's liberals believed that their success could be ensured only on a continent-wide basis.[37]

However, the efforts of liberalism to unify Europe on a popular rather than a dynastic basis failed just as completely as some later moves of Napoleon III on behalf of the European polity. A suspect "parvenu" among Eu-

[34] *Ibid.*, p. 194. He himself, however, hesitated to support the Greeks actively; only his successor, Nicholas I, came to their aid as did, by that time, Britain and France.

[35] That the French and Belgian crises did not grow into a major European crisis may be regarded, at least in part, as a last triumph of Gentz' European statesmanship. Cf. Mann, pp. 298-303.

[36] Dupuis, pp. 264-65.

[37] See, for example, Mazzini's essay, "Faith and the Future," in *The Duties of Man and Other Essays* (London, 1936), pp. 154-55, 176-77, 191; also Oscar J. Hammen, "The Failure of an Attempted Franco-German Liberal Rapprochement, 1830-1840," *American Historical Review,* Vol. 52, pp. 60-61 (1946-47).

rope's monarchs and therefore anxious to consolidate his position on a popular foundation, the French Emperor repeatedly called for a reorganization and rehabilitation of the European community. But by this time a new violent chauvinism was beginning to take the place of the original liberal nationalism of the early nineteenth century. As it gained in strength, the idea of Europe faded into the background. "What is Europe?" Bismarck, a few years later, asked a diplomat who warned him against the possible opposition of Europe to a plan of his.[38] He himself, to be sure, continued to base his policies on the existence of a European equilibrium, even though he denied the existence of a European polity,[39] and the various European congresses of the eighteen-seventies and eighties testify to the continued existence of a common ground. But the question contained a challenge which was to be hurled twice at Europe by his successors. Bismarck himself forged the weapon with which they were to defy the continent—a united Germany whose concentrated power could no longer be curbed by Europe alone as had been that of France under Louis XIV or Napoleon I.

The political threat to Europe was aggravated by a simultaneous challenge to its spiritual cohesion. "Anti-European" trends made themselves felt among German intellectuals who rebelled against the idea of Europe with its implications of tolerance and equality as "un-German." Suffice it to mention the names of Julius Langbehn and Paul Lagarde and the Anglo-German Houston Stewart Chamberlain who called upon Germany to throw off the chains of Western European bondage for the greater glory of the German Reich.[40] Similarly, voices in Russia which

[38] F. W. Foerster, *Europe and the German Question* (New York, 1940), p. 305.

[39] Srbik, Vol. 2, p. 548, with illustrations. "You know that I cannot love Bismarck," a Danish colleague told the German historian Friedrich Meinecke during the Nazi era, "but under the present circumstances I must admit that Bismarck belonged to our world." Friedrich Meinecke, *Die deutsche Katastrophe* (Zürich, 1946), p. 27.

[40] Peter Viereck, *Metapolitics* (New York, 1941); Aurel Kolnai, *The War Against the West* (New York, 1938).

had never become European spiritually began to proclaim their opposition to the European idea. The Orthodox Church which had always viewed "Europe" with suspicion now found an effective ally in the Slavophile movement which attacked fiercely what it called the degeneracy and anarchy of Europe.[41] Dostoyevski, in his famous speech at the unveiling of the Pushkin Memorial in 1880, gave eloquent expression to the anti-Europeanism of the Russian spirit.[42] To be sure, neither in Russia nor in Germany did this anti-European spirit burst forth in full strength until a later time—in the former state in 1917, in the latter in 1933. But it weakened immensely that spiritual community without which there could be no hope of permanent close co-operation.

Finally, in addition to these internal European developments, the emergence of a world state system contributed likewise to the weakening of the European polity. No longer was it sufficient for Europe's Powers to shape their foreign policy within the framework of continental power constellations. With the rise of strong non-European Powers their policy had to be mapped on a global rather than a continental scale. Thus a world state system gradually replaced the European system as the basic framework of international relations.

The First World War accelerated this shift. The struggle which ensued between Germany and Europe after the accession of William II to the German throne and led to the War of 1914-18 at first seemed nothing more than another attempt of one state to impose its hegemony on the unwilling European community. But its outcome differed markedly from that of previous such conflicts. Although the European polity entered the war as a unit, fused together by alliances and ententes, and thus was better pre-

[41] Thomas G. Masaryk, *The Spirit of Russia* (London and New York, 1919), Vol. 1, pp. 237-93; N. J. Danielevsky, *Russland und Europa* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1920), esp. pp. 15-34.

[42] For some representative quotations from the speech, see Erich Kahler, *Man the Measure* (New York, 1943), p. 556.

pared to repel the challenge to its system than in most previous crises, it was no longer in a position to defeat the anti-European forces by itself. This could be done only with the help of a non-European Power — the United States. The European system had clearly demonstrated its inability to fulfill its primary function of safeguarding the independence of its members.

Just as the war for the survival of "Europe" did not remain a European war, the subsequent peace treaty was not primarily a European one either. It was in some of its basic features the product of American ideals and objectives. Having participated in the struggle to restore order in Europe, President Wilson insisted on helping to determine the future of Europe.

The United States, as pointed out before, had always looked askance upon the European system which seemed to it, in the words of one American observer, to "proceed on the assumption that states are natural enemies."[43] In consequence, as Frederick Jackson Turner once put it, "an American is the born enemy of the European system of international relations".[44] What made Europe's persistently recurring clashes all the more incomprehensible to Americans was the fact that they had always looked upon Europe as one "vast body politic," very much like the United States.[45] They saw what they believed to be merely "the minute distinctions between the people of Europe, . . . the variations within a unity, the individualities within a family." Americans, it has been aptly said, regarded Europe "as one people because they were themselves one all-European people.[46] By the same token, all of Wilson's World

[43] Alexander Hill Everett, *Europe or a General Survey of the Present Situation* (London, 1822), p. 306; see also Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of Sections in American History* (New York, 1932), pp. 338-39.

[44] *Ibid.*, p. 318.

[45] Everett, *loc. cit.;* M. E. Ravage, *The Malady of Europe* (New York, 1923), pp. 79-80.

[46] Ravage, *loc. sit;* also Irving Fisher, "Reciprocal Influences Be-

War I speeches proceeded from the assumption that that war was essentially a European civil war.

With Europe seemingly so much like the United States, Americans had long wondered why it did not substitute the American system "of a sectional union and legislative adjustment, for the settlement by the sword,"[47] and they decided "to present to our sister continent of Europe the underlying ideas of America as a better way of solving difficulties."[48]

Wilson, from his early days, shared these ideas. In one of his first papers he had already expressed his firm conviction that the United States could serve as a model for a world federation.

> There is a tendency—is there not? [he had written] a tendency as yet dim but already steadily impulsive and clearly destined to prevail towards first the confederation of empires like the British, and finally of great states themselves. Instead of centralization of power there is to be wide union with tolerated divisions of prerogative. This is a tendency towards the American type—of governments for the pursuit of common purposes, in honorary equality and honorable subordination. [49]

To Wilson the war in Europe made the need for a world confederation on the American model more evident than

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tween America and Europe," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* Vol. 108, p. 170 (1923): "Europe is our mother country." Contrast this attitude with this representative European self-analysis: "There is something like a European unity, but it can manifest itself only in the actions and counteractions of the Great Powers. The unity is merely a background for the contrasts." Eugen Rosenstock, *Die europäischen Revolutionen* (Jena, 1931), p. 36; also Max Rychner, "Amerikanisierung Europas?", *Neue Rundschau,* Vol. 39, p. 231 (1928); Count Paul Teleki, "L'Venir de l'esprit européen," in Institut International de Co-opération Intellectuelle, p. 92.

[47] Turner, p. 318.

[48] *Ibid.,* p. 339.

[49] Ray Stannard Baker and William E. Dodd, *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (New York and London, 1925-27), "College and State," Vol. 1, pp. 157-58.

ever before. Even prior to the entry of the United States into the war, he pledged America's support for the maintenance of peace in the future. He made it clear, however, that it would have to be a peace which conformed to American principles and ideals. "No covenant of co-operative peace," he told the Senate in 1917, "that does not include the peoples of the New World can suffice to keep the future safe against war; and yet there is only one sort of peace that the peoples of America could join in guaranteeing. The elements of that peace must be elements that engage the confidence and satisfy the principles of the American governments." The peace would have to be based on the principle of the equality of nations, government by the consent of the governed, freedom of the seas, limitation of armaments, no entangling alliances, a community of power which would guarantee the permanence of the settlement rather than a balance of power. "These are American principles," he concluded, "American policies. We could stand for no others." But he felt that they "are also the principles and policies of forward looking men and women everywhere of every modern nation, of every enlightened community. They are the principles of mankind and must prevail."[50]

Wilson left the impact of these ideas on the Paris peace settlement.[51] Of the ideas he cherished most, the concept of government by the consent of the governed found its fullest realization—in the principle of national self-determination. As a result, the number of states in Europe (and Asia) was substantially increased. Europe now found itself burdened with a diversity greater than ever before which rendered continent-wide co-operation, even for short periods, correspondingly difficult. This further break-up of Europe and of the world, it is true, was to be offset by the supervisory activities of the League of Nations. Yet the League

[50] Baker and Dodd, *loc. cit.*, *"The New Democracy,"* Vol. 2, pp. 409, 414.

[51] One American author discussing Wilson's postwar settlement even speaks of the "Americanization of Europe." Ravage, p. 114.

never attained the all-inclusiveness nor the power which were the prerequisites of its efficacy. The world lacked that basic unity of political ideas and institutions, of cultural and economic standards which had made possible the establishment of the United States and without which any world confederation was doomed to failure. Unwittingly therefore the United States contributed to the further atomization of Europe—to the creation of additional national and economic barriers of which it had always so strongly disapproved.

Other developments added to the weakening of the European system. After having expanded its membership continuously for centuries, it was now materially reduced in size by the withdrawal (or elimination) of Russia, one of its most important members. More tragic, however, and more far-reaching in its consequences was Europe's failure to reintegrate Germany successfully into its remaining community as it had done with such notable success in the case of France after the Napoleonic Wars.

The Europe, then, which emerged from the First World War was, if anything, less of a unit than before 1914. As a polity, based on a community of interests, it held little attraction for its Great Powers. Britain's interests were primarily extra-European. Pre-Hitler Germany never considered herself a full-fledged member, while France, the most European-minded of Europe's Powers, haunted by fears of a possible resurgence of Germany, blocked by her intransigence the path to a stable European system. Fascist Italy, while outwardly peaceful before Hitler's rise to power, spiritually eliminated herself from Europe with Mussolini's March on Rome.

Attempts to restore the European system or to create a new and stronger one remained therefore ineffective or ended in outright failure. The Locarno Treaties established a precarious regional settlement for Western Europe, but failed to create a truly European order due to the fact that it was impossible to reach corresponding agreements in Eastern Europe. Briand's plan of a European federal union in 1930 at a time when a co-ordination of policies might

have offered Europe real relief from its difficulties never even reached the discussion stage. Similarly, plans for a United States of Europe such as Count Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-European project remained the hobby of theorists to which "realistic" statesmen paid but half-hearted lip service. Many of Europe's leaders lost faith in the ability of a European state system to safeguard the interests of their countries and looked elsewhere for such protection.[52] Others, while feeling the need for closer co-operation, could not bring themselves to make the concessions which alone would have assured a more effective European system. In either case the unity which had held Europe together, despite the diversity of its component nations, was fatally weakened.

And yet, there existed, among the peoples of Europe, a longing for co-operation beyond national boundaries, which manifested itself in the enthusiasm with which such international agreements as the Locarno and Briand-Kellogg Pacts were greeted. This trend was amorphous and vague, without a concrete program and organization. It lacked the strength and purposefulness to assert itself in crises such as the Great Depression when the removal of economic barriers imposed by a narrow nationalism could have speeded up Europe's recovery. Without effective leadership, it was likewise unable to stop the rise of such anti-European forces as Nazism for which the growing disintegration of Europe paved the way. But when Hitler, in turn, presented himself as the champion of a new supranational order, he added immensely to the appeal he was able to make to the non-German world. Tired of the unending turmoil into which national rivalries had plunged their respective countries, many began to look upon him as the guarantor of a

[52] This lack of faith is clearly reflected in most of the replies of the Governments to which Briand addressed his memorandum on a European federation. *International Conciliation,* No. 265, Dec., 1930. "Europe obviously aims at being governed by an American commission. Its entire policy tends in that direction," noted Paul Valéry in the early nineteen-thirties with what today must appear as remarkable foresight. *Regards sur le monde actuel* (Paris, 1936), p. 51. See also Rosenstock, p. 524.

more stable order than the traditional European system had ever been able to give them. National sovereignty, the cornerstone of that system, became a questionable asset. "The ordinary common people of Europe were ripe for unification into one political system in the summer of 1939 as they have not been ripe for unity since the days of Charlemagne," wrote the Berlin correspondent of the *Christian Science Monitor* at that time. "The desire for a merging of nationalisms into a European union which would remove the specter of war from their daily lives and give them peace was greater than it has probably been at any moment since the breakup of the Roman Empire."[53]

Europeans found it all the more easy to consider surrendering their cherished national independence as increasing numbers of those who had once been the protagonists of an uncompromising nationalism no longer considered possible the reconciliation of such nationalist attitudes with the safeguarding of their social and economic interests. The attitude of Britain's and France's Conservatives in the Spanish Civil War, of Vichy's and other countries' professional officer corps towards Hitler, to mention but a few examples, showed that the famous slogan of "Rather Hitler than Blum," repeated in similar words in many another European country, expressed the views of more than a negligible minority.[54]

With the receding of nationalist attitudes the European state system was losing its basic foundation. An outgrowth of national trends which superseded the universalism of the medieval world, its *raison d'etre* depended on the im-

[53] Joseph C. Harsch, *Pattern of Conquest* (New York, 1941), p. 70; also L. Dumont-Wilden, *L'Evolution de l'esprit européen* (Paris, 1945), p. 206; Leslie Roberts, "Have We Missed the Bus in Holland?" *Saturday Evening Post,* Vol. 217, pp. 46-47 (April 7, 1945).

[54] W. Friedmann, *The Crisis of the National State* (London, 1943), pp. 71-85; Andreas Dorpalen, "A New Nationalism in Europe," *Virginia Quarterly Review,* Vol. 20, pp. 335-37 (1944); Hannah Arendt, "Approaches to the 'German Problem'," *Partisan Review,* Vol. 12, pp. 97-98 (1945-46); Thomas Kernan, *France on Berlin Time* (Philadelphia, 1941), pp. 20, 153-54; Edward Hallett Carr, *Nationalism and After* (New York, 1945), pp. 35-37.

portance attributed to national sovereignty as a primary political objective. Hitler, whose own philosophy, despite his outward professions, was distinctly antinational,[55] clearly sensed this decline of national values. He tried to benefit from it in his attempt to subjugate the continent by proclaiming his supranational "New Order". As a matter of fact, had he given Europe peace and stability, the latter might well have accepted Germany's hegemony.[56] Since he failed to do so, he never obtained Europe's willing co-operation.

But less than ever was Europe able to shake off this new anti-European hegemony by itself. Its delivery from German rule proved feasible only with the help of the two greatest non-European Powers, the United States and the Soviet Union. Once more a European war grew into a world war. Under the impact of the War the European polity broke down completely.[57]

It is unlikely that it will ever rise again. A number of factors militate against the restoration of the traditional European state system. Dependent on outside help and goodwill, Europe is, for the time being at least, no longer in a position to control its own destiny. Its immediate future will be determined by the United States and Russia

[55] The best evidence of his antinationalism is of course his insistence on the continuation of the recent war long after Germany's defeat had become a certainty, regardless of the consequences to Germany, or perhaps even because of the devastation it would create in Germany since the nation was not "worthy" of surviving the defeat. Meinecke, *Die deutsche Katastrophe,* p. 90; also Anne O'Hare McCormick, "The Nazis Feed on Death and Destruction," *New York Times,* Apr. 9, 1945, p. 18. For additional evidence see Konrad Heiden, *Der Fuehrer* (Boston, 1944), pp. 245-47, 447; Friedmann, pp. 49-56.

[56] Dumont Wilden, *loc. cit.;* Roberts, *loc. cit.;* Hermann Rauschning, *The Revolution of Nihilism* (New York, 1939), p. 221.

[57] Not inappropriately the former Rumanian Foreign Minister, Grigore Gafencu, entitled a report on a trip "in search of Europe," (i. e., the European community) in the spring and summer of 1939, "The Last Days of Europe." Grigore Gafencu, *Europas Letzte Tage* (Zurich, 1946).

both of which have long been hostile to the European system of loosely associated sovereign states. Russia has already proceeded with the promotion of close regional co-operation of the states of Eastern Europe.[58] Similarly the Marshall Plan envisages the co-ordination of economic activities in the West.[59] Strategic considerations have accelerated these trends on both sides. There are definite indications, moreover, that Europeans themselves favor greater unification (cf. the Dutch-Belgian-Luxemburg customs union and the 1948 five power pact between these three states and Britain and France). If anything, the recent War appears to have strengthened the desire of Europe's peoples, if not their Governments, for closer co-operation and integration.[60]

Their attitude, of course, only serves to confirm the likelihood of the permanent liquidation of the traditional European state system. Regardless of whether Eastern and Western Europe will be reunited and whether all or part of Europe regains its independence once more, there is no longer room in it for a system whose main function is the maintenance of the independence of its individual members. The European state system rose with the European nation state, and it is disappearing now with the latter's decline. Other power combinations, buttressed by other ideologies, will take its place.

[58] See Constantine Poulos, "Revolution in Eastern Europe: A Regional Planned Economy," *The Nation,* July 5, 1947, pp. 11-12.

[59] Discussing American reactions to the Plan, the *New Statesman and Nation,* Vol. 35, p. 90 (Jan. 31, 1948) noted: "There is an unexpected moral fervor roused by [the] thought of helping to produce European unity, and its genuineness cannot be doubted." See also *New York Times,* Aug. 18, 1947, p. 1; Aug. 19, 1947, p. 4; *Life,* Sept. 22, 1947, p. 38.

[60] Arendt, pp. 98-102; Dorpalen, pp. 338-49; Roberts, *loc. cit.* Carlo Levi, "Is Europe Through?" *New York Times Magazine,* Dec. 7, 1947, pp. 10, 72-74.