THE GREAT POWERS AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY REGIMES.

THE FORMATION OF THE CONCERT OF EUROPE, 1792-1815

By

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

The Great Powers and the Establishment of Security Regimes.

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Over the past two centuries, international relations have been marked by greater institutionalization. This trend has characterized not only trade and economic relations but also such highly sensitive areas as security and political-military cooperation among states. The institutionalization of security issues by means of establishing global and regional security organizations, such as the UN and NATO, or issue-specific security regimes, such as the non-proliferation regime, raises important questions about the changing nature of international relations. Why do states cooperate to establish international security regimes in the first place? Why do they succeed in establishing security regimes in some cases and fail in others?

In my dissertation I addresses these questions by studying several attempts made by the great powers between 1792 and 1815 to form an early case of a security regime, known as the Concert of Europe. As an example of successful great power cooperation in security issues, the study of the Concert has recently acquired a great deal of political as well as academic importance, leading to the

emergence of substantial scholarship among historians and political scientists. The literature on the Concert is abundant, however, it suffers from a major weakness: it offers bivariate explanations of regime formation, emphasizing either power, interests or knowledge as the key variable. The same weakness characterizes the regime scholarship in general. I redress these weaknesses in the scholarship by using a multivariate approach to the study of the formation of the Concert. I focus on the interplay of four key factors – power, interests, knowledge and leadership in the creation of the European Concert.

I do not treat the formation of the Concert of Europe as a single case study. The formation of the Concert constitutes a series of mini-cases and thus may be viewed as a small-N study. Between 1792 and 1815 the great powers went through several rounds of negotiations over the creation of a European concert, which corresponded to the formation of several anti-French coalitions. The Second and the Third Coalitions represent cases of failure to form a European concert, while the Grand Coalition (1814-1815) is a clear-cut case of success.

The findings reached on the basis of all four case-studies are numerous and shed new light on the relative role played by the key major factors – power, interests, knowledge and leadership in the creation of security regimes. As a theory-generating small-N study, the findings of the dissertation may be tested in other cases of security regime formation such as the creation of the League of Nations (1919) or the United Nations (1945).

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<u>Introduction</u>

As John Ruggie observed in 1975, international behavior had become increasingly institutionalized (1975, 559). The trend towards greater institutionalization has marked all aspects of world affairs, including such highly sensitive areas as security and political-military cooperation among states. The institutionalization of security issues by means of establishing global and regional organizations, such as the UN and NATO, or issue-specific security regimes, such as the non-proliferation regime, raises important questions about the changing nature of international politics. Why do states cooperate to establish international security regimes in the first place? Why do they succeed in some instances and fail in others?[1]

<u>The Concert of Europe: An Early Case of a Security Regime</u>

In my work I address these questions by examining the creation of an early case of a security regime, known as the Concert of Europe (1815). There are many compelling reasons for choosing to examine the formation of the Concert in

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[1] Both liberal and realist scholars have increasingly used the concepts of 'international institutions' and 'international regimes' interchangeably (see, for example, Keohane 1988, 1989; Mearsheimer 1994/95). In my view, international institutions and regimes are closely related rather than perfectly interchangeable concepts: 'international institutions' is a broader concept than 'international regimes.' It includes such different arrangements as conventions (sovereignty), regimes (non-proliferation), and formal organizations (NATO or UN) (Wallander, Haftendorn and Keohane 1999, 1-2).

In my dissertation I use the concept of international regimes as a distinct subset of international institutions. However, in those instances when I cite scholars who use these concepts interchangeably, I will preserve the language of the original text.

depth. First, the interest in the formation of the Concert is not purely academic. In the post-Cold War era the Concert of Europe has acquired a great deal of political relevance as an example of successful cooperation among the great powers in security matters (Jervis 1992, 716).

Second, the scholarship on international regimes has focused mostly on the second half of the twentieth century. Relatively little has been written on international regimes established prior to 1945. This selection bias is partly explained by the fact that the institutionalization of international relations, including the creation of regimes, begins to proceed at a rapid rate after WWII (Richardson 1999, 48-49). But it is also due to the fact that the field of International Relations has become considerably less history-oriented. Few IR scholars conduct their current research in the format of a theory-informed, in-depth examination of historical cases. In fact, a brief review of the literature on the Concert of Europe demonstrates a clear-cut division between the works of historians and those of students of International Relations. Most works by IR scholars are theory-rich but history-poor. The use of historical material often amounts to the selective use of quotes and facts to "prove" a given theory. In this case theory "guides" the selection of historical facts rather than being grounded in historical situations and developments (Elrod 1976, 160). Examining the formation of the Concert of Europe by means of the case study method allows me to redress this problem in the literature.

Third, by choosing a historical rather than a contemporary case of regime formation, I can keep my own political biases as well as the biases of my readers

in check. It is not a secret that "[t]he kinds of theories we find attractive are influenced not only by events but by our general political orientations" (Jervis 1998, 973). By focusing on the Concert I may ensure that no matter where we stand on the political spectrum today (with regard to the importance and the role of international institutions in world politics), the Concert is sufficiently far away from contemporary political views that might cloud our judgment.

Finally, unlike the United Nations or the League of Nations, the Concert of Europe is the least controversial case of a security regime created by the great powers. The general consensus among IR theorists and historians is that the Concert was a successful case of a security regime, which, as some scholars argue, preserved almost a century of great power peace in Europe. This allows me to focus exclusively on the question of regime formation with no need to "prove" that the regime existed in the first place or that it was effective.

Methodology

In terms of methodology, I use the case study method to examine the formation of the Concert. The choice of the case study method is prescribed by the nature of the question under consideration: in my view, regime formation can only be studied by means of a careful examination of individual cases. In fact, most empirical research on regimes has been done in the form of case studies or focused comparisons of a small number of cases (Underdal 1995, 114).

The use of the case study method has its own limitations and critics. It has been argued that "there is a danger of skewing the results through a biased selection of cases, producing *ad hoc* interpretations of historical events, and

manipulating information to conform to theoretical expectations" (Young and Osherenko 1993b, 225-226). While these apprehensions may have some ground, the choice of the Concert allows me to minimize this problem. The fact is that the formation of the Concert of Europe constitutes a series of mini-cases and may be viewed as a small-N study. Between 1792 and 1815 the great powers went through several rounds of negotiations over the creation of a European concert, which corresponded to the formation of several anti-French coalitions. The first three coalitions represent cases of failure to form a European concert, while the Grand Coalition (1814-1815) was a clear-cut case of success. Thus, by studying several cases, which come from the same historical period and region, I can attain two goals. First I avoid the methodological problem of case selection on the dependent variable as I examine both cases of failure and of success. Second, I compare essentially similar cases. Several attempts by the great powers to create a European concert present a perfectly comparable set of cases. "While the results of a single case may be suspect, the opportunity to compare conclusions across a number of well-chosen cases increases our ability to test specific hypotheses and to redefine theories of regime formation for consideration in future research" (Young and Osherenko 1993b, 226).

<u>The Organization of the Dissertation</u>

In Chapter One I provide a concise review of the regime literature. The purpose of the review is not to be comprehensive but to map the existing literature in terms of key theoretical approaches and then outline my own approach to the study of

regime formation.[2] Subsequently, I review the existing literature on the Concert of Europe and discuss how my approach will address some of the weaknesses in the scholarship.

Each of the four chapters that follow focuses on one of the case studies. Chapter Two presents a discussion of the French Revolution and the formation of the First Coalition (1792-1797), which was an unsuccessful attempt to deal with the threat of revolutionary France by means of eighteenth century balance-of-power politics. The collapse of the First Coalition set the stage for subsequent attempts by the great powers to form a European concert to contain France. Chapter Three presents a discussion of the formation of the Second Coalition (1797-1799). In particular, it focuses on the efforts of the British Foreign Secretary Lord Grenville to create a permanent alliance of the great powers on the basis of his blueprint for a European concert.

In Chapter Four I discuss the formation of the Third Coalition (1804-05). I examine two competing blueprints for an anti-French coalition offered by the Russian Emperor Alexander I and his foreign minister Prince Czartoryski and by the British Prime Minister, Pitt "the Younger." Chapter Five examines the formation of the Grand Coalition (1813-1815), which ultimately defeats Napoleon and serves as the basis for the formation of a new security regime in Europe known as the Concert of Europe. The concluding chapter includes a summary of theoretical findings based on the four case studies.

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[2] For an excellent review of the regime scholarship see Hasenclever, Andreas Peter Mayer, and Volker Rittberger. 1997. *Theories of International Regimes* (New York: Cambridge University Press).

**Chapter One**

**Regime Analysis: Realists, Neoliberals, and Cognitivists**

<u>Regime Analysis as a Field</u>

As a research field, regime analysis is relatively new: its origins date back to the mid-1970s. There is little doubt that since then regime analysis has developed into a major approach to studying cooperation in international relations. In the 1980s, the regime literature mostly focused on the problems of defining the concept of 'regime' and understanding factors that explain regime formation. Subsequently, the emphasis shifted to the questions of regime maintenance and transformation. Finally, scholars have increasingly begun to address the question of regime effectiveness (Underdal 1995, 116-17).

With the recent rise of U.S. unipolarity and unilateralism, which present a challenge to the existing international security architecture, the question of regime formation has once again acquired a new intellectual and policy relevance. However, the literature has not yet been able to reach any consensus about the factors that lead to the formation of regimes. In part this may be explained by the fact that the regime scholarship suffers from some of the same divisions that characterize international relations theory in general.

Within the broad framework of regime analysis, we can distinguish among three major categories of explanation that focus on power, interests, and knowledge, respectively. These three categories overlap with three IR schools: (neo)realism, (neo)liberalism, and constructivism (or cognitivism) (Hasenclever,

Mayer, Ritterger 1997).[3] Following the existing trend in IR theory, these categories of explanation in regime analysis have been constructed as *competing* rather than *complementary* explanations.

For neoliberals, regime analysis has explained more successfully than other IR approaches the presence of cooperation in an anarchic world of sovereign states (Ritterger and Mayer 1993, xii). However, realists, especially neorealists, have questioned the explanatory power of the approach portraying it as an *intellectual fad* and a *false promise* (see, Strange 1983; Mearsheimer 1994/95; Waltz 2000). The neoliberal-neorealist debate continues to this day (see, Hoffmann, Keohane, and Mearsheimer 1990; Powell 1994; Schweller and Priess 1997; Jervis 1999). But the fact of the growing institutionalization of international relations cannot be denied. Consequently, the main disagreement between neoliberals and realists is not over the existence of institutions but over the neoliberal claim that institutions are more than instruments of statecraft and have an independent impact, "a life of their own" (Jervis 1999, 54). The question is what role the existing international regimes and institutions play in international relations; what factors explain the regime formation, maintenance and effectiveness. Before proceeding with a concise overview of the regime literature, I need to choose a definition of an international regime that I will use in my dissertation.

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[3] Haggard and Simmons (1987) propose a slightly different categorization of regime theories: structural, game-theoretic, functional and cognitive approaches. The first and the last of these approaches are identical to Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger's power- and knowledge-based categories. The game-theoretical and functional approaches were united by Hasenclever, Mayer, and Rittberger into a single interest-based category of explanations (Hasenclever, Mayer, Rittberger 1996, 178).

Defining Regimes

The literature offers several definitions of regimes, two of which have been widely

accepted. The first (and more elaborate) definition was offered by Stephen

Krasner in his seminal work *International Regimes* (1983). The second, leaner

definition was formulated by Robert Keohane in *International Institutions and*

*State Power* (1989a, 4) and further developed in 1993. Of the two, Krasner's view

of regimes is considered to be the *consensus* definition in the regime literature

(Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 8). According to Krasner, regimes are

> implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules, and decision-making
> procedures around which actors' expectations converge in a given area of
> international relations. Principles are beliefs of fact, causation, and
> rectitude. Norms are standards of behavior defined in terms of rights and
> obligations. Rules are specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action.
> Decision-making procedures are prevailing practices for making and
> implementing collective choice.  (1983, 2)

While rich and nuanced, Krasner's definition contains ambiguities and has some

problematic aspects (Keohane 1993, 27). As Haggard and Simmons note,

> often principles shade off into norms and standards of behavior defined in
> terms of rights and obligations. Norms in their own turn are difficult to
> distinguish from rules, or specific prescriptions or proscriptions for action.
> As a result, analysts often disagree over the definitions of norms and
> principles of a particular regime.  (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 493-494)

According to Keohane's more restricted view, regimes are "institutions

with explicit rules, agreed upon by governments that pertain to particular sets of

issues in international relations" (Keohane 1989a, 4). Keohane's original

definition of regimes has its own share of problems. In particular, defining

regimes in terms of explicit rules may lead to the same type of formalism that the

field of international law and organization has suffered from. As a result of such a

formal approach, nominal agreements could be considered to be regimes, even though they may not have any behavioral implications (Keohane 1993, 27). Being aware of the risk of formalism, Keohane has subsequently augmented his own definition by stating that regimes should be considered "as arising when states recognize these agreements as having continuing validity" (Keohane 1993, 28). The problematic aspects of Keohane's definition are amply compensated, however, by its virtues. In particular, treating regimes as multilateral agreements among states aimed at regulating state conduct within particular issue-areas allows us to differentiate between regimes and other forms of international cooperation. Regimes are examples of international cooperation but cooperation is also possible without regimes (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 495).

In my dissertation, I employ Keohane's definition because I consider it to be more applicable to the study of security regimes for several reasons. First, security issues are still the prerogative of sovereign states, and Keohane's definition appropriately focuses on states as main actors. Second, it emphasizes the fact that a set of rules does not need to be effective to qualify as a regime, but it must be recognized "as continuing to exist." "Using this definition, regimes can be identified by the existence of explicit rules that are referred to *in an affirmative manner* by governments, even if they are not necessarily scrupulously observed" (Keohane 1993, 28 *emphasis added*). This view of regimes allows scholars to differentiate between the issues of regime *formation* and regime *effectiveness.* By focusing on explicit formal agreements among states, students of regime theory can also distinguish between regimes and other instances of patterned behavior or cooperation in world affairs. Lastly, security

regimes are usually explicit rather than implicit, and also display a higher tendency towards formalization: states are more likely to attempt to formalize security arrangements in treaties rather than work on implicit understandings and assumptions.

### Power-Based Theories of Regimes

In its "pure" version, realism (in particular, structural realism) denies that international institutions play any significant role in world politics. Neorealists do not deny that regimes may be formed but they argue that institutions are not independent factors, rather they reflect the distribution of power in the system and the interests of the most powerful state or states (Mearsheimer 1994/95, 7).[4] Consequently, international institutions will survive as long as they remain close to the underlying balance of power in the system, and they will fail when the underlying balance of power in the system changes (Waltz 2000, 26).

Some scholars may accept that international institutions may facilitate cooperation in economic and trade issues but stress that they have no impact on military and security issues. Instead of denying the relevance of international regimes *per se*, scholars create a hierarchy of issues and argue that states may cooperate with each other in non-security matters, which may lead to the establishment of regimes. In the realm of "high politics," however, states "face

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[4] In his discussion of international institutions Mearsheimer does not differentiate between regimes formed under hegemony and those formed in a balance of power situation. Whether hegemony is conducive to the formation of security regimes is an empirical question. A more interesting case is regimes created in a balance of power situation by the great powers. While such regimes may 'reflect' the interests of the most powerful states, this assumption does not address the question how or why the most powerful states have reconciled their interests to establish common institutions.

very strong constraints on their behavior, which undermine the potential for cooperation" (Haftendorn, Keohane and Wallander 1999, 4).

Of the two major realist theories – hegemony and the balance of power – hegemony, at least, theoretically allows more room for the creation and functioning of international regimes without making changes to the underlying realist assumptions about the nature of the international system and the motivation of actors. Hence, it should not be surprising that hegemonic stability was the first major realist account of regime formation.

Hegemonic stability takes its origin in the 1973 work of Charles Kindleberger on the Great Depression (Hasenclever, Mayer and Rittberger 1997, 88). In his work, Kindleberger was not concerned with international institutions; rather he was interested in the stability of what he called "international economic infrastructure." Kindleberger argued that the international economic infrastructure would be supported and supplied by an outstanding political and economic power, and this would permit international exchange to take place. As Kindleberger argued, "for the world economy to be stabilized there has to be a stabilizer, one stabilizer" (1973, 305).[5]

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5 Kindleberger himself seemed later uncomfortable with such interpretation of his work by political scientists. In Kindleberger's view, the notion of hegemony implied 'threat', 'force' and 'pressure whereas his focus was on leadership.'

In his 1986 article Kindleberger argues that there is a difference between a leader and a hegemon, and it was possible to lead without threats or use of force (Kindleberger 1986, 841). I would consider this to be an important clarification from Kindleberger because leadership is theoretically possible in a balance of power situation as well. And it may be connected to the concept of 'leadership' developed by Oran Young which is a key factor in the formation of international regimes (see the discussion of 'leadership' on pp. 31-33).

As a distinct theory of regimes, hegemonic stability applies the logic of Kindleberger's argument to the formation and decline of international regimes. Hegemonic stability has two versions: *benign* and *coercive* (Osherenko and Young 1993, 9-10). According to the *benign* version, the existence of a single preeminent state will lead to the emergence of regimes, which will benefit not only the hegemon, but also weaker states in the international system. Regimes are viewed as a kind of public good, which the hegemon provides. The *coercive* variant of hegemonic stability is more in line with the classical realist assumptions about the nature of international actors and world politics. It holds that the hegemon creates international regimes, which advance the interests of the hegemon itself (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 84). Hence, regimes are imposed on other states, regardless of whether these institutions reflect the interests of those states or not (see, Gilpin 1981). In general, a hegemonic world order is associated with strong regimes, whereas the collapse of hegemony is associated with the collapse of regimes and other international institutions (Keohane 1982, 326).[6]

While logically coherent and intuitively plausible, the theory of hegemonic stability raises a number of important empirical and theoretical questions. If hegemony is a *necessary* condition for regime formation, then we should observe *no* regimes being formed when the distribution of power in the international system is not hegemonic. However, empirically hegemony is a rare configuration of power in the international system while the formation of international regimes

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[6] For a more detailed review of Hegemonic Stability, see Duncan Snidal's "The Limits of Hegemonic Stability Theory" (*International Organization*. 1985. 39.4: 579-614).

is not a rare phenomenon. If hegemony is a sufficient condition for regime formation, then the hegemon should always be able to impose his will on other powers, major and minor, and *any* attempt at regime formation by the hegemon should be successful, which is not the case (Young and Osherenko 1993b). Additionally, hegemonic stability assumes that international regimes are always imposed. But in reality very few regimes are imposed, most are negotiated, especially when we look at the institutions created by the great powers. As Lake writes, some international institutions are hierarchic, while others are anarchic, forced by means of coercion or negotiation, respectively (2001, 131-132). Finally, if international cooperation is ultimately explained in terms of a [hegemonic] distribution of power among states, be it economic or military, the concept of regimes itself becomes redundant (Jervis 1983, 174).

It is also clear that power alone may not explain the creation of regimes by the great powers under the conditions of the balance of power. Even if some international institutions are imposed on lesser or minor powers, they are negotiated among the most powerful states. How do we explain the formation of regimes by the great powers aimed at self-restraining? Why would the great powers establish the Concert of Europe in 1815 instead of continuing to rely on the balance of power mechanism as they had successfully done throughout the 18th century and earlier? [7]

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[7] In his book *After Victory* (2001) John Ickenberry argues that the world orders created after 1815, 1919, 1945 and 1989 were hegemonic, and that the impetus for institutionalization came from the *liberal* hegemon. My own study of the formation of the 1815 regime demonstrates convincingly that the victory over Napoleon was a *coalitional* victory and the security regime established after 1815 was based on the balance of power among the members of the anti-Napoleon coalition. Hence, the

The assertion that "institutions are basically a reflection of the distribution of power" does not address that question. I do not argue that *power* is not a major variable and plays no significant role in regime formation. However, it is more productive to examine the *relative* role of power in regime formation under both conditions: hegemony and the balance of power.

Interest-Based Theories of Regimes

Neoliberalism has developed into the mainstream approach to the study of international institutions (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 179). Neoliberals accept neorealists' assumptions about the international system but reject their conclusions. With regard to the assumptions, neoliberals accept that two features of the international context are particularly important: "world politics lacks authoritative governmental institutions and is characterized by pervasive uncertainty" (Keohane 1982, 332; see also Keohane and Martin 1995, 39). In addition to accepting anarchy and uncertainty as the defining features of the international system, neoliberals also accepts the neorealist view that states are rational goal-seeking actors who are interested in the maximization of their individual utility (Keohane 1984, 25). In that sense, both neorealism and neoliberalism are utilitarian and rationalistic approaches to the study of international cooperation (Keohane and Martin 1995, 39; Wendt 1992, 391).

Where neoliberals and neorealists differ is the conclusions which they draw about state conduct in international relations. According to neoliberals,

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question remains: how do we explain the establishment of international institutions in those instances when the relations among the great powers are based on power parity and some great powers are not liberal states?

states may and do cooperate with each other precisely because they are rational actors. Neoliberals stress the existence of *common interests* as the key cause of cooperation among states which often assumes the form of establishing international institutions (Grieco 1988, 486; Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 83; also see Keohane and Martin 1995, 42). They borrow from economic theories and emphasize *information* and *transaction costs* which common institutions help reduce (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 183; Keohane 1982). According to this approach, "international markets" often produce sub-optimal outcomes. When states persistently encounter such outcomes, they have the incentive to create common institutions which will reduce the *information* and *transaction costs*, and make international commitments more credible (Smith 1987; Keohane 1982; Keohane and Martin 1995).

The uncritical acceptance of neorealist assumptions leaves neoliberal interest-based theories of regimes open to serious criticism. As a result of over-reliance on rationalism, interest-based explanations treat states' interests as stable, fixed and externally-given. Such theories are often unable to explain cases when actors' interests change without any corresponding changes in the power capabilities. They also overlook the fact that international actors may not be always fully aware of their own interests and may *learn* and adjust their interests and strategies as a result of negotiations over regime formation. Since neoliberal scholars do not claim that regimes can prevent the likelihood of violent conflicts and wars, this raises the question whether international regimes can explain cooperation in security matters. Another weakness of neoliberal views is that following the structural realism of Waltz (1979), they often emphasize the

systemic approach to the conduct of states and focus on the external conditions that inform state behavior. They overlook domestic attributes of states and their impact on foreign policy decisions, including the formation of regimes (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 184).

In terms of the actual research on regimes, "[t]he search for how and to what extent international institutions "matter" has largely played out in the realm of international political economy" (Lake 2001, 129). In those cases, when neoliberal scholars write about security issues, they tend to replace regimes with a broader category of international institutions (see, for example, Haftendorn, Keohane and Wallander 1999). I believe that this trend to use "institutions" rather than "regimes" is not coincidental. The use of the broader concept of international security institutions, instead of the "wooly" concept of security regimes, allows neoliberal scholars to focus on formal military-political alliances (NATO) and international organizations (the United Nations), and thus avoid the question whether *regimes* as such matter in security and military affairs as much as they do in non-security issues.

### Knowledge-Based Theories of Regimes

The third major approach in regime analysis is cognitivism (or constructivism). It emphasizes knowledge and ideas as the key explanatory variables of regime formation (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 136). The question that cognitivists raise is whether state interests may be directly derived from power and situational constraints (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 509-513). And they answer that question in the negative. To cognitivists, power and egoistic interests

are not sufficient explanations. Cooperation among states cannot be explained without taking into account such factors as actors' *values*, *beliefs* about certain issues, *knowledge* about how they may achieve their objectives. As a result, what neorealist and neoliberal accounts of regimes need to factor in is knowledge, ideas and processes by which the states *learn* (Smith 1987, 255).

One can distinguish between *strong* and *weak* cognitivists. Strong cognitivists develop their theories as *alternatives* to neoliberal and realist accounts of regimes rather than as adjustments to them (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 137). They disagree with neorealists and neoliberals on a number of issues, including the simplistic notions of the rationality of actors and the anarchic nature of the international system. Rather than starting with states' interests and power, strong cognitivists argue that the conduct of states presupposes the existence of a normative structure that must be analyzed in its own right. Weak cognitivists criticize neoliberals and neorealists for the incompleteness of their study of international regimes. They hold it that the demand for regimes is dependent on how actors perceive problems and conceive of solutions to them (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 136-137).

Cognitivists argue that states' interests should not be treated as a "given." Before states make any choices about international cooperation, they need to define their interests and ascertain the circumstances. At this stage, a great deal depends on the interpretation of the circumstances which in turn depends "on the body of knowledge that actors hold at a given time. That knowledge shapes the perception of reality and informs decision-makers about linkages between

means and ends" (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 206). Such an approach emphasizes the importance of shared meanings because "[f]or knowledge or ideas to have an impact on regime formation, they must be widely shared by key policymakers" (Krasner 1983a, 19). One way of spreading new knowledge and ideas is by means of *epistemic communities* (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 209).

New ideas and understandings or changed circumstances affect actors' beliefs which may induce a corresponding change in the actors' behavior. When this happen, actors undergo the process of *learning* (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 208). *Learning* may lead states to redefine their interests or strategies. Cognitivists argue that there is a demonstrable need to develop "a contextually richer theory of international politics, including regime formation which would supersede "vulgar realism or vulgar liberalism in isolation"" (Snidel 1993, 741, quoted in Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 205).

While shared knowledge, ideas and values are definitely important for the establishment of regimes, the weakness of the approach is that cognitivists can explain the content of a given regime but cannot necessarily explain, when or under what conditions these shared ideas or values will emerge, or when consensual values or knowledge will affect state behavior to such an extent as to lead to the formation of regimes (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 510).

<u>Bridging the Theoretical Divides: Multivariate Analysis of Regime
Formation</u>

While each of the three theoretical approaches to regime analysis has their own merits (as well as demerits), the regime scholarship in general suffers from several theoretical and empirical weaknesses. In terms of empirical research, the literature has focused on explaining successful cases of regime formation, while ignoring the discussion of failures to create regimes (the so-called *non-regime* cases). In this respect, regime analysis has not avoided a common fallacy of choosing cases on the dependent variable. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of looking at both successful and failed cases when explaining the creation of regimes. In this regard, I do not think the scholarship has adequately addressed the question raised by Young and Osherenko (1993b): why do states reach agreement on some issues and regulate them by means of regimes, yet fail to achieve consensus on other, seemingly similar problems?

Second, regime analysis suffers from what may be called *paradigmatic pluralism*. As we have seen, the scholarship is divided into three approaches, each offering a competing explanation of regime formation.

> Neo-liberals stress (self-) interest as a motive for cooperation among states and likewise for the creation of, and compliance with, international regimes. Realists emphasize how power and considerations of relative power position affect the content, and circumscribe the effectiveness and robustness of international regimes. Cognitivists point out that both the perception of interests and the meaning of power capabilities is dependent on actors' causal and social knowledge. (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 211)

This state of affairs is hardly satisfactory:

> Those who see power as the basic driver will invariable find a way to explain institutional arrangements as surface phenomena that reflect underlying relations of power. But those who prefer to think of institutions as driving forces will inevitably counter with arguments that show how relations of power reflect underlying institutional arrangements ... And the same goes for parallel arguments relating to forces such as interests and knowledge. (Young 2002, 185)

Under these circumstances the question that needs to be addressed is not whether one approach has more explanatory power than the other two. The question is whether any single factor alone can provide a complete and adequate explanation of the creation of international regimes. At some level, all three factors (*power*, *interests*, and *knowledge*) interact in the production of regimes (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1997, 211). I concur with scholars who argue that a greater understanding of regime formation will not be advanced by studies that provide single factor explanations (Osherenko and Young 1993a, 250). There is a need for a theoretical approach that will integrate all the three major factors into a common framework for analysis, allowing us to examine links among these factors in the production of regimes. After all, "the fact that two propositions are *different* does not necessarily mean that they are *incompatible*" (Underdal 1995, 117). As Haggard and Simmons note in their review article, the categories into which the regime literature may be grouped "are not mutually exclusive, and the most persuasive interpretations are likely to draw from more than one theoretical tradition" (Haggard and Simmons 1987, 498).

Thus, the weaknesses of the regime scholarship call for the adoption of a multivariate approach to the study of regime formation. A multivariate approach

is not a new idea. It was first discussed by Kenneth Boulding in his work *Ecodynamics, A New Theory of Societal Evolution* (1978). In it Boulding argued that at the level of societal aggregation order may result from the interplay of three social mechanisms: the Threat system, the Integrative system, and the Exchange system (Boulding 1978, 16). His framework resembles the three variables – power, interests, and knowledge – that guide neorealists, neoliberals, and cognitivists (Hasenclever, Mayer, Ritterger 1996, 217).

Some regime scholars have begun moving towards more systematic analysis of *multivariate* relationships (Underdal 1995, 116). Recently Young and Osherenko used multivariate analysis to examine the creation of polar regimes (1993a). Multivariate analysis shifts the focus of research from *causal chains* to *causal clusters* allowing scholars to treat outcomes as products of clusters of variables that operate more or less simultaneously (Young 2002, 186). C*ausal clusters* are "sets of interactive driving forces in contrast to causal chains" (Young 2002, 176).

In my dissertation I adopt a multivariate approach to the study of the formation of the Concert of Europe. The use of multivariate analysis may raise a set of questions, especially when applied along with the case study method. The major challenge is the problem of theoretical *eclecticism*. A related question is how to determine what cluster of factors to focus on in the study of the formation of the Concert. In their 1993 book *Polar Politics* Young and Osherenko focus on an extensive set of factors which, besides power, interests, and knowledge, includes leadership, the veil of uncertainty, types of bargaining, the availability of

salient solutions, and compliance mechanisms, to name just a few. Without any further discussion of their model, it is obvious to me that the number of variables has to be limited. Therefore, in my analysis I focus on the interplay of four major variables: *power*, *knowledge*, *interests*, and *leadership*. Power, interests and knowledge are the independent variables, which can also be called the driving social forces behind the formation of a regime (Osherenko and Young 1993a, 247). To a large extent, these are self-explanatory variables. The factor of leadership requires further explanation.

I view *leadership* as the factor that brings the other three variables together, interacting with each of them. It is the only variable that brings in human agency into the research, thus allowing me to focus on the role of particular statesmen in the formation of regimes. The creation of security regimes is mostly led by states. However, states "act" only through individuals with institutional authority to represent them. By bringing in leadership as a factor, I do not refer to any abstract leadership of states. Rather it is a concrete act on the part of concrete individuals: individual statesmen, whose leadership skills or position play a pivotal role in the formation of a given regime. As Young and Osherenko note, it is such leadership of concrete individuals that is often the key to success (1993, 232).[8]

Leadership as a factor has different aspects. Some participants in the formation of regimes may generate new ideas and use the power of their ideas to shape the way in which all participants in regime negotiations understand issues.

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[8] Taken this understanding of leadership, we should not confuse leadership with hegemony.

Such individuals may come up with new institutional designs or solutions, enhancing the range of available cooperative options. Such individuals provide *intellectual leadership.* Other statesmen may have the diplomatic skills to help bridge the differences among parties to negotiations, and help broker agreements, in this way providing *entrepreneurial leadership* (see, Young 1989).[9] These different types of leadership may be displayed by the same individuals. For example, someone representing a great power during regime negotiations may have the necessary entrepreneurial skills and knowledge to provide entrepreneurial and intellectual leadership.

The use of multivariate analysis holds the promise of enhancing our understanding of the Concert of Europe and, at the same time, furthering our theoretical understanding of regime formation in general. Since I have no prior knowledge of the relative weight to be attached to each factor, my meta-narrative of several attempts to form a security regime in Europe between 1792 and 1815 will not be biased towards any *apriori* choice of a major factor, something that is lacking in both the regime literature and the existing literature on the Concert.

The Concert of Europe (Literature Review)

In this review of the literature on the Concert, I will discuss three questions which I consider important. The first question is about the factors that explain the formation of the Concert. While political scientists and historians give different

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[9] Young identifies a third type of leadership, which he refers to as *structural leadership.* Since I focus on security regimes created by the great powers, each negotiator, representing a respective great power, may exercise structural leadership during the regime negotiations. As a result, in my view the concepts of power and structural leadership overlap to such an extent that I have decided to exclude the discussion of structural leadership from the analysis of the cases.

answers to these questions, their answers are typically single-variable explanations, stressing either power (mostly, historians) or shared interests and values (mostly, political scientists) as the key factors. The second question is about the longevity of the Concert with both historians and IR scholars agreeing on the starting date but disagreeing on when exactly the regime ceased to exist. The third question is about different meanings attributed to the Concert. More importantly, this is a question about the relationship between the Concert of Europe and the Holy Alliance.

Most historians have viewed power as the key factor explaining the Vienna settlement (Schroeder 1992; Elrod 1976; Taylor 1954; Gulick 1955; Gruner 1992). Some hold that the 1815 settlement was a restoration of the classical eighteenth century balance of power system (Gulick 1955). While agreeing that the regime was based on the balance of power, others argue that it acquired a new nature and stress new aspects of the balance of power system after 1815 (see, *AHR Forum* 1992). For example, they view the 1815 system as a bipolar system worked out between Britain and Russia rather than a multi-polar system (Kraehe 1992, 715). Other historians use the concept of power to explain the formation of the Concert but view the underlying distribution of power as hegemonic and not balanced (Schroeder 1992). The fact that most historians focus on power should not be surprising: the peace-makers at Vienna themselves spoke of the need to restore a proper balance or *equilibrium* in Europe (Schroeder 1992, 683-684).[10]

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[10] Schroeder makes a difference between the balance of power and political equilibrium (Schroeder 1992).

Contrary to the works of historians, IR scholars favor explanations emphasizing common interests, shared norms and values (see, Jervis 1982, 1992). In accordance with this view, following the end of the Napoleonic wars, European leaders became appreciative of the need for interstate peace, practiced self-restrained behavior towards each other in ways different from the tradition of power politics (Elrod 1976, 159; Jervis 1982, 362). As one scholar has put it, "in attending to their common duty, the great powers developed a set of norms to serve as a code of conduct, they established rules of behavior to regulate the competition among them, and followed a set of procedures designed to maintain order" (Richardson 1999, 51). These explanations conform to *neoliberal* views, which emphasize commonality of interests, or *constructivist* views emphasizing common values and norms.

In may be argued that neither historians nor political scientists offer a satisfactory explanation of the Concert. The historical accounts tend to be too detailed to discern any pattern and generalization which could enhance our understanding of other cases (beyond the "balance of power"). The IR accounts tend to be light on history with many of the conclusions reached based on normative arguments and a selective use of facts. The latter creates a tendency among IR scholars to confuse the more cooperative conduct of the great powers, which was the outcome of the Concert's operation, with the causes of its formation.

Next comes the question of the longevity of the regime: how long did the Concert operate? Scholars agree on the starting date (1815), but continue to

disagree as to when the Concert collapsed, with the end dates varying between 1822 (the end of the Congress era), 1853 (the outbreak of the Crimean War) or 1914 (the outbreak of the Great War). Some scholars tend to equate the Concert with the "era of the congresses" (Nichols 1971; Nicolson 1946) or the Holy Alliance (Morgenthau 1960). Others define it as a system, which ended in 1853 with the outbreak of the Crimean War, which pitted the great powers against each other for the first time since the defeat of Napoleon (Elrod 1976, 159). And still others argue that with modifications the Concert of Europe was in place for almost a century between 1815 and 1914 (Kissinger 1994; Albrecht-Carrié 1968). The question of the longevity of the Concert is important because depending on one's choice of the end date, one would also have a different conception of the regime and hence factors which led to its formation.

Finally, the third major question in the literature concerns the different meanings that the term "European Concert" has had. The statesmen of the era, including those who participated in the formation of the Concert, referred to it by different names. The term "concert" was apparently first used by the Austrian minister Kaunitz as early as 1791, and subsequently by Britain's Foreign Secretary Grenville (Holbraad 1971, 3).  Grenville's use of the term, particularly around the time of negotiations over the Second Coalition (1797-99), meant some kind of a permanent alliance of four great powers to tame France, as opposed to the traditional idea of an *ad hoc* war-time alliance (see, Sherwig 1969). In the years after 1815, Castlereagh would use such names as the "confederacy," the "great alliance" and the "union" to refer to the mechanism of diplomacy by conference or congress that came out of the Vienna settlement (Holbraad 1971, 4). The use of

the word "concert" was revived in the second part of the nineteenth century, primarily by British statesmen and came to mean "a loose association of great European powers consulting and acting together occasionally" (ibid).

Given the lack of agreement among the statesmen of the era with regard to the name of the Vienna settlement, it should not be surprising that historians and IR theorists also disagree on the use of the term. The problem stems from the fact that the 1815 settlement was based on several treaties and arrangements, including diplomacy by congress and the Holy Alliance among the European monarchs. The earlier views of the scholars equated the Concert of Europe with the Holy Alliance. According to these views, the regime operated between 1815 and 1822 (Morgenthau 1960). This view has fallen into disfavor with liberal historians and political scientists because the Holy Alliance came to be viewed as a reactionary alliance of conservative European monarchs. Liberal scholars who would like to see the Concert as an example of great power cooperation can hardly advocate the same type of cooperation today unless they dissociate the "progressive" Concert from the "reactionary" Holy Alliance. To prove their point, they would typically quote several well-known dismissive references to the Holy Alliance made by Metternich and Castlereagh.[11]

As my study of the Grand Coalition and the Vienna settlement demonstrates, this is a retroactive application of contemporary political views, which contradict historical evidence. Some national historiographies do not

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[11] As the story goes, Metternich called the Holy Alliance a 'loud-sounding nothing,' and Castlereagh described it as a 'piece of sublime mysticism and nonsense.'

distinguish between the Concert and the Holy Alliance at all. In particular, the concept of the European Concert is almost non-existent in Russian historical accounts of 1815 and 1822, which speak of the Holy Alliance as the major institutional arrangement coming out of Vienna (see Shilder 1897; Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947; Romanoff 1912). Since Russia was one of the major creators of the European Concert, it is unclear how it could have co-established and participated in a security regime, the existence of which Russian historians were not aware of or so grossly misperceived. Interestingly enough, the contemporary opponents of the Concert in Britain also equated the Concert with the Holy Alliance, viewing the Holy Alliance as the ideological foundation of the Vienna settlement (Holbraad 1971, 4).

Despite all the differences, there is one characteristic which the IR and historical works about the Concert share: just like the regime literature in general, the literature on the Concert offers single-cause explanations, focusing either on power or on shared interests and norms. As I have stressed earlier, the question is not whether power, interests or knowledge matter in the formation of the regime, but in their relative roles and their interplay. Only a multivariate approach will allow scholars to examine regime formation without any prejudice. Paraphrasing Elrod, who writes that "peace, no less than war, issues from a multiplicity of causes" (1976, 160), I argue that international regimes issue from a multiplicity of causes, the relationship among which needs to be established through a careful examination of historical evidence of each case study. Of the multiplicity of causes, I focus on the relative role of power, interests, knowledge and leadership in the production of regimes.

I have to state from the outset that the subsequent case chapters do not attempt to present a comprehensive narrative of the military and political events in Europe between 1789 and 1815. Rather they constitute a thorough examination of several attempts to create a security regime in Europe which ultimately culminated in the settlement of 1815.

**Chapter Two**

**The First Coalition and Its Lessons**

Introduction

On 20 April 1792, calling on the French National Assembly to declare war on the external enemies of the Revolution, the Foreign Minister Charles Dumouriez spoke of a counter-revolutionary "concert" of European powers that was threatening revolutionary France (Blanning 1987, 81). But was the anti-French alliance formed in 1792-93 (later known as the First Coalition) a true concert of great powers agreed on their war strategy and pledged to some common goal?

In this Chapter, I propose to demonstrate that, far from being a concert, the First Coalition was an opportunistic grouping of powers who either joined forces to make gains at the expense of a rival state weakened by internal turmoil or were simply dragged in by the unrelenting tide of revolutionary events. Divided by internal rivalries and discordant interests, the First Coalition could hardly survive, let alone prevail in a drawn-out struggle with the determined foe. Its ultimate (and perhaps inevitable) collapse served as a lesson for English statesmen, notably Foreign Secretary Lord Grenville and Prime Minister Pitt, leaving them to search for a more durable form of association of powers – one based on the commonality of aims in war and peace – in order to meet the challenge of revolutionary France.

In retrospect, it is hardly an overstatement to say that the French Revolution posed an existential threat to the eighteenth century European state system, which operated on the basis of *raison d'etat* and the balance of power. As

Henry Kissinger observed, after the French Revolution "disputes no longer concerned the adjustment of difference within an accepted framework, but the validity of the framework itself; the political contest had become doctrinal [...]*"* (1964, 4). The balance of power that had operated so intricately prior to 1789 "suddenly lost its flexibility and [...] came to seem an insufficient protection to powers faced by a France which proclaimed the incompatibility of its political maxims with those of other states" (ibid.).

To contemporaries, however, the new nature of the challenge presented to the European state system by the Revolution was not immediately obvious. The calling of the Estates General in May 1789, the formation of the Constitutional Assembly and the drafting of the monarchical constitution of 1791 were viewed as largely domestic affairs of France that need not concern other monarchies of Europe. Some, notably in London and St. Petersburg, looked at these events with malicious satisfaction as they weakened one of the hitherto strongest European states traditionally hostile to them; others, particularly in Berlin, viewed the turmoil in France as an opportunity to make gains at the expense of the weakened power; still others regarded the Revolution as "an urgent warning to all sovereigns to treat their subjects with greater consideration," to quote the Austrian Emperor Leopold. All of them continued to play a traditional *power politics* game, not grasping for one moment that the forces unleashed by the Revolution and her ideas would not stop at the borders of France (Madariaga 1990, 166).

When the events in France in 1791-92 began finally to arouse apprehension among other European powers, their jealousies and traditional rivalries prevented them from taking a swift joint action on behalf of monarchical Europe. Britain did not join the fight until after the failure of the Prussian-Austrian invasion of the summer-fall of 1792 gave the Revolution a lease on life. And Russia stayed out of the First Coalition altogether, despite the counter-revolutionary rhetoric of her Empress. As a historian of the French Revolutionary Wars has observed, "[a]lthough quite new in some important respects, the 'revolutionary wars' which began on 20 April 1792 can only be understood properly in the context of *old regime* rivalries" (Blanning 1987, 36). A brief review of these rivalries is therefore necessary in order to understand the international context within which first plans for a European concert originated.

The review will be organized around the four great powers (Prussia, Austria, Britain, and Russia) in the order in which they joined (with the exception of Russia) the First Coalition. I will outline their foreign policy priorities in the years preceding and immediately after the events of 1789 in France and the development of their policy vis-à-vis the Revolution in 1792-97.

<u>Europe and the French Revolution</u>

The most convenient starting point for a review of *old regime* rivalries is the beginning of the Russo-Turkish War in 1787. It not only highlighted the existing rivalries among the great powers (the Austro-Prussian rivalry in the center of Europe, the Russo-Prussian rivalry in the east, and the Anglo-Russian rivalry in the south) but intensified them and, for a time, eclipsed the events unfolding in

France. Hard as it is to believe in hindsight, but in the first two years after the fall of the Bastille, the great European powers were far more absorbed in the events in southern and eastern Europe than in the rapidly unfolding developments in France.

The war started with the arrest of the Russian ambassador and his incarceration in the Seven Towers of the Sultan's palace in Constantinople in August 1787, a ritual Turkish declaration of war (Blanning 1987, 36). It quickly spread to the Balkans by drawing in Austria in support of her ally, Russia, and to the Baltic by prompting Sweden to launch a surprise attack on Russia in July 1788. The war also galvanized a movement for domestic political reform among the Poles, which challenged Russian tutelage over Poland and brought about her third and final partition. It also stirred up the Prussian King Frederick William II (who had only recently - in 1786 - succeeded his great uncle, Frederick II) into a series of opportunistic actions in pursuit of a single goal: territorial expansion of his state.

Prussia. In the fall of 1787, the Prussians (incited by the British and knowing that the Austrians were now tied down in the Balkans) invaded the United Provinces (the Netherlands) in support of the Stadholder, William II of Orange, whose position had been challenged by the pro-French Patriot Party.[12] Although Prussia had no vital interests in the domestic affairs of the United Provinces, it was willing to do the British bidding (who wanted to keep the United

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[12] *Stadholder* was the title of the constitutional head of the United Provinces.

Provinces out of France's orbit) expecting that the latter would reciprocate by supporting Prussia's own program of territorial swaps in Eastern Europe.[13]

The "Herzberg Plan" (known after the name of one the King's advisers, Count Ewald von Herzberg, who devised it) was based on the premise that the war in south-eastern Europe between the Ottomans and the Russian-Austrian alliance would end quickly with the collapse of the former. At this point, the Prussians would intervene and demand a compensation for themselves by means of an elaborate exchange of territories involving the Ottoman Empire, Austria, and Poland, with Prussia eventually gaining from Poland the cities of Danzig, Thorn, and Posen and thus rounding off her territories in the East (Blanning 1987, 52-53; Madariaga 1990, 163-165). The Ottomans proved to be more resilient than had been expected, however, and, as the war dragged on, the initial Prussian plan fell through.

The Prussians then set their sights on Austria. Plagued by fiscal difficulties caused by the war with the Ottomans, Austria was facing increasing discontent bordering on open revolt in her Belgian provinces (the Austrian Netherlands) and in Hungary. Prussia wanted to force Austria to return to Poland the province of Galicia which she had acquired as part of the first partition of that country. In return, the Prussians expected, the grateful Poles would cede to Prussia Danzig and Thorn. In spring 1790, amid the uncertainty, which followed the sudden death of Emperor Joseph II and the accession of his brother, Leopold II, war

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[13] The only issue that could involve Prussia in the domestic affairs of the United Provinces was the boorish treatment received by the wife of the Stadholder, the sister of the Prussian King, at the hands of the Dutch Freikorps (members of the military wing of the pro-French party) (see Blanning 1987, 51-52).

between Prussia and Austria seemed almost imminent: the Prussians mobilized their army and negotiated anti-Austrian alliances with Poland and Turkey. At this point, however, Britain intervened to prevent a large-scale territorial rearrangement, which she feared would upset the balance on the Continent.[14] In July 1790, at the conference at Reichenbach, the British brokered a settlement, under the terms of which the Austrians agreed to abandon the Russians in the war against the Ottomans and make a separate peace in exchange for the Prussians agreeing to demobilize their army (Blanning 1987, 53-54). The Prussians were thus left empty-handed by their British ally.

Next, the Prussians turned against Russia. In March 1791, they mobilized their army again, this time to support Britain, who was now threatening to intervene in the Russo-Turkish war to prevent a complete collapse of the Ottomans. But after going all the way to the brink of war with Russia, the British government was forced to back down at the last moment. Left alone vis-à-vis Russia, the Prussians had to follow suit. The British had good reasons for not going to war which included the growing opposition to war both inside and outside Parliament and strategic problems of waging war against such a huge and distant country as Russia. But their reasons did not convince the Prussians, who had expected lofty territorial compensations (in Poland) in exchange for their support. This episode marked the *de facto* end of the Anglo-Prussian alliance.

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[14] Among other things, the British feared that an independent "United States of Belgium," which the Prussians wanted to set up in the Austrian Netherlands, would fall right into the French orbit.

The disappointment with the British alliance prompted Prussia to re-appraise her foreign policy. Instead of continuing to rely on her "perfidious ally," she decided to turn now to her former opponents, Russia and Austria. To Russia, which, after concluding a peace treaty with the Ottomans in December 1791, was now preparing to resolve the "Polish problem," Prussia offered a new partition of Poland demanding for herself Danzig and Thorn. To Austria, she proposed a joint expedition against France, which looked gravely weakened by revolutionary turmoil. As a reward for her war effort against France, Prussia wanted to obtain from the Duke of Bavaria the duchies of Jülich and Berg (with the city of Düsseldorf) to round off her possessions on the North Rhine. (The Duke would be offered compensation in Alsace to be taken from France.) Austria was proposed compensation in the French Flanders (to round off her Belgian provinces).

The proposed land grab in the West, thinly disguised as a quest to restore the French King to his former power in the name of monarchical solidarity, "was given short shrift by the [new] Emperor Leopold, who told [the Prussian envoy] that the French Revolution should be regarded as an urgent warning to all sovereigns to treat their subjects with greater consideration" (Blanning 1987, 82-83). The Emperor's comment was the best illustration of Austria's policy of non-involvement during the first years of the Revolution, despite the fact that of all European powers she was most affected by the events in France.

Austria. While Austria was indeed affected by some of the domestic developments in France, upon a closer look, none of the issues involved warranted an Austrian intervention in French affairs. First, at stake was Austria's

alliance with France against Prussia, which had been concluded in 1756, at the time of the Seven Years' War. The importance of this alliance for Austria should not be overestimated though. It had never brought her any tangible benefits. In fact, on several occasions, French diplomacy worked to prevent any expansion of Austria's power and influence in Germany. During the War of the Bavarian Succession in 1778, Comte de Vergennes (the foreign minister of Louis XVI) refused to give Austria any help. Several years later, his successor, Comte de Montmorin, once again thwarted Austria's long-cherished plan to exchange her Belgian provinces for Bavaria. As a historian of the French Revolutionary Wars remarked, "[w]ith an ally like that, Austria had no need of enemies" (Blanning 1987, 45). In light of this French attitude, the weakening of royal authority in France and the imminent dissolution of that controversial and "unnatural" (as many thought in both Vienna and Paris) alliance between the traditional rivals were not unwelcome by the Vienna Court and certainly did little to prompt it to launch an anti-revolutionary crusade in the name of monarchical solidarity.

Another issue that involved the Hapsburg Emperor in the domestic events in France concerned the feudal rights of several princes of the Holy Roman Empire in the French province of Alsace, which were contravened by the Revolution's abolition of the "feudal regime." In spite of pressure from the Imperial Diet (parliament of the Holy Roman Empire), Emperor Leopold dragged his feet, and was clearly unwilling to take any "principled" stand for the historical rights of the German princes (Blanning 1987, 74).

Finally, there was the dynastic tie: the wife of the King of France, Marie Antoinette, was the sister of Emperor Joseph and his successor, Emperor Leopold. But her persistent and urgent appeals failed to stir up her brothers into any action against the Revolution. In fact, based on Leopold's most recent biography by Adam Wandruszka, it has been argued that

> [f]ar from seeking to extirpate the Revolution, Leopold sympathized with and himself sought to realise many of its aims. … [Even] on the very eve of a war [of 1792] he had neither sought nor relished, he was still seeking to liberalise the constitutional arrangements of his own dominions and was still insisting that there should be no total counter-revolution inside France. (Blanning 1987, 72)

As is obvious from this short overview, none of the issues involving Austria in the domestic affairs of France convinced her to even consider a counter-revolutionary "crusade" in 1789-90. This does not mean, of course, that Austria was completely oblivious to the Revolution. "The universal quality of revolutionary principles and the strident presence in Paris of foreign refugees could not help but alert [her] to the danger of international contagion" (Blanning 1987, 85). But in the first two years of the Revolution, Austria was far more concerned with the prosecution of her war against the Ottomans, which was not going well initially, and, later, with the events in Poland, the unrest in Hungary and Belgium, and the increasingly menacing behavior of Prussia. In fact, "on the first anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, the two German powers appeared more likely to go to war against each other than against the Revolution" (Blanning 1987, 82).

Austria's gradual *rapprochement* with Prussia, which started after the signing of the Convention of Reichenbach in July 1790, came at a time when the

events in France began to eclipse the developments in the east and south-east of Europe. Since Austro-Prussian cooperation was the backbone of the First Coalition in its initial phase, it is worth looking at in more detail in order to understand the Coalition's internal disunity, which ultimately caused its downfall.

The turning point for Austria's attitude to the Revolution came in June 1791, when the French royal family made an unsuccessful attempt to escape from France (the "Flight to Varennes"). When upon their forced return to Paris, the royal family were put under house arrest, Leopold issued an appeal (the "Padua Circular") to all monarchs of Europe calling for a joint action to restore the liberty of the French King and his family. The Prussians, who had been eyeing France as an easy prey, were happy to oblige and an Austrian-Prussian Convention was signed in July in Vienna. At the end of August, Leopold met Frederick William II and representatives of French émigrés at a summit in Pillnitz, Saxony. The summit issued a joint declaration, which became known as the Pillnitz Declaration. In theory, it announced the events in France to be "a matter of common concern to all the sovereigns of Europe" and called for an international agreement aimed at restoring monarchical government in France by means of a joint military intervention (Blanning 1987, 85-86). In practice, however, little, if anything, happened, not least because the French King voluntarily accepted the limits on his powers put forth in the new constitution in September 1791. "As [Austria's foreign minister Prince] Kaunitz observed to his subordinate, Baron von Spielmann, the Austrians had every reason to be grateful to Louis XVI for getting them off the hook" (Blanning 1987, 88). In reality, following

considerations of the balance of power, Austria did not want to see the restoration of strong monarchy in France because "a strong France and a strong Austria could not coexist amicably, no matter what their formal relationship might be" (Blanning 1987, 89).[15] Thus,

> [f]rom the Austrian point of view, the ideal solution to the French problem would be some sort of constitutional monarchy, stable enough not to be a source of revolutionary contagion but too weak to threaten Hapsburg interests in the Low Countries, Germany or Italy. In short, France was to become a western version of Poland – but with Austria playing the role of Russia. With Louis XVI's acceptance of the new constitution, that eminently desirable solution appeared to have been achieved. (ibid.)

Subsequent events in France quickly dispelled that misperception. The Legislative (or, as sometimes referred to, National) Assembly, convened under the new constitution in September 1791, proved to be a far more radical body than its predecessor, the Constituent Assembly (elected in 1789). The balance of power between the King and parliament (including in matters of foreign policy) tilted decisively in favor of the latter. This made the Austrians extremely anxious, particularly in the light of the deteriorating situation in their Belgian provinces, which were the obvious first target of French expansionism. After dragging his feet for more than a year, Leopold decided now to issue a strong protest against the annulment of the seigniorial rights of the Holy Roman princes in Alsace. Communicated in a note of Austria's foreign minister Kaunitz to the French envoy on December 21, 1791, the protest caused paroxysms of anti-Austrian feelings in the French National Assembly. In January 1792, continuing down the

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[15] The prominent Russian historian S. Solovyov (1863) writes that, "in accordance with the then dominant rule of foreign policy, each state was supposed to strive to keep in its neighboring state a form of rule, which would provide as little power to the government of that state as possible so as to make it safe for her neighbors" (*History of the Downfall of Poland*, chap. IX).

road of confrontation with France, the Austrian Council of State issued an extensive list of demands to the French National Assembly which now included the restoration of absolute monarchy in France and complete liberty and respect to the royal family.

Once Austria had made the decision to go all the way to restore the monarchy in France, she turned to Prussia to cement her relationship. The alliance treaty between them was signed in Vienna in February 1792 with both countries pledging to each field fifty thousand troops for a campaign against France. This change in Austria's policy toward France was at least in part due to the declining influence (and health) of her eighty-one year old foreign minister, Prince Kaunitz, who had been a moderating force in Austria's foreign policy. The ascendancy of his rivals, Count Philipp Cobenzl and Baron Anton Spielmann, turned Austria toward a more aggressive pursuit of territorial compensations, even at the expense of the interests of the Holy Roman Empire. Spielmann resurrected the old idea of an exchange of Austria's Belgian provinces for Bavaria, which "was neither accepted nor rejected by the Council of State, but rather pushed to one side by the decision that Prussia should be allowed to make the running over compensations" (Blanning 1987, 115). The shift toward a more expansionist foreign policy was also facilitated by the sudden death on March 1, 1792, of Leopold, after a very short illness, and the accession to the throne of his undistinguished, twenty-four-year-old son, Francis.

Finally, there was an additional factor propelling Austria toward an alliance with Prussia: the emerging cooperation between Prussia and Russia over

Poland. As Empress Catherine prepared to deal a final blow to the Polish patriots and entered into negotiations with Frederick William II over a proposed new partition of Poland, the Austrians, who by now had become bogged down in French affairs, were afraid of being left totally isolated facing the hostile French National Assembly in the west, the expansionist Russian Empress in the east, and the opportunistic Prussian King in the north.

Still, the final push for war with France came from the Prussians. In April 1792, Frederick William II, who had now assumed personal control over the conduct of foreign policy, instructed his ministers to send a sharply-worded note to their ally in Vienna urging her to act. "Rightly convinced that the French [themselves] were about to declare war and afraid lest any further delay might leave them without the Prussian help they needed so urgently, the Austrians decided for war" (Blanning 1987, 118). The evidence suggests that while they did so reluctantly, the Prussians were more than ready for action expecting generous compensations for their war effort.

Britain. The invasion of France in the fall of 1792 had to proceed without participation of two other great powers, Britain and Russia. Despite the traditional enmity between Britain and France, the former adopted initially a policy of neutrality toward the Revolution. It was inspired not so much by any sympathy for the French attempt to establish constitutional principles of government (except for mild endorsement by several radical Whigs in Parliament) but by a pragmatic calculation that the revolutionary upheaval would weaken its centuries-old enemy, certainly to the point of irrelevance overseas, if

not on the Continent itself. In October 1789, the Duke of Orleans, the brother of the French King, was snappily told by Britain's foreign minister, the Duke of Leeds, that the French King should not look to the foreign powers "either with hope or apprehension" but should instead set about putting his own house in order (Blanning 1987, 133).

At the same time, Leeds was writing to one of his friends: "I defy the ablest Heads in England to have planned, or its whole Wealth to have purchased, a Situation so fatal to its Rival, as that to which France is now reduced by her own intestine Commotions" (quoted in Ehrman 1996, 4, and Blanning 1987, 132). William Eden, the chief British negotiator of the 1786 commercial treaty with France, wrote to his friend, Lord Grenville, who succeeded Leeds as foreign minister at the height of the Ochakov crisis: "I heartily detest and abjure the whole system of the *Democrates* abstractly considered; but I am not sure that the continued course of their struggles to maintain a disjointed and inefficient Government would not be beneficial to our political interests, and the best security to the permanence of our prosperity" (quoted in Blanning 1987, 133). As a historian of the French Revolutionary Wars put it, "[t]he British were anxious only that political turmoil *continue* in France for as long as possible" (Blanning 1987, 132).

In the next three years, neither internal developments in France, all pointing toward increasing radicalization of the Revolution, nor appeals from other Powers for joint action against the Revolution succeeded in moving the British out of their complacent neutrality and into any counter-revolutionary

action. Fully two years after the fall of the Bastille, the Sardinian envoy to London, Count de Front, still reported to his sovereign that "[t]he British Cabinet is resolved to stay neutral [... as] it finds it very agreeable not to have to do anything to attract French specie and to seize all her trade" (Blanning 1987, 165).

In fact, Britain tried to use the collapse of France's foreign policy to play a more assertive role in Continental affairs. The results were mixed, however. In July 1790, at the conference at Reichenbach, the British thought they scored a major diplomatic success when they forced Austria to abandon her Russian ally and conclude a separate treaty with the Ottomans on the basis of the pre-war status quo and Prussia to demobilize her army, which was poised to invade Austria, and with it to give up her plans for territorial compensations. In reality, however, the British alienated their Prussian ally and pushed the resentful Austria closer to Prussia.

In January 1791, the British Prime Minister Pitt (still having the Prussians at his side) tried to repeat his diplomatic success by this time forcing Russia to give up the fruits of her recent victories over the Ottomans and conclude a peace treaty based on the pre-war status quo. Unlike the Austrian Emperor Leopold, Empress Catherine stood firm and the British eventually had to withdraw their objections to Russian annexation of a large tract of the Ottoman territory on the northern coast of the Black Sea (Madariaga 1990, 167-68). As mentioned above, this episode (known as the Ochakov crisis) put an end to the Anglo-Prussian alliance. The Prussians had enough of British treachery and turned to their former opponents by forming an alliance with Austria against France and

opening negotiations with Russia over a possible new partition of Poland (Blanning 1987, 59). By summer 1791, Britain was forced to retreat into a position of isolation.

Despite the signs of growing radicalization of the Revolution in France, the self-inflicted isolation did not initially bother Pitt and Grenville. In fact, following the abolition of monarchy in France on 10 August 1792 and the proclamation of the Republic, the British ambassador in Paris was recalled "on the reasonable ground that the authority to which he was accredited – the monarchy – no longer existed, but it was stressed that Great Britain remained 'extremely neutral'" (Blanning 1987, 134). Justifying the non-involvement, Grenville maintained that the Revolution would soon come to a halt as it would inevitably lead France to national bankruptcy and that, in any case, it would be defeated by superior Austro-Prussian forces assembling at her border (Jupp 1985, 145). Not only did Britain issue a formal statement of neutrality in response to the Austrian invitation to join the war against the Revolution, but King George III in his capacity as the Elector of Hanover declared his neutrality and, much to the chagrin of the Austrians, even "helped keep the other north German princes out of the war [... while] his ministers took prompt and firm action to stifle a bellicose spasm by their Dutch satraps" (Blanning 1987, 134). Not even the allied setback at Valmi on 20 September 1792 and the subsequent decision of the Duke of Brunswick to begin withdrawal of the Prussian troops from France shook Britain out of her complacency.

The British "conversion" to the anti-revolutionary cause took place some time in November 1792, when the tide of the military campaign turned decisively to the side of the Revolution. First came the resounding French victory over the Austrians at Jemappes on 6 November and the subsequent occupation of the Belgian provinces. Next came the decree adopted by the Convention on 19 November, which declared that "fraternity and assistance would be given to *all* peoples wishing to regain their liberty" (quoted in Blanning 1987, 136). While some historians (notably Albert Sorel) point to the spontaneous character of the decree, which was adopted after a short and highly emotionally charged debate in the Convention and thus could hardly be viewed as a definitive program for action, coupled with subsequent proclamations that the Revolution "cannot be calm until all Europe goes up in flames" it made a very disturbing impression on everyone including the British.

For almost a century after the Treaty of Utrecht, which ended the War for the Spanish Succession, one of the axioms of Britain's foreign policy had been that France should not be allowed to acquire possession of the Low Countries. From this point of view, the Austrian possession of Belgium was regarded as an essential barrier to French expansionism in the area. But now, after the Austrian rout at Jemappes and the increasingly deteriorating domestic situation in the Netherlands, where the Stadholder William was opposed by the Patriot party, that pillar of Britain's security was crumbling. "With one half of the Low Countries conquered and the other half in imminent danger, the British could no longer remain passive observers" of the Revolution (Blanning 1987, 140). Immediately upon receiving the news of Jemappes, the Cabinet communicated to

the Dutch government "a firm assurance of the British support in the event of foreign invasion or domestic subversion" (ibid.).

The actual rupture between Britain and France came in January 1793. In response to French demands to stop interfering into internal affairs of the United Provinces and their unilateral decision to open the River Scheldt for navigation, which contradicted several international treaties, Britain's foreign secretary, Grenville, issued a stern reply, in which he refused to recognize the credentials of the French envoy, marquis de Chauvelin, as all official communication with France was suspended since the storming of the royal palace at Tuileries on 10 August 1792, and rejected the French explanation of the Fraternity Decree of 19 November and the unilateral decision to open the Scheldt. Most importantly, however, he declared:

> England never will consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, [...] the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers [... and] this government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will also never see with indifference, that France shall make herself, directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. (quoted in Blanning 1987, 157)

In the end, it was the news of the execution of King Louis XVI that prompted the British to expel the French envoy, which in turn evoked a declaration of war in the National Assembly on 1 February 1793. Thus, despite Britain's initial unwillingness to get involved in Austria's royalist crusade or to support Prussia's schemes of territorial redistribution which would follow a war with France, she was finally dragged into the counter-revolutionary coalition by the tide of events. For the British the conflict "was not about monarchists against

republicans or the internal affairs of France, but was necessitated by the French assault on the balance of power in Europe in general and on the security of the Low Countries, in particular" (Hague 2005, 279). As Pitt declared in Parliament, "if sufficient security [...] could be had for this country," he would not object to French government "to remain even upon its present footing" (quoted in Hague, 2005, 280).

Russia. Although Russia never joined the First Coalition, she was not indifferent to the Revolution. The initial reaction of her Empress to the news of the Revolution was rather skeptical. In contrast, Russian educated society, most of the nobility and even common people received the news with enthusiasm. According to the French Ambassador in Russia, the Comte de Ségur, "Frenchmen, Russians, Danes, Germans, Englishmen, Dutch, all [in St. Petersburg] congratulated and embraced each other in the street, as though they had been delivered of a too heavy chain weighing on them" (quoted in Madariaga 1990, 189). To confuse things even more, Catherine's grandsons, the Grand Dukes Alexander (the future Emperor Alexander I) and Constantine, were among the most enthusiastic supporters of the Revolution. There were even rumors that some members of the Russian nobility (reportedly a Golitsyn and Count Paul Stroganov) personally participated in the storming of the Bastille and even joined the Jacobin Club (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 3).

Catherine's initial skepticism quickly turned to outrage when the news of the revolutionary excesses started reaching Russia. She did not allow, however, her personal feelings and distaste for the Revolution to drag Russia into any anti-

French alliance. The Empress would issue "the most vehement diplomatic notes against the Revolution and the French Republic and foment the whole of Europe against them" but she prudently avoided European war, "observing the vicissitudes of the fortunes of the Allies from afar and taking care not to allow her troops to intervene" (Czartoryski 1971, vol. I, 108 and 279).

Even a quick look at Russia's foreign policy in the decade preceding the fall of Bastille will demonstrate that her *de facto* neutrality toward the revolutionary France was rooted in the rivalries and interests she had developed under the *old regime*. First, the decade of the 1780s was marked by a gradual deterioration of her relations with Britain. Traditionally, Britain had been Russia's main trading partner, particularly in naval stores. In fact, British merchants even enjoyed preferential treatment under the terms of the Anglo-Russian commercial treaty of 1766. But the two countries never forged a closer political union on the strength of their commercial relations. The stumbling block was British refusal to back Russia in her expansion in the south that threatened the Ottoman Empire, particularly since the Russo-Turkish war of 1768-84. The British consistently refused to promise assistance against the Ottomans in the event of another Russo-Turkish war because of their fear of jeopardizing the extensive trade which they carried on in the Eastern Mediterranean (Madariaga 1990, 81).

The Anglo-Russian relationship took a sharp downturn after the outbreak of war between Britain and France in 1778. It had always been British practice in wartime to detain neutral ships on the high seas and to confiscate not only their cargo if it was enemy property or contraband of war but also the ship itself as a

penalty for dealing in enemy property. Similarly, all neutral cargo on board a captured enemy ship was confiscated on the grounds that it became "contaminated." The British position in this matter was always contested by the major maritime trading powers, including the Netherlands, Denmark, and Sweden. But it was Russia, however, who put herself forward as the champion of the maritime rights of neutral powers.  In March 1780, Empress Catherine seized the detention of a Russian ship to issue a proclamation of "Armed Neutrality," which was clearly aimed at Britain. Although the British initially attempted to conciliate Russia and even agreed to offer assistance in the case of a Russo-Turkish war (which Catherine now turned down), the episode created a lasting mutual ill-will (Madariaga 1990, 82).

The next episode that contributed to the deterioration of the Anglo-Russian relations was the personal initiative of the British monarch. In 1785, George III, in his capacity as Elector of Hanover, joined and helped recruit other German princes for the League of Princes (the *Fürstenbund*) formed by the Prussian King Frederick II. Frederick's League was intended to thwart the ambitions of Empress Catherine to become the supreme arbiter of the Holy Roman Empire, a position she had attained by mediating in the War of the Bavarian Succession and guaranteeing the Treaty of Teschen of 1779, which ended the war. Coupled with the Russian Empress' role as the guarantor of the political arrangements in Poland, which she had acquired after the first partition of Poland in 1772, the status of the guarantor of the Treaty of Teschen would make Russia the holder of balance in central Europe (and Catherine, a German

princess herself, the arbiter of the Holy Roman Empire). Frederick's *Fürstenbund* supported by George III helped ruin those plans (Blanning 1987, 57-58).

The hostility between the two countries increased further when William Pitt, Jr., known for his strong anti-Russian sentiments, became Prime Minister in 1783 (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 6). It did not come as a surprise when in 1786 Russia refused to extend the commercial treaty with Britain and a year later concluded a similar treaty with Britain's arch-rival, France, aimed in particular at the development of the Black Sea trade (Jupp 1985, 121). In spring-summer 1791, British hostility to any expansion of Russia on the northern coast of the Black Sea at the expense of the Ottoman Empire almost led to an Anglo-Russian war, which was averted only at the last minute.

Surprisingly, however, the peaceful resolution of the Ochakov crisis led to a quick *rapprochement* between Britain and Russia. A new commercial treaty was signed between the two countries, and when Britain entered the war against France in January 1793, Catherine sent a squadron of ships to patrol with the Royal Navy in the North Sea, reportedly having said: "Love for the English is natural to me" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 5). But that was as far as the Empress was willing to go against France. When Austria and Prussia demanded military assistance in their invasion of France, Catherine refused "with the cynical and specious argument that, while they were fighting Jacobinism in France, she was waging her own war against it in Poland" (Blanning 1987, 186).

As a foreign policy issue for Russia, Poland brought her into direct contact and rivalry with both German powers, Prussia and Austria. After the first

partition of Poland in 1772, the decade of the 1780s saw the triumvirate of Russia, Austria and Prussia falling apart. The relations between Russia and Prussia became spoiled in 1781, when Emperor Joseph II reached an agreement with Catherine to cooperate in the event of war with the Ottomans (Madariaga 1990, 84). Frederick II retaliated with the creation of his *Fürstenbund*, which was aimed, among other things, at keeping Catherine out of German affairs.

Russo-Prussian relations hit their nadir after the accession to the Prussian throne of Frederick-William II in 1786. The Prussians were now eagerly searching for an opportunity to acquire more Polish territories and were ready to unscrupulously play games with the Polish patriots by encouraging them to look for ways to free their country from Russian tutelage. The opportune moment arrived in 1787 when Russia was caught off-guard by a declaration of war on her by the Ottoman Turks and then by a surprise attack of Sweden's King Gustavus III. Having received assurances from Prussia of her support in the case of a confrontation with Russia, the Polish patriots set to reform their country's debilitating political institutions (which were jealously guaranteed by Russia) to restore her political vitality. On 3 May 1791, the Polish Seim adopted a new constitution proclaiming a hereditary, limited monarchy, which could raise enough taxes to provide for defense of the country, and abolishing the *liberum veto* provision which rendered the Seim practically incapacitated by giving any of its members the power of veto over any parliamentary decision.

Initially Russia could not react to the loss of her dominant position in Poland. The situation changed, however, following the collapse of the Anglo-

Prussian ultimatum over Ochakov and the signing of the preliminary peace with the Ottomans in July 1791. (The final treaty was concluded in Jassy in December 1791). Catherine could now turn her attention to the Polish problem. In May-June 1792, her armies invaded Poland at the "request" of the so-called Polish confederates, who proclaimed as their goal the restoration of the old, unreformed constitution and "glorious liberties" for the nobility (Madariaga 1990, 168-69).

In the crushing of the Polish reform movement and the second partitioning of the country, Russia worked closely with her rival, Prussia. While Austria supported the constitutional reform movement in Poland as a safeguard against Prussia's aggrandizement at the expense of that unfortunate country, she could do little at that time to prevent the second partitioning as she was completely absorbed now in the developments in France. Austria's physical inability to resist a joint Russian-Prussian enterprise over Poland was compounded by a reorientation of her policy after the sudden death of Emperor Leopold II in March 1792. Leopold's successor, Emperor Francis II, turned away from annexations in Poland in favor of the exchange of the Austrian Netherlands for Bavaria (Madariaga 1990, 169).

Meanwhile Prussia was happy to cooperate with Russia in the proposed partition despite the fact that she had a treaty with Poland of March 1790, which committed her to guarantee the territorial integrity of the latter. The failure of the invasion of France in September 1792 made it painfully obvious to the Prussian King and his advisers that, contrary to their expectations, the campaign against the revolutionary nation in the west would be anything but a quick victory to be

followed by "compensations." Now Prussia's attention swiveled again to the east. In October 1792, she declared that she would stay in the war against France only if she immediately received her compensation in Poland. In January 1793, under the terms of the second partition of Poland with Russia, she finally obtained her much-coveted Danzig and Thorn.

Thus, at the height of the revolutionary crisis in the west, which called for a united front of European monarchies against France, two great powers, Russia and Prussia, were absorbed in the events in the east of Europe, ready to bury their previous hostility and even intense personal animosity of their rulers,[16] and, in the best traditions of Europe's classical balance of power, to cooperate with each other to extract the maximum pay from the hapless Polish state.

The End of the First Coalition

The second partition of Poland was followed by the revolt of Kościuszko in April 1794, which was ruthlessly put down by the Russian armies under the command of Field Marshal Suvorov. For a time, Catherine considered the outright annexation of the rest of Poland but eventually had to invite Prussia and Austria to arrange for the third and final partition of Poland in January 1795.

It was the partitioning of Poland that led to the first major defection from the First Coalition: having her appetite for territorial aggrandizement satiated for the time being, Prussia, which had already withdrawn from active military

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[16] Catherine's contempt for the Prussian King, the "stupid lout" she dubbed "Gu" (after Frédéric-*Gu*illaume) was only matched by her scorn for the English King George III, the "marchand drapier" she dubbed "Ge." "After their cooperation in the United Provinces in 1787 they were amalgamated into a single object of derision" "Gegu" (Blanning 1987, 59).

campaigning against France in 1793, decided in April 1795 that she had nothing to gain from the continuation of the war in the west and signed a separate peace treaty with France in Basle, Switzerland, recognizing the Rhine as the "natural frontier" of France. Her defection had far-reaching consequences for the First Coalition. Spain followed the example of Prussia by signing a separate peace treaty in July 1795 and the remaining members of the Coalition (Britain, Austria, and Piedmont) began contemplating the possibility of an accommodation with France.

In December 1795, the British cabinet made an overture to the Directory in France by way of its unofficial representative in Switzerland, Mr. Wickham. In a letter of instruction to the British ambassador in Vienna, Morton Eden, who acted as a conduit to Wickham, the foreign secretary, Lord Grenville, summed up the proposed terms of peace as reducible to a few heads, including a general amnesty for the Royalists in the interior of France (not even restoration of a limited form of monarchy), return of Belgium to Austria and of Savoy to Sardinia (Holland Rose 1903, 295-97). The British opposition to Austria's goal of swapping her Belgian provinces for Bavaria thwarted the plans for a joint British-Austrian declaration of intent to enter into negotiations for peace, although the Austrians assented to the general proposals of the British government (Holland Rose 1903, 299). Grenville was not optimistic about the prospects of a peace treaty with France, however. In a letter to Ambassador Eden of 9 February 1796, he prophetically remarked: "Much more must be done by the allied arms before the allies can hope to receive from France a proposal or agreement in any admissible terms of peace" (ibid.).

Nothing came from the British overtures in winter-spring 1796 since the majority of the Directory firmly intended to press on with the war and the acquisition of "natural frontiers" along the Rhine and in Italy. The same ending awaited the mission of Lord Malmesbury who was dispatched to Paris in October of that same year, this time because the Directory was confidently expecting to reap the benefits of General Bonaparte's successful campaigns against the Austrians in Italy. "If failure [of British peace overtures] was probable in spring [1796], it was certain in the autumn" (Holland Rose1903, 301). The final blow to the First Coalition came in October 1797 when (after the preliminary treaty of Leoben in April 1797) the Austrians signed a separate peace treaty with France at Campo-Formio. The First Coalition was dead and Britain was left alone in the field with no allies on the Continent.

Conclusion

Far from being "an instinctive reaction" of conservative monarchies to the Revolution, united in their goal to extirpate it, the First Coalition came about as a result of different interests of its member states: a growing sense of insecurity of some powers (Austria and Britain) and an insatiable appetite for territorial aggrandizement of others (Prussia), who saw an easy prey in a France weakened by the Revolution. As Grenville's friend, Lord Auckland, prophetically observed with regard to the initial Austro-Prussian alliance: "History shows that offensive leagues against particular people have seldom succeeded; and for this obvious reason, that the party attacked immediately acquires a union of interests, and the

attacking parties have adverse interests of every description" (quoted in Blanning 1987, 133).

The First Coalition was based on a disjointed set of agreements between its member states rather than a single alliance treaty (Jupp 1985, 185). It should not be surprising then that its members never managed to work out any common war aims, with each power interested only in advancing her own individual interests. As a result, the members were engaged in two simultaneous balancing acts: against revolutionary France and against each other, jealously watching and calculating every possible gain that another Coalition member could get in their "common" struggle.

Another important aspect of the First Coalition was that its members did not necessarily view Revolutionary France as an irreconcilable foe and were ready to negotiate and conclude separate treaties with her. Due to the internal dynamics of the Revolution, however, France was not a stable negotiating partner. Nor could the France of the Revolution be content with negotiated settlements with her neighbors. But the European powers were yet to learn the value of any agreements with the revolutionary power bent on changing Europe in her new image. The Coalition finally collapsed because France was able to use the disunity and disarray of political aspirations of other European powers and pull them out of the Coalition one by one by exploiting their internal rivalries and appealing to their individual interests.

The Revolution itself did not place the search for a security regime in the form of a European concert on the agenda of the European powers. It was the

failure of the Coalition and the old mechanism of the balance of power to deal with France that became the catalyst for British statesmen to begin developing new security arrangements, which finally took the form of a comprehensive plan for a European concert. That experience of learning from the failure of the First Coalition and the subsequent diplomatic initiatives of the British statesmen constitute the value of the Coalition for the ultimate creation of the Concert of Europe in 1814-1815.

**Chapter Three**

**The Second Coalition: Grenville's Diplomacy and the Early Blueprint for a European Concert**

<u>Introduction</u>

In late spring and summer 1797 Britain faced the worst war crisis in a century (Mackesy 1974, 2). The conclusion of the preliminary treaty between Austria and France at Leoben, in April, left Britain with no major power ally on the Continent: Prussia had been neutral since the Treaty of Basel of April 1795; and after taking first hesitant steps toward actual war with France in the last months of the Empress Catherine's reign, Russia turned again to the policy of non-involvement with the accession of the new Emperor Paul I in November 1796. Of the lesser states, Portugal was the last remaining ally of Britain, but her military value was insignificant; the Netherlands, Spain, and Sardinia, which had been on the British side at the beginning of the war, were now reduced to the status of satellites of France.

The domestic situation in Britain was equally gloomy. In February, the Bank of England had to start issuing banknotes because of a run on deposits and a shortage of bullion. On Easter Sunday, 16 April, the Channel Fleet mutinied by refusing to sail from its base at Spithead (Derry 1962, 108). To make matters worse, by the end of 1797 London had enough evidence suggesting that the French were preparing to invade the British Isles.

Facing mounting difficulties both at home and abroad, Pitt decided to make one more attempt to negotiate peace with France. On 30 June 1797, over strong objections from his foreign secretary, Lord Grenville, who now thought

that "nothing but firmness could save England," Pitt sent his emissary, Lord Malmesbury, to France to negotiate with the delegates from the Directory. The negotiations held at Lille proceeded in strict secrecy: Malmesbury's dispatches were seen only by Pitt and Grenville; the rest of the Cabinet was given edited versions. Malmesbury was instructed to make a generous offer to the French that would include the recognition of their conquests of the Austrian Netherlands and Savoy and the return by the British of all colonial prizes, with a few exceptions.

Initially, the negotiations looked promising, although in hindsight it appears that the war party in France led by one of the Directors, Paul Barras, was playing for time. The first blow to the prospect of a negotiated settlement came in August when Portugal was forced to sign a peace treaty in Paris which, among other things, stipulated the exclusion of British ships from Portuguese ports. Then came the *coup d'état* of 18 Fructidor (September 4), directed by Barras and supported by the army, which purged the moderates from the Directory and both legislative councils. Following these events in Paris, the French negotiators at Lille were instructed to up their demands so as to make them absolutely unacceptable to the British. The negotiations were broken off, and Malmesbury headed back to London on September 18 (Reilly 1978, 351-354). Thus, the British government now had no option but to continue the war – the question was how.

In the fall of 1797 Britain had three strategic courses of action to choose from. The first two options called for disengagement from continental European affairs: one option was to focus exclusively on Britain's home defense, preparing to repel a looming French invasion, most likely of Ireland; the other option was to

launch colonial offensives as compensation for the aggrandizement of France on the Continent. The third course of action was to seek a fresh continental alliance with powers which shared Britain's objectives in the war, namely, the overthrow of France's militant republican government and her return to the pre-1789 borders (Jupp 1985, 209; Reilly 1987, 366-67). The course of overseas conquests was supported by the secretary for war, Henry Dundas, but he was a lone voice in the Cabinet. Others were divided between a home defense and a continental alliance strategy (Jupp 1985, 209; Mackesy 1974, 3).

The strongest supporter of the idea of a fresh continental alliance against France was the foreign secretary, Lord Grenville, whose influence with Pitt gave him the decisive voice in Britain's conduct of war in the next two years (Mackesy 1974, 6). Unlike his cousin, Pitt, who now felt it "[his] duty, as an English minister and a Christian, to use every effort to stop so bloody and wasting a war," Grenville came to believe firmly that "in the establishment of the French Republic is included the overthrow of all the other Governments of Europe" (Derry 1962, 115; see also Mackesy 1974, 5). Although in the spring and summer of 1797, the prospects of another anti-French coalition looked rather bleak, he pinned his hopes for a new alliance on the rapacious conduct of France herself. Subsequent events proved him right.

The coup d'état of 18 Fructidor (September 4, 1797) revived revolutionary radicalism in France. The purges removed, among others, two moderate members of the Directory who favored a peace treaty with Britain (Carnot and Barthélémy) and tilted government policy toward expansionism again. The

"rejuvenated" Directory was now fixed on the continuation of war. The secret

negotiations with the British (the Malmesbury mission mentioned above) were

broken off almost immediately, on September 18. But a month later the Directory

had to accept the final peace treaty with the Austrians signed at Campo Formio

on 17 October 1797.  Had it not feared its own "Citizen General" Bonaparte, who

negotiated and signed the Treaty of Campo Formio, the Directory would probably

have rejected it and insisted on the continuation of war. The attitude of the

French Government to Campo Formio was best summed up in a secret

memorandum prepared by its foreign minister, Charles Maurice de Talleyrand:

> Given the situation of the Republic, which is a *parvenu* power in Europe,
> which has raised itself in the teeth of the monarchies and on the ruins of
> several of them, … [t]he dispute which has been lulled for the time being
> by the surprise and dismay of the vanquished enemy has in no way been
> finally resolved by the arms which must always be at the ready so long as
> hatred persists. (quoted in Blanning 1986, 176)

In the months following Campo Formio French expansionism continued

unabated. At the Congress at Rastatt, where a peace treaty was being negotiated

with delegates of the Holy Roman Empire, the French secured the consent of the

Imperial delegates to the cession of the entire left bank of the Rhine to France. A

coup d'état, assisted by the French army, turned the Swiss Confederation into the

"Helvetian Republic." Geneva was annexed outright and the French army took

over control of the strategic Alpine passes to northern Italy. In Holland, a coup

engineered by a French army commander purged the Assembly of the moderates

and gave the French occupation of the country an air of permanence. In Italy, the

French troops entered Rome, the Pope was exiled, and the "Roman Republic" was

proclaimed. Later, they tightened their control over Piedmont, eventually forcing

the King to abdicate and flee to the island of Sardinia. In short, in 1798 the French Government was well on its way uniting Holland, Belgium, France (all the way up to the Rhine), Switzerland, and Northern Italy into a single revolutionary super-state (Blanning 1986, 177-78; Mackesy 1974, 9-10, 36).

These developments aroused apprehensions in all the capitals of Europe, but particularly in Vienna. In fact, the Austrians themselves viewed the Treaty of Campo Formio as a truce rather than a definitive peace with France. The Treaty was barely signed when the Austrian Chancellor Thugut approached the British Ambassador suggesting a bilateral alliance between Austria and Britain, should Austria be drawn again into the war (Mackesy 1974, 9). Although Grenville rebuffed the offer, the Austrians persisted.

At around the same time, important news arrived in London from Berlin. On 8 October 1797, the British envoy sent a dispatch informing Grenville that the Prussian King Frederick William II was dying and that his successor, Frederick William III, was likely to abandon Prussia's neutrality and join in the struggle against France (Sherwig 1969, 97; Jupp 1985, 211).

Finally, the French occupation of the Ionian Islands (of the now partitioned Republic of Venice) and the expulsion of a Russian consul brought France into direct conflict with Russia, who viewed the occupation as a direct challenge to her interests in the Eastern Mediterranean. In November 1797, Emperor Paul I declared himself the protector of the Order of the Knights of St. John, which had the custody of the Island of Malta, thus signaling his intention to check the spread of French influence in the region. The Tsar also decided to

reclaim his position of the "guarantor" of the territorial integrity of the Holy Roman Empire, which was clearly violated at the Congress at Rastatt by the cession of the left bank of the Rhine to France.

A "renewed militancy," which now dominated at the courts of Vienna and St. Petersburg, and the approaching death of Frederick William II in Berlin convinced Grenville that conditions on the Continent were finally becoming favorable for a new anti-French coalition (Jupp 1985, 211). As a consequence, he began drafting a plan for a "quadruple alliance" of the major powers, or the first comprehensive plan for a "European concert."

Grenville's Plan for a European Concert

There are conflicting views as to the origins and the novelty of Grenville's proposal for a "quadruple alliance" of powers which he formulated as a policy in 1797. Sherwig (1962; 1969) argues that the blueprint was original and designed to redress the flaws of the First Coalition. Mackesy argues that the proposal drew on the intellectual legacy of earlier British plans, such as the Grand Alliance against Louis XIV: "Since the days of Marlborough British statesmen pursued the mirage of the alliance, seeking to unite Europe against the threat of French domination" (1974, 8). Jupp argues that Grenville entertained the idea of an "entire union and concert" of the major powers as early as 1793, when Britain had just entered the war against France. At that time, Grenville suggested a general concert of major powers, which "should be kept in being [after the war ends] to preserve a peace settlement" (1985, 210).

While it is perfectly possible that the idea of a "four-power concert" had emerged earlier, it had never been formulated as a diplomatic objective and had never been translated into an official policy of the British Government. It was in the summer and fall of 1797, when Britain chose the policy of active engagement on the Continent with the aim of securing a fresh alliance with continental powers that Grenville returned to his earlier ideas. And so, in 1797 Pitt and Grenville took the decision to "make the idea of a general concert a matter of policy" (Jupp 1985, 212).

Grenville seems to have developed the plan gradually rather than as a single policy statement. In its final form, the plan was designed to redress the main defect of the First Coalition, namely, the lack of any agreement among the Coalition members with regard to their political aims in the war and the absence of an overriding strategic plan (Mackey 1974, 7). Grenville was convinced that the failures of the First Coalition had resulted from its *political disunity* rather than its purported *military weakness*: after all, in order to win, "allied armies must be deployed to serve a single master-plan; and no military plan could be settled and faithfully executed unless the allies were pursuing agreed political aims" (Mackesy 1974, 8). The internal disunity of the First Coalition had made it possible for France to divide its members by appealing to their individual interests, as was particularly the case with the Prussians at Basle and later with the Austrians at Campo Formio (Sherwig 1962, 291). As Grenville wrote to Count von Haugwitz, the architect of Prussia's neutrality, in a letter dated 14 January 1798:

> [I]n its present crisis Europe can be saved only by a union of the Great Powers which would have for its purpose the establishment of the common tranquility, and the guarantee of possessions by the respective governments. As long as war exists in part, the interests will be divided; as long as a *general concert* does not exist *for the maintenance of [the balance of] power*, nothing can halt the designs of a government [meaning, France] which dominates by disunion. (Sherwig 1962, 286, *emphasis added*)

Grenville's idea of a "concert" meant that the four powers would have to agree among themselves on a territorial rearrangement suitable for enduring peace which would then be imposed on France by either diplomacy or war. The territorial readjustment would require France to return back to her old, pre-1789 frontiers. If she refused and war became inevitable, the quadruple alliance would establish a permanent conference center, where the allied ministers would meet, negotiate and plan the conduct of the military campaign and other matters of common interest as the war developed. Upon victory, the alliance was not to be disbanded but would continue so as to maintain peace and security of Europe by means of a permanent system of territorial guarantees. Although the final settlement was to be worked out among the great powers only, it would be offered to all European nations for ratification. While the concert would eventually include the entire European community, the leadership and responsibility for the maintenance of the peace settlement would remain in the hands of the four powers ((Mackesy 1974, 8; Ehrman 1996, 134; Sherwig 1962, 291 and 1969, 97-98; Jupp 1985, 212). Thus, in 1797 the blueprint for a Concert of Europe was in place, and it was now up to British diplomacy and in particular up to Grenville to see to it that it became the basis for the formation of the Second Coalition.

<u>Grenville's Diplomacy: Negotiations over a European Concert (1797-1799)</u>

Beginning the fall of 1797 and throughout 1798 Britain intensified her diplomatic efforts to form the four-power alliance. However, the outcome of Grenville's diplomacy was not the kind of alliance his own proposals had called for. While his plan called for a concert of the four major powers, his diplomatic strategy almost guaranteed that such a concert would not be easily achieved, if at all. In fact, the conduct of British diplomacy was affected by a number of superfluous factors, including Grenville's own personal prejudices. He flatly refused to enter into direct negotiations with Austria concerning the possibility of any bilateral alliance or the proposed quadruple alliance (although Austria was supposed to be part of it). This contrasted sharply with his excessive courting of Russia and, particularly, of Prussia. Thus, when the war finally came, Austria and Britain fought together, but not as allies. The reasons for Grenville's short-sighted treatment of Austria warrant a more detailed discussion.

<u>Austria</u>. In 1797, Britain viewed Austria as a "treacherous and unreliable ally." This view requires some explanation: after all, unlike Prussia, which had participated as a principal in one military campaign only (at the outset of the war in summer-fall 1792) and defected the First Coalition as soon as her appetite for territorial acquisitions was satiated with two large slices of Poland, and unlike Russia, which, despite her professed animosity to the Revolution, had never fielded an army against her, the Austrians had borne by far the greatest burden in the war by fighting the French continually for almost five years. So, why so much ill-feeling toward Austria?

The answer seems to lie in the shocking impression that the news of Austria's separate peace with France made on the British King and his ministers: as they saw it, not without some justice, Austria signed the peace treaty "not as a vanquished power but in a calculating spirit of gain" (Mackesy, 1974, 9). Thus, she would cooperate with France if only she were offered the *right price* in terms of "compensations" and hence could not be trusted.

The British had another, more specific grumble: they were disappointed with Austria's trading of her Belgian provinces for territorial indemnities in Germany. The protection of the Low Countries had always been a permanent British interest. In fact, in 1793 Britain went to war because of the French conquest of Belgium. In addition, Austria's trading of Belgium for Bavaria not only established the French in the Low Countries but by including in the Austrian indemnity the Archbishopric of Salzburg set in motion the process of secularization of ecclesiastical estates in the Holy Roman Empire. This, in turn, threatened to trigger a large-scale territorial rearrangement in Germany, something the British diplomacy had worked hard to prevent in the previous years.

Last but not least, Grenville's treatment of Austria was informed by his view of her as a defaulting debtor: London and Vienna had been at odds for some time over the repayment of Austria's war loans, and the issue was still unresolved in 1798. Bad as defaulting may be for the image of the debtor in an economy based on credit, it was even worse in this case because it affected Grenville personally, turning him from an Austrophile into an Austrophobe. Since the issue

played such a detrimental role for the British attempts to create a European concert, it is worth some consideration.

The Austrians had been demanding financial assistance from Britain since 1794. Their financial position was so difficult that when in May of that year an Austrian state loan of 3 million pounds was floated on the London money market, only 300,000 pounds had been subscribed. The Austrians then turned to the British Government asking for a guarantee for their loan. Eventually the loan guarantee was included in the budget of 1795 and adopted by Parliament in February of that year. When the Austrians fell behind the repayment schedule, they approached the British Government again asking for advances against a future loan. The Austrian Ambassador in London, Count Starhemberg, assured Grenville that the 1795 loan and fresh advances would be repaid as soon as Austria could float another loan on the London money market. Although the Bank of England advised against the transaction, Grenville personally viewed the Austrian request favorably. His view prevailed in the Cabinet and the Treasury was directed to start making advances to Austria, which eventually totaled 1.62 million pounds.[17] When the British Government requested that the Austrians put their promise to repay the advances from a future loan in a formal statement, Ambassador Starhemberg duly signed a convention to that effect. The Government quickly passed a bill through Parliament adding the advances to the 1797 budget. But then the news arrived from Vienna that the Ambassador's signature under the convention was disowned by Chancellor Thugut. By refusing

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[17] Of this amount, roughly half was sent in the first three months of 1797 before the news reached London in May of the Franco-Austrian peace preliminaries at Leoben.

to ratify the convention, Thugut, in Grenville's words, "obtained money by 'the most objectionable and offensive of all modes: by refusing to ratify a solemn treaty'" (Mackesy 1974, 10-11). Not only was it a financial injury to Britain but it was also a personal insult to Grenville who had championed the Austrian cause in the Cabinet.

The Austrians argued in their defense that their condition was so bad that they simply could not afford any loan repayments, that the loan rate was too high and would prevent Austria from raising further loans on more favorable terms, and that the British should demonstrate good faith by offering more favorable terms since the money was spent fighting the common enemy (Mackesy 1974, 40). But their arguments fell on deaf ears. For the British, it was a simple issue: "Austria had broken its word and was attempting a barefaced swindle" (Schroeder 1987, 252). The Austrians were told that their excuses were "futile and groundless," and that "the full, complete and unqualified performance of this engagement [meaning acknowledging the debt and promising its repayment] is an absolute and indispensable condition of any idea of friendship, union or concert" (quoted in Mackesy 1974, 11).

As mentioned above, Grenville felt personally betrayed by the Austrians. In 1795, he was the chief supporter in the Cabinet of financial aid to Austria (Mori 1997, 218). And the 1797 Act, which included the Austrian advances into the budget, was based on a promise made by Starhemberg to him *personally*. In consequence, in his private letters to the Austrian Ambassador, Grenville did not spare words to convey his indignation by denouncing Austria's "*chicanes*, her

dishonesty and bad faith, her cowardly yielding to her enemies and her firmness only against her friends" and Chancellor Thugut personally. As a historian of the Second Coalition observed, while "[s]uch expressions may have relieved Lord Grenville's feelings; it is not so clear that they promoted harmony" and his idea of a quadruple alliance (Mackesy 1974, 9).

The bickering with Austria over past debts seems remarkably short-sighted and self-defeating, particularly if viewed against the backdrop of the plans to include her in a concert of the four powers. But it is important to bear in mind also that, apart from personal ill-feelings toward Austria and her Chancellor, Grenville's diplomatic strategy was based on the belief that Austria's participation in the alliance could be taken for granted. He was confident that, given Austria's exposed position in Germany and Italy, the French policy of expansion would force her back into the war sooner rather than later. Hence, there was no need to court Austria at all. It was far more important to ensure that when the war came that the other two powers – Prussia and Russia – would be part of it (Mackesy 1974, 11; see also Sherwig 1962, 287 and Jupp 1985, 212).

Prussia. In 1797-99, courting Prussia was the top priority of Britain's foreign policy. Grenville was facing a very difficult task though. The relations between the two countries had been strained even before Prussia's desertion of the First Coalition in April 1795. The Prussian King's commitment to the Coalition had always been halfhearted. He was quick to withdraw his troops from France after the debacle at Valmi in September 1792 and since then had never participated in the war as more than an auxiliary. In fact, the Prussians were

quite good at using their nominal participation in the Coalition to press various demands on their Coalition partners including demands for financial assistance to continue waging war against France although since 1793 the bulk of the Prussian army was transferred and deployed in the newly-acquired Polish provinces. In April 1794, the Prussians secured British subsidies for the continuance of war but held back during the following campaign allowing the French to decisively defeat the Austrians and regain the control of Belgium. In one episode, the British Government sent Malmesbury and Cornwallis to Prussian headquarters to discuss the deployment of the subsidized army, but its commander, Marshal Möllendorff, refused to move his troops without a command from his sovereign, who was at that time in Poland (Mori 1997, 207).

Grenville personally detested Prussian behavior. When in April 1795 Pitt decided to offer another subsidy to Prussia in an attempt to bring her back to active military operations against the French, Grenville refused to sign the letter during a stormy meeting of the Cabinet. In consequence, Pitt had to draft the subsidy offer himself and had it sent under the signature of the war secretary, Henry Dundas (Mori 1997, 218). Ten days later, on April 18, Pitt and Grenville were appalled to hear about the signing of a peace treaty between Prussia and the French delegates at Basle, Switzerland. More than just deserting the Coalition herself, Prussia "had [also] drawn all Germany north of the [River] Main into a system of neutrality which she protected with an army of observation" (Mackesy 1974, 27-28).

Politics selects its facts, however. In 1798, it suited the British to forget Prussia's rapacious and treacherous behavior because London decided that, if, for the new alliance to emerge, Britain needed the cooperation of at least one German power, it would have to be Prussia rather than Austria. One of the reasons for the pro-Prussian bias of the British Government was her geographic position: Prussia could offer more valuable help with British interests in the Low Countries (Schroeder 1987, 261). Securing the liberation of the Low Countries was a major British objective in the war against France, an objective to which Austria had already become indifferent (by agreeing at Campo Formio to trade her Belgian provinces for indemnities in Germany). Thus, winning Prussia's support had become a greater priority for London than Austria's (Sherwig 1969, 101). As King George III wrote to his ministers: "If we do not get Prussia into the business, Russia will hold back and Austria as usual fail us when we least expect it" (cited in Mackesy 1974, 13).

Despite British efforts, Grenville's diplomacy with Prussia failed to produce any results. In January 1798, London received the news of Prussia's rejection of the four-power alliance. Grenville's hopes that the new King, Frederick William III, would take the control of Prussia's foreign policy in his hands and abandon his predecessor's policy of neutrality proved to be unfounded. As the foreign diplomats in Berlin learned quickly,

> [t]he King was a complete cipher, without education or character; a nullity in domestic and foreign policy, and with the military capacity of a colonel, absorbed in the minutiae of uniforms and equipment. ... With a weak monarch, the lack of responsible ministers opened the way to favorites: court intrigues remained the avenue to influence. The result was, as the American Gouverneur Morris had told Lord Grenville, that the Prussian

ministers avoided committing themselves to any great plan for fear that a setback would alienate the King. (Mackesy 1974, 29)

The King's reluctance to break with the policy of his predecessor was reflected in his decision to retain as his foreign minister Count Kurt von Haugwitz, the chief architect of Prussia's neutrality. Haugwitz was distrusted by all ambassadors in Berlin: "'The paltry shuffling, lying fellow who is called Minister for Foreign Affairs at this Court,' a British ambassador [Lord Elgin] called him. 'Less the Minister for Foreign Affairs than a sentry at the door to prevent affairs from entering,' said the French envoy Siéyès; '... he thinks he has won every issue on which he avoids negotiating'" (Mackesy 1974, 29). And yet the King entrusted Haugwitz with response to Grenville's offer of a quadruple alliance in December 1797. In his reply, which reached London in January 1798, Haugwitz stated that neutrality was the only position that would serve Prussia's true interests. Prussia, he stressed, would go to war only if France openly violated the neutrality zone established in north Germany, in which case she would expect Britain to come to her assistance (Sherwig 1969, 98-99).

Prussia's rejection of the offer was based on Berlin's calculations that war with France could prove less profitable than continued neutrality (Sherwig 1962, 284; Schroeder 1987, 260). She was interested in solidifying her recent acquisitions in Poland and her influence in north Germany; any war with France would threaten these gains and consequently, had to be avoided. In addition, Prussia distrusted her proposed alliance partners, particularly Austria. Thus, in 1798 the prospect of an anti-French coalition simply did not meet Prussia's interests (which she defined in very practical terms). Grenville did not abandon

his hopes of bringing Prussia in, however. He expected the Russian Emperor Paul to help mediate between the two German powers and ensure their participation in the Coalition.

The Berlin Conference[18]

Initially, Russia's mediation promised some results. In late March 1798, Austria and Prussia had submitted their claims for indemnities in Germany to Paul I as the guarantor of the Treaty of Teschen; and a conference was arranged in Berlin, at which the Tsar was planning to push Grenville's plan for a four-power alliance. The conference opened in May 1798. Each of the participating powers sent their envoys: Russia was represented by the Tsar's personal envoy, Prince Repnin, who was aided by Russia's ambassador in Berlin, Count Panin; Prussia was represented by her foreign minister, Haugwitz; and the British and Austrian ambassadors in Berlin, Lord Elgin and Prince von Reuss, represented their courts (Mackesy 1974, 30). Unlike the conference diplomacy of 1814-15, which succeeded in creating a concert of great powers, participants in the Berlin Conference, with the exception of Haugwitz, were not the top foreign policy decision-makers of their respective Courts. As a result, the conference setting did not lead to the creation of an atmosphere of trust and familiarity among the decision-makers of the four European powers who for the most part continued to communicate via their representatives and ambassadors. And some negotiations

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[18] The Berlin Conference of 1798 was an important stage in the process of negotiations over the Second Coalition and the European Concert as designed by Grenville. The Conference is unjustifiably overlooked, however, by historians and political scientists writing on the Second Coalition or the Concert of Europe. Mackesy (1974) is the only historian among those whose works I have used who discusses the conference in some detail. Schroeder (1987) only mentions a "special mission to Berlin."

over the proposed quadruple alliance were conducted outside of the framework of the Conference.

Given the circumstances of the conference and the complexity of the issues, stemming from the rivalry between the two German powers, it should not be surprising that the negotiations quickly became deadlocked. Despite France's encroaching behavior in the Low Countries, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy, the Austrians and the Prussians continued to view each other with hostility and suspicion in equal measures. Eventually Prussia decided to stay neutral because of her "antipathy towards Austria and Haugwitz's judgment that neutrality was his best choice" (Jupp 1985, 216). Signaling the fiasco of the Conference, Grenville gave Lord Elgin permission to leave Berlin on 19 July to come home for health reasons, leaving the mission in the hands of the Secretary. "The negotiations in their present form were bankrupt" (Mackesy 1974, 32).

The French viewed the lack of progress at the Berlin conference with satisfaction. In July, foreign minister Talleyrand reportedly boasted: "We have given up fearing coalitions: there is a principle of hatred, jealousy and distrust between the Cabinets of Berlin and Vienna which will guide them above else" (Mackesy 1974, 32). His assessment of the situation was accurate: in the end, neither Grenville's nor the Tsar's diplomacy was able to overcome the enmity between the two German powers.

It is also important to note that the mutual distrust and suspicion of Prussia and Austria was not completely unfounded or irrational. At the time when the two powers were engaged in the alliance talks in Berlin, they were also

involved in separate discussions with France. In May 1798, Haugwitz was negotiating with the French envoy, Siéyès, who was sent to Berlin by the Directory to buy off the Prussians.[19] But he lacked the nerve to choose between the two options and eventually took refuge in neutrality (Mackesy 1974, 30-31). At the same time, the Austrians were negotiating with the French at Seltz. The formal pretext for the Franco-Austrian conference was the attack on the French Embassy in Vienna on 15 April. The Viennese mob tore down the tricolor that French Ambassador General Bernadotte flew from his embassy and sacked the building while the police stood by. When the French Government demanded explanations, Chancellor Thugut took the opportunity to sound out the French with regard to possible extension of the Austrian holdings in Italy as a compensation for the left bank of the Rhine, which France obtained at the Congress at Rastatt in March. Count Cobenzl, one of the Austrian negotiators at Campo Formio, was sent to Seltz to negotiate with a member of the Directory, François de Neufchâteau. It was not until the end of the conference at Seltz on 6 July that the Austrians gave up hopes of another bargain with France (Mackesy 1974, 31). "Rebuffed by Neufchâteau, Cobenzl left the conference convinced that war was now unavoidable" (Blanning 1986, 192).

Austria's behavior in this period seems particularly contradictory. As recently as April, the Austrian Ambassador in London, Starhemberg, delivered a dispatch to Grenville from Thugut, in which the Austrian Chancellor expressed

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[19] Siéyès' mission was strongly supported by the King's great-uncle Prince Henry, who saw Britain and Austria as Prussia's true enemies. He argued that Prussia would obtain better terms from France than from the proposed quadruple alliance: "If war comes, Prussia will need a point of support, and only France can provide it" (Mackesy 1974, 30).

his doubts concerning the possibility of a lasting peace with France. Vienna believed that the only policy choice was resistance, and that Britain and Austria should form an alliance and appeal for help to Prussia and Russia (Mackesy 1974, 12). Thugut thus seemed ready to support a union of major powers, although during the interview with Grenville his envoy repeatedly inquired if Britain would be willing to drop Prussia from the proposed alliance in order to ensure Austria's whole-hearted participation (Mackesy 1974, 12-13; Sherwig 1969, 101). And yet a few weeks later, at the conference in Berlin, Austria showed little willingness to patch up her differences with Prussia and seized the first opportunity to open separate discussions with France.

Part of the explanation for Austria's contradictory behavior actually lies in Grenville's diplomacy, which was not always based on what was best for the Coalition. When Thugut's offer arrived in April, Grenville took a full three weeks to reply. The answer, which finally reached Vienna in May, stressed the need for a four-power alliance and the benefits of having Prussia in, rather than leaving her out, and suggested that the right venue for discussion of Austria's concerns was the coming conference in Berlin, where the Russian Tsar would work to mediate the differences between the two German powers. But the letter also stressed that no new Anglo-Austrian connection would be formed until Austria proved her good faith by ratifying the loan convention. Moreover, in the future, Britain could offer subsidies, not loans, and even these would be given only after the actual fighting began.[20] While Grenville had political reasons for his inflexibility

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[20] Thugut, on the other hand, wanted loans and not subsidies because the latter would put Austria's military operations under British general supervision.

(Parliament could hardly be expected to approve any new money to Austria until she properly acknowledged her past debts), "his insistence on [the loan] ratification would mean that though Britain and Austria would [ultimately] fight the same enemy, they would not fight as allies" (Mackesy 1974, 13-14; also Sherwig 1969, 102). The only link between the two powers in the coming war was the Russian Emperor.

Russia. By 1798, Grenville had come to believe that no European concert would be possible without Russia's participation. His views were now shared by many others. It was stressed, for example, that Russia and Britain had the same interests with regard to continental Europe meaning that, unlike Austria and Prussia, neither power had an interest in territorial acquisitions in central and western Europe. This commonality of interests had been "marked by nature," as the British Ambassador in St-Petersburg, Charles Whitworth, put it in a letter to Grenville of 19 April 1799. Besides, Russia's support for a quadruple alliance of powers would be a strong incentive for both German powers to join (Sherwig 1969, 100).

At the same time Russia was an awkward ally for Britain (because of their recent enmity over Russian designs on Poland and Turkey) and the Russian Emperor Paul I was personally an unpredictable ally for Grenville.[21] By 1798, the

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[21] The one asset that Grenville had to deal with Paul's unpredictability was his personal friendship with the Russian Ambassador in London, Count Simon Vorontsov (Mackesy 1974, 34). Unlike the Austrian envoy, Starhemberg, Vorontsov, a known Anglophile, was trusted and liked in London. Grenville had established friendly ties with Vorontsov after the Ochakov affair, in which his brother, Thomas Grenville, had had a hand in the anti-war agitation. Grenville himself was against any military action against Russia over Ochakov, which must have marked the basis of his friendly relations with the Russian Ambassador (Mackesy, 1974, 34). On numerous occasions, the Russian Ambassador

Polish issue had largely died down,[22] but the British, first and foremost Pitt, continued to be concerned and jealous of Russia's advances vis-à-vis Ottoman Turkey and her presence in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the Mediterranean, Britain was particularly disturbed by Russia's designs on Malta where, in the aftermath of the Treaty of Campo Formio, Paul declared himself to be the protector of the Maltese Order (Mackesy 1974, 33).

In the late 1797 and early 1798, upon Grenville's instructions, Ambassador Whitworth at St. Petersburg extended the first offer of a quadruple alliance to the Tsar. As mentioned earlier, the British efforts to form a new coalition included Grenville's request that the Tsar should mediate between the two German powers over their disputes in Germany and help London improve its relations with Austria by getting her to ratify the loan convention (Mackesy 1974, 32).

When Russia's mediation at the Berlin conference did not produce any result, Grenville expected the Tsar to come up with some new initiative to reconcile the German powers. Instead, upon hearing news at the end of July that the Austrians had broken off their conference with the French at Seltz and that the French expedition under the command of General Bonaparte seized Malta, Paul decided to enter the war without securing the four-power alliance and the aid of Prussia. An auxiliary corps was ordered to march to Galicia to support Austria under the existing treaty between her and Russia. A 60,000-strong army

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would play a role independent of the Court he represented, trying to promote a mutual understanding between London and St. Petersburg (see Mackesy 1974).

[22] When the Opposition raised the subject of Poland in Parliament, "Grenville replied that the partitions were not the work of the present Tsar, and asked whether it would promote anyone's happiness to restore Russia's share of Poland" (Mackesy 1974, 32-33).

was deployed along the River Dniester, ready to cross the frontier if the Turks asked for help against a French attack on Albania or northern Greece. Finally, Admiral Ushakov's fleet in Sevastopol was sent to cruise off Constantinople, ready to enter the Mediterranean if the Turks permitted it to pass the Black Sea Straits.[23]

The most important decision by Paul was, however, a request for British subsidies which would allow him to send an army of 60,000 to fight on the Rhine, should Austria enter the war against France. With this request for subsidies and the offer of troops "Paul departed from the search of a close-knit general [meaning, quadruple] concert," and started seeking a more pragmatic arrangement: a triple alliance between Russia, Britain, and Austria. The change was not limited to the *structure* of the anti-French coalition only. "A vital object of the scheme for a general concert had been to reconcile the separate aims of the four allies. That was no longer mentioned: only the general aim, 'the re-establishment of the general tranquility … and not the restoration of the French monarchy,'" as the British Ambassador Whitworth was reporting on Paul's offer in dispatches from St. Petersburg of July 6 and 24 (Mackesy 1974, 35).

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[23] At that time, the destination of Bonaparte's expedition was not known and Paul was receiving alarming reports from his envoys in Berlin and Vienna that the French expedition was destined for Albania or northern Greece. There, the French were expected to join forces with the rebellious Pasha of Vidin, Pasvan Oglu, who wanted to take revenge for the Turkish defeat in the recent Russo-Turkish war, and march on Bessarabia, where they would link with Polish émigré forces assembled there. The next step would be, of course, an invasion of Russia's Polish provinces supported by a general uprising of Polish nationalists (Blanning, 1986, 191).

As mentioned earlier, from the British perspective, an Anglo-Russian alliance would not be of great value unless one of the two German powers participated in it. Now that Austria was the only choice left, the Tsar would have to mediate between Vienna and London. Grenville still wanted the Tsar to persuade Thugut to ratify the loan convention. Without this Britain would not support Austria even indirectly by subsidizing a Russian army to be sent to fight alongside the Austrians on the Rhine (Mackesy 1974, 38-39; see also Sherwig 1969, 105-06). In fact, the Cabinet resolved at its meeting on 19 August that should the Austrians refuse to cooperate with the loan convention, British subsidy to Russia could be used for a joint Anglo-Russian seaborne invasion of Holland. But this decision was kept in secret even from the Russians so as not to alarm the French. It was a difficult task to explain to the Tsar (without revealing the proposal for an Anglo-Russian invasion of Holland) why the duplicity of Austria should preclude Britain from giving a subsidy to Russia to allow her to fight the Revolution on the Rhine. It was accomplished only thanks to close cooperation between Grenville and the Russian Ambassador Vorontsov. The latter even submitted to Grenville the draft of his dispatch for St. Petersburg for amendments. As Grenville explained to Vorontsov, and Vorontsov to the Tsar, a settlement of the loan question was absolutely necessary because without it no parliamentary approval could be obtained for any aid for Austria (Mackesy 1974, 39-40).

Thus, "[a]t the end of August Lord Grenville's dream of a close-knit and irresistible coalition had come to little. England and Russia failed to reconcile the two German powers; Austria had not ratified her loan agreement with England

and so remained disqualified for British aid; and even if the subsidy were transferred to Russia, it was not to be used for helping the Austrians unless they ratified the loan. If they did not, England's only contribution to a continental war might be to bring a Russian army to England and launch a sea-borne invasion of Holland," but that prospect was still far off owing to disagreements in the Cabinet and it had not yet been even mentioned to the Russians (Mackesy 1974, 41). The only thing that Grenville could do was to wait on events to resolve the deadlocked quest for a coalition. And soon these events arrived.

Aboukir and the first false start in fall 1798. When Bonaparte's expedition disembarked in Alexandria, Egypt, at the end of July 1798, it accomplished a remarkable feat in European politics: it brought Ottoman Turkey into an alliance with its arch-enemy, Russia, against its traditional ally, France. But the Russo-Turkish alliance swung into operation only after the news reached Constantinople that on 1 August the French Mediterranean fleet had been destroyed by Admiral Nelson at Aboukir Bay and Bonaparte's army was bottled up in Egypt. On 9 September, the Ottomans declared war on France and the Russian Black Sea fleet, which had been cruising off Constantinople for some time, was allowed to pass the Straits into the Mediterranean. Already on 5 October the first Ionian Island (Cerigo) fell to a joint Russo-Turkish assault.

Although Nelson fought his battle at Aboukir Bay on 1 August, it was not until the end of September that the news of his victory and of the Turkish decision to allow the passage of the Russian fleet through the Straits reached

London.[24] Upon it, the British Government decided to pursue a new coalition policy: "to forget the Prussians, rely on events to force the Austrians into the war, and subsidize the Russians in a bilateral alliance either to assist the Austrians or supply an army for British uses" (Mackesy 1974, 44). But at the very moment Grenville was drafting his offer of subsidy to the Tsar, news came from St. Petersburg that shattered this policy: Paul was now persuaded by the Austrian Ambassador, Count Cobenzl (who returned to his diplomatic post at St. Petersburg after the conference with the French at Seltz had ended), that the Austrians were sincere about entering the war and were only waiting to know what aid Britain could offer them before ratifying the wretched loan convention. Consequently, the Russian Emperor decided instead of settling for a bilateral alliance with Britain to revive the pursuit of a four-power coalition: his envoy in Berlin, Count Panin, would work with the Austrian envoy to bridge the differences between Austria and Prussia, and in London Count Vorontsov would work with the Austrian Ambassador Starhemberg to settle the loan dispute to mutual satisfaction of Austria and Britain.

Paul's offer was supported by King George III and some members of the Cabinet including Lord Chancellor Loughborough, who thought that the issue of the Austrian loan should not be allowed to stay in the way of this great opportunity to form a four-power concert: "[W]e should be nearly as much in the

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[24] The Second Coalition is marked by the fact that major events on the ground developed faster than the news of them would reach the European Courts, which negatively affected the ability of governments of the Second Coalition to take timely decisions. In this particular instance, the dispatches, which arrived from Vienna and Constantinople on 26 September,  made it certain that a successful naval engagement had taken place on 1 August. Nelson's own dispatch arrived on 2 October (Mackesy 1974, 42.)

wrong as Austria were to persevere [in insisting on the ratification of the loan convention by Austria] at the risk of defeating the greatest combination of force that ever could have been formed against the enemy," wrote the Lord Chancellor. Pitt and Grenville continued to insist, however, that the Austrians could not be trusted and should ratify the loan convention before any negotiations could start on a new subsidy to Vienna (Mackesy 1974, 45-46).[25]

At this point, the Russian Ambassador in London offered a solution that might have broken the deadlock: instead of entering the war as an auxiliary, Emperor Paul I should enter it as a principal by declaring war on France and request the cooperation of Austria. If Austria decided to cooperate, Paul could field a 60,000-strong army subsidized by Britain to fight alongside the Austrian troops on the Rhine; if not, the troops would be offered to Prussia. But even before this plan was presented to Paul, a letter arrived on 19 October from Ambassador Whitworth in St. Petersburg informing Grenville that Russia would not take any subsidy from Britain if Austria did not get paid as well.

At receiving the news from St. Petersburg, Grenville became desperate regarding the concert negotiations and decided to abandon them and wait on events. It seemed as though Britain had tried everything she had tried to establish a grand alliance of the four powers, and failed because of the continued

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[25] It is important to stress that the war effort was having a heavy toll on the British domestically. For example, to subsidize the continental war Pitt, as the finance minister, was planning to propose in the Commons as part of his 1799 budget a revolutionary measure: an income tax. It was particularly important for the Government to persuade the House that it would use the public money wisely. In these circumstances, recovering the Austrian subsidies had acquired a new importance for the British government which cannot be trivialized.

antagonism between Prussia and Austria, Prussia's calculation that neutrality was preferable to war, and the loan dispute between herself and Austria. She had tried to establish a three-power alliance with Austria and Russia and again failed because Austria continued to refuse to ratify the loan convention. Finally, Grenville had attempted to establish a two-power alliance with Russia, and once again failed as he had been outmaneuvered by Cobenzl: and the Tsar would not hear of any British subsidy if Austria had not been offered one (Mackesy 1974, 46-47).

Prussia, the Neapolitan attack and the second false start in December 1798. At the time Grenville decided to abandon the search for an alliance, news came from Berlin of an inquiry made by the Prussian foreign minister Haugwitz in a private meeting with the Russian ambassador Panin as to the possibility of a British subsidy for a Prussian invasion of Holland. The news reached Grenville on 2 November through Vorontsov, who in turn had received it from Panin.[26]

Grenville's initial reaction to the communication from Berlin was also skeptical. It looked like Prussia "was playing the Austrian game of seeking a promise of money before she would negotiate" (Mackesy 1974, 48). But his skepticism began to melt as the news of events elsewhere started reaching London in November-December. First came the news of an open revolt in Belgium against the French plans to introduce conscription. As a consequence, the French moved their troops from Holland to quell the revolt leaving only a small number behind. Thus, it looked as if the Low Countries were ripe for an

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[26] Panin, who was skeptical about the proposal, decided to ask his colleague in London first before he would report it to the Tsar.

intervention, which would be backed by a widespread popular revolt against the French. Then, on 10 November came a dispatch from the British ambassador in Vienna, Morton Eden, that France and Austria were nearing war because of the French encroachment on the canton of Grison, the easternmost Swiss canton which refused to be incorporated into the Helvetian Republic (Mackesy 1974, 48-49). The Austrians had already communicated to the Russians their plan of campaign, according to which the main Russo-Austrian offensive would be in Switzerland and from there to launch an invasion of south-eastern France (Blanning 1986, 193).

On 16 November the Cabinet decided to reopen the halted negotiations for a general concert. The first item on Britain's diplomatic agenda was again the daunting task of reconciling the two German powers and bringing them into the proposed alliance. Their rivalry aside, the problem was the deep lack of trust between them. Prussia feared that Austria could avoid war by striking another eleventh hour bargain with France and leave her in the field alone to see the full wrath of the revolutionary armies; consequently, she would not move until Austria was already in the war. Austria in turn feared that Prussia could be bought off by the French and stay neutral or, worse still, use the opportunity to stab her in the back.

Since Britain had no ambassador in Berlin since August (recall that Lord Elgin had obtained a leave in August and was back in Britain), the Cabinet chose Grenville's brother, Thomas, for a special mission to Berlin to revive the idea of the concert. Thomas Grenville was to persuade the Prussians that Austria would

soon be in the war, whether she wanted it or not and that the time was right for Prussia to join the proposed concert. He also had to obtain agreement of both German powers on the overriding political objective of the coalition, namely, to reduce France to her old frontiers as an essential condition for peace and tranquility of Europe. Not all old governments would have to be restored (e.g., Belgium and Venice), nor would allies seek the restoration of the Bourbons (which could alienate Austria). In fact, legitimism was not essential to the key goal of the concert – France could choose to remain a republic, but a republic within its "ancient limits."[27] The concert of powers would permanently guarantee the stability of the peace settlement.

Before Thomas Grenville set out for Berlin on 18 December, news arrived of an attack on the French army in Rome launched by King Ferdinand IV of Naples. The King had expected a French invasion of Naples and apparently decided to launch a preventive attack. He was reportedly beaten back but it was good news for British diplomacy anyway because Naples (or the Kingdom of Two Sicilies) had a treaty with Austria and, hence, the hostilities between Naples and

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[27] The fact that the restoration of monarchy in France was not a British goal in the Second Coalition is attested to not only in the diplomatic correspondence but also in public pronouncements of the Government. In the Commons debate of 7 June 1799, Pitt said: "Whatever I may in the abstract think of the kind of government called a republic, whatever may be its fitness to the nations where it prevails, *there may be times when it would not be dangerous to exist in its vicinity*. But while the spirit of France remains what at present it is, [...] if its power to do wrong at all remain, there does not exist any security for this country or for Europe. ... Our simple object is security, just security, with a little admixture of indemnification" (quoted in Derry 1962, 117, emphasis added).

France seemed to make war between Austria and France an almost foregone conclusion.[28]

Thomas Grenville's trip to Berlin illustrates the difficulties of communication at that time which often had far-reaching consequences for British diplomacy. He was in Yarmouth on 18 December and sailed aboard the frigate *Champion* with the first fair wind on 21 December. The River Elbe was frozen, however, and the *Champion* was forced to turn home. On December 29, Thomas Grenville returned to London. For the next three weeks he and his brother were pondering over the situation as there was no mail from Germany (as the packet boats could not navigate the frozen Elbe) (Mackesy 1974, 54).

Finally, on 19 January 1799, three packet boats arrived, and the Foreign Office was flooded with dispatches from every capital. The news from Vienna was disappointing: the Austrian Chancellor Thugut decided to refuse any aid to the Neapolitans on the grounds that their treaty with Austria was defensive whereas they had committed an act of aggression. Thugut also suspected that the Neapolitan attack was orchestrated by the British Government in order to drag Austria into the war. Thus, Austria refused to be dragged into the war despite the professions of her ambassadors in St. Petersburg and London (ibid.). Grenville's reaction to the news was outrage: "If he [Thugut] were paid to thwart all our measures and to favor those of France, he could not do it more effectually" (Hague 2005, 377).

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[28] In addition, King Ferdinand's wife, Queen Maria Carolina, was a sister of the late Marie Antoinette and an aunt of Austrian Emperor Francis.

The news from St. Petersburg was encouraging. Upon hearing about the Austrians' failure to come to the aid of King Ferdinand, the indignant Tsar decided that he would renew his application for a British subsidy, which he had withdrawn in the interest of Austria, and enter the war as a principal by sending 8,000 troops to the aid of Naples and fielding another 45,000 to support the Prussian-led campaign in Holland. The British ambassador then signed a subsidy treaty with the Tsar on 29 December. Finally Britain had an ally with an army (Mackesy 1974, 57-58). Combined with a communication from Berlin confirming the readiness of King Frederick William III to launch a campaign with Russia and Britain against the French in Holland even in the absence of Austrian support, the Russian subsidy treaty seemed to open the way for a three-power alliance. Another bit of news from St. Petersburg caused some concern to Grenville: on 29 November, the Tsar proclaimed himself as the Grand Master of the Maltese Order. Russian presence in the Mediterranean was always a cause of anxiety for the British but the issue was downplayed by Grenville since at present Malta was still occupied by a French garrison.

New instructions were drafted for Thomas Grenville's mission to Berlin. Having committed another perfidy, the Austrians were now totally excluded from any consideration of aid. The Prussians were offered a subsidy for the liberation of Holland and were also to accept the offer of Russian military aid (Mackesy 1974, 61-62). With these instructions, Thomas Grenville sailed from Yarmouth on 27 January and arrived at Berlin on 17 February.

Thomas's Grenville's voyage to the Continent, which Castlereagh would repeat fourteen years later, was meant to help overcome a recurring problem in coalition building: the mishaps, miscommunications, delays and forgone opportunities caused by the lack of geographic proximity among the European decision-makers:

> Here he was at the diplomatic crossroads of Europe. To Berlin the couriers coming in through Cuxhaven for Vienna and Petersburg brought their dispatches under flying seal for Tom to read, and thus informed he could regard himself as an advanced post of the Foreign Office, *reducing the delays which geography imposed on the Coalition's diplomacy*. (Mackesy 1974, 63, *emphasis added*)

In his very first dispatch from Berlin, Thomas Grenville dampened the hopes of his brother for a three-power coalition: the Prussian foreign minister Haugwitz was now full of doubts and when pressed for detailed campaign plans spoke of preparations for a vigorous defense. But without a firm assurance that Prussia would enter the war by going on the offensive in Holland, Grenville could not discuss any British subsidy. Things with the Prussians cleared up soon, however. On 6 March, despite the news of an impending confrontation between Austria and France (to be discussed later), the Prussian minister Count von Finckenstein communicated to the Russian ambassador Panin that "[t]he King rejected an offensive war, and would confine himself to preserving the peace of northern Germany as long as possible. But he would be happy to form a defensive concert with Britain and Russia for the security of northern Germany and the Empire, and in certain circumstances would not hesitate to change from the defensive to the offensive." When pressed by Thomas Grenville and Panin about precise circumstances in which Prussia might go on the offensive, Finckenstein

replied a week later that it could only happen in the event of a French attack. Otherwise, Prussia would remain neutral in the struggle (Mackesy 1974, 65). Thus, Thomas Grenville's mission to Berlin was dead.[29]

The Outbreak of the War

The general war that had loomed in Europe since 1797 finally broke out in March 1799. Strictly speaking, the Second Coalition had yet to be formed by the time the war broke out (Sherwig 1969, 113). Contrary to Grenville's expectations in December 1797 - January 1798, the war on the continent started as a war between Austria and France. In fact, the Austrians were forced over the edge by a push and pull coming from Russia and France. Paul, who after declaring himself the Grand Master of the Maltese order in November 1798, was now paying more attention to the Mediterranean and Italy than to Germany. He intended to recapture Malta and restore in Italy the old-regime frontiers: the French would be excluded altogether and the Austrian influence would be limited to the north. An alliance was concluded between Russia and Naples and an auxiliary corps stationed on the Dniester was ordered to cross the Austrian border and march to Italy with all possible dispatch; admiral Ushakov's fleet was sent from the Ionian Islands to Naples. The French occupation of Piedmont in November leading to the abdication of the King of Sardinia and the subsequent defeat of the King of

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[29] It is not quite clear if Grenville was realistic in his hopes of Prussian action. A contrasting opinion of Prussia was offered by a veteran diplomat, Lord Malmesbury, in December 1798, at the time Thomas Grenville was sent to Berlin. He called the proposed mission "a fool's errand which could only encourage our enemies. At best, said Malmesbury, it could only bring Prussia's sword half out of the scabbard, for that is as far (I will venture to affirm) as it will ever be drawn" (Mackesy 1974, 62). This is yet another piece of evidence that Grenville must have suffered from some kind of cognitive closure regarding certain issues. This state of his mind and his personality had a detrimental affect on the outcome of the Second Coalition.

Naples and the occupation of Naples in December made Paul take a very tough line against the Austrians. On 31 December 1798, his ambassador in Vienna, Prince Andrei Razumovsky, told Thugut in no uncertain terms that the Russian auxiliary corps (quartered at Brünn) would be withdrawn if the Austrians did not stop wavering. Three days later, on 2 January, the French, who had long been taking an interest in the presence of Russian troops within Austrian borders, issued an ultimatum to Austria to expel them or face war. Afraid of being left completely alone vis-à-vis the French, Emperor Francis and Thugut ordered the Archduke Charles to prepare the armies for a spring offensive. Thugut was determined, however, to make the French seem the aggressors. In February, the Directory ordered her armies to start crossing the Rhine. The formal declarations of war were issued by both powers on 11 and 12 March, respectively. The war of the Second Coalition began.

When the news of war between Austria and France reached London, Britain found herself in a "curious diplomatic position, curiously constructed."

> She was bound by a [subsidy treaty with Russia] to deploy 45,000 Russian troops in the orbit of Prussia, who refused to take part in the war, and she promised no aid to Austria, who was now doing the fighting. … Lord Grenville had sought a quadruple alliance: there was not even a triple alliance of the major allies when war began. Britain was allied to Russia, and Russia to Austria, but there was no treaty between Austria and Britain. The hinge of the Coalition was therefore the Tsar, the only channel through whom Britain would aid or could influence the Austrian effort. And the Tsar was so unstable that Britain was more likely to bend her own military planning to his whims than to use him to influence Austria. (Mackesy 1974, 67)

## The Military Campaigns and the Collapse of the Second Coalition

Since there was no agreement among the Coalition members on the war aims, it was not surprising that the beginning of the military campaign led to the further deterioration of relations between the allies. Although the Austrian Emperor asked the Tsar that Russian Field Marshall Suvorov be appointed commander-in-chief of the allied forces, Russo-Austrian relations began to cool off almost immediately after the beginning of the military campaign in March 1799. Suvorov and other Russian generals repeatedly complained about inadequate Austrian support (Schroeder 1987, 267). On the other hand, the Austrians were complaining that the Russian Field Marshall was interfering with political decisions, for example, by asking the King of Sardinia to return from exile after the liberation of Piedmont and take back his country. The decisive moment came in July 1799, when the Austrian army abruptly left Switzerland and moved to the mid-Rhine, leaving the Russian corps in Switzerland under the command of General Korsakov in a very difficult position. Suvorov had to rush to his rescue through St. Gotthard pass and eventually the Russians escaped the disaster although they were severely mauled by the French. The episode left Paul estranged from Austria (Schroeder 1987, 253-59).[30]

In Paul's view, Russia's participation in the war was aimed at reestablishing *tranquility* in Europe and did not pursue any selfish interests. As the military campaigns went underway, Paul felt that Russia's "unselfish" efforts

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[30] In addition, Paul was personally offended by the harsh treatment that Grand-Duchess Alexandra, his eldest daughter who was married to Archduke Joseph, Prince Palatine of Hungary, received from the wife of Emperor Francis (Czartoryski 1971, 215).

were being used by Austria and England to further their private ends: Austria had her interests in Switzerland and Italy and Great Britain in Malta (Frederiksen 1943, 11; see also Sorel, VI, 73 quoted in Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 64). On 22 October 1799, the Russian Emperor announced his withdrawal from the Second Coalition. A year later, in 1801, Paul broke off relations with Austria, declared war against England and prepared to enter into a "cordial alliance" with the then First Consul of France, Bonaparte.

Now Paul had a different view of Russia's interests, which centered on advancing in the south against Ottoman Turkey, and France could actually become an ally in that endeavor rather than an adversary.[31] Austria and Prussia would be compensated by new territories and a new continental system could be established aimed against "perfidious England" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 63-64). As the Tsar would write in his instructions to General Sprengporten, who was sent to Paris to negotiate with First Consul Bonaparte the release and return of Russian prisoners of war:

> [A]s the two states of France and of the Empire of Russia are not in a position, owing to the distance [separating them], to do each other any harm, they could by uniting and maintaining harmonious relations between themselves, hinder the other powers from adversely affecting their interests through their envy or desire to aggrandize and dominate. (Sorel, VI, 73, cited in Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 64)

Paul's bitter sentiments towards his former allies and readiness to switch sides were easily detected and used by Bonaparte (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 64). Realizing the magnitude of change in Paul's policy, the First Consul took a number of friendly steps towards Russia, including releasing Russian prisoners of

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[31] This same definition of Russia's interests would reemerge in Russo-French relations in 1807 with the treaty of Tilsit between Alexander I and Napoleon.

war. For Bonaparte, there was no reason why Russia should not have come to an understanding with him (Czartoryski 1971, 217).

For all practical purposes, Russia's withdrawal from the Coalition meant its end. At first, it forced Britain to come to terms with Austria (Sherwig 1962, 291). Because of Britain's earlier diplomatic miscalculations, when Austria had no direct ties with Britain and consequently had no legal obligations vis-à-vis London and could seek a separate peace with France (Schroeder 1987, 257). The British effort to secure Austria came too late, though. Following her humiliating defeats in June 1800 in Italy at Marengo and in December that same year in Germany at Hohenlinden, Austria signed another separate peace treaty with France in Lüneville in 1801. Eventually, Britain herself had to conclude a peace treaty at Amiens in 1802. The war of the Second Coalition came to an end.

Conclusions

By 1797 the British Government had begun to draw important lessons from the experience of the First Coalition and the causes of its collapse. Among the main weaknesses of the First Coalition identified by Britain's foreign secretary Grenville were the absence of agreement among the allies over the political or strategic goals in the war and the lack of any shared understanding over the terms of the post-war settlement. To redress these defects, Grenville formulated a set of new proposals which were to serve as the basis for the formation of the Second Coalition. Grenville's plan called for the establishment of a concert of four great powers based on the following provisions: the Coalition members were to work out a common final settlement which they would impose on France by

diplomacy or war. The great power alliance was to be the primary guarantor of the final settlement, and for that reason had to be kept intact after the military victory to manage the peace.

When the Coalition came into existence, it turned out to be quite the opposite of what Grenville's proposals had called for: in fact, the Coalition was made of a set of disjointed agreements. There was no general treaty tying all member states to common war and peace-time objectives. There was no agreement among the members on the military strategy or the political objectives of the war against France.

It also was not a coalition of all four powers. Only three powers – Britain, Austria and Russia – ultimately went to war with France (Sherwig 1962, 291). Prussia never joined, preferring to remain neutral throughout the military campaigns of 1799-1800. There was, however, not even a triple alliance as no general treaty united the powers fighting France: Britain was allied to Russia, and Russia was allied to Austria, and there was no treaty between Austria and Britain. The Russian Emperor was the only channel of communication between Britain and Austria, a channel that was very unstable (Mackesy 1974, 67).

The allies failed to work out any common political objectives in the war against France. Each of them was fighting for her own set of reasons and interests. Russia's participation in the war was motivated by numerous factors, including the Tsar's "genuine horror of the French Revolution, a desire to defend smaller states against greedy great powers, a belief in the importance of moral principles in politics, and the desire to restore the European balance as he and

other Russians understood it" (Schroeder 1987, 259). As a result, Russia's policy would be driven by such concrete issues as the control of Malta, and such general issues as the restoration of the *tranquility of Europe* and struggle to contain Jacobinism.

Unlike Paul's aims, which included an *ideological* aspect, Austria's aims in the Second Coalition were not ideological. Austria went to war against France in 1799 for broad *reasons of state security* and *vital interests* (Schroeder 1987, 258).

> [Austria] would not fight for the Bourbons, whom the Austrians distrusted, but would pursue limited aims of her own, [and try to] turn local military success to immediate account. This was the warfare of the ancient regime, war of limited territorial aims, of bargains and compromises. (Mackesy 1974, 70)

While being directly threatened by France, Austria had another major concern of equal importance: her historic position in Germany and her continued rivalry with Prussia over the issue. For Austria, it was the rivalry between the Hapsburg dynasty and Prussia over the role of the Hapsburgs in the Holy Roman Empire that had an *ideological* dimension. In 1798, "the greatest fear of Thugut [...] was that the [Holy Roman] Empire, and with it Austria's historic German position, would expire in a scramble for compensations and secularizations promoted by France, Prussia, and various lesser German estates" (Schroeder 1987, 248). Such a development would lead to the rise of Prussia's influence in north Germany and France in the west and southwest (ibid).

Austria's fear of the rise of Prussian power in Germany drove her into an alliance with Russia, although Austria was fearful of many aspects of Russia's

policy too (Schroeder 1987, 247-248). Austria tried to break out of this encirclement by appealing to Britain with requests for direct alliance, which would allow her to resist the threats posed by France and Prussia without having to rely too heavily on Russia's assistance. However, Britain's refusal to establish any direct alliance with Austria convinced Vienna that Grenville's grand strategy was nothing less than a case of Anglo-Russian imperialism and "Anglo-Russian condominium in Europe" (Schroeder 1987, 282).

Britain's own interests were based on considerations of the balance of power: Britain was fighting to restore the balance of power on the continent by pushing France back to her pre-revolutionary boundaries. The British strategy for achieving that goal would change over time as the British statesmen learned more about the nature of the Revolution in France. It did not initially involve any plans for a change of the political regime in France. However, gradually Grenville came to accept the *strategy of overthrow*. This had nothing to do with any rejection of revolutionary ideas and Jacobinism *per se*. But Grenville came to believe that the republican form of government in a country such as France was the real root of expansionism. "A stable peace for Europe required a stable regime in Paris: expressed as a war aim, it meant the overthrow of the enemy government" (Mackesy 1974, 5).[32] As a result, for Grenville the war of the Second Coalition was not a limited war. It was not an ideological crusade, either. "He wanted to restore

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[32] It should be noted that in 1799 and 1800, after Bonaparte became the First Consul, this view of British war objectives was under attack from Dundas, the British Secretary of State for War. Dundas would openly remind Grenville that the war was not about the overthrow of French republicanism but about power and wealth. "It was a war of limited and qualified aims, which could one day be resolved by a peace of compromise with the existing government of France" (Mackesy 1984, 38).

the monarchy in France because it was the form of government most likely to promote international stability" (Mackesy 1974, 69). It was also obvious that these were not the aims of either of the two German states (Mackesy 1974, 69).

Militarily, the Second Coalition fared no better than the First Coalition. In many ways, the military failure of the Coalition was a direct outcome of the political discord among the allies. "In the absence of agreed Coalition aims, the major allies would allow their divergent political aims to distort the planning of their strategy and disrupt its execution" (Mackesy 1974, 70).

In 1797-1799 Grenville designed an innovative institutional formula for success in the war against France: a *concert* of great powers with a commonality of aims in war and peace that would not be disbanded but would be preserved after the end of the war. But a successful concert could only be created if its objectives were unanimously accepted by all the four powers, and Grenville's diplomacy failed to work out any common objectives or strategies acceptable to *all* the members of the Coalition. British diplomacy of the period was never adjusted to make sure that the declared goals would be reached. Grenville's plan was neither anchored in the realities of the present, nor was British diplomacy flexible enough to accommodate legitimate concerns and interests that other European states would have.

### Grenville's Personality: an Intellectual Leader Lacking Entrepreneurial Skills

A major part of the responsibility for the failure of the Second Coalition lies with Lord Grenville as a diplomat and an entrepreneurial leader. While Grenville should be credited for his intellectual leadership in working out the earliest blueprint for a European concert, due to a set of personality characteristics, his diplomacy failed to see the plan through.[33] On the one hand, Grenville was a "statesman of European vision" (Mackesy 1974, 4-5). On the other, he lacked in the qualities of a diplomat to carry his plan through. Contemporaries noted that his manners were offensive to his peers and subordinates. Many believed that Grenville had no regard or any feelings for anyone else. As Lord Liverpool once described him, Grenville was a most extraordinary character: "For with all his talents and industry, he could never see a subject in all its bearings – and consequently, his judgment can never be right'" (Mackesy 1974, 6). His mannerisms were outright offensive, and he had not learned to put his personal sentiments aside for the sake of a common political good.

By way of example, in April 1798, Austria seemed ready to enter the war against France with a number of conditions. Instead of exploring this opportunity, Grenville allowed his personal hurt feelings and mannerisms to dictate Britain's response. His replies to the Austrian Ambassador were contemptuous and bitter:

> You waste your time and trouble by trying to reason about the conduct of your Court. ... I hope England will save herself from the general wreck; and

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[33] Other factors also played a role in the failure of the Second Coalition but Grenville's share was significant.

even if she does not, we shall have gone down fighting, and not yielding like cowards to our enemies. (Mackesy 1974, 27)

While this could have been an honest tone to discuss the matter with a colleague from the Cabinet, it was certainly not the tone to be adopted in diplomacy. Such a manner of communicating did not promote harmony or any greater understanding between Britain and her potential allies (Mackesy 1974, 9).

Austro-Prussian rivalry. The chief British diplomat failed to see the validity of concerns that his coalition allies had. Seeing only their own interests as vital, the British statesman failed to appreciate the importance of some issues for other coalition partners. This was particularly true with regard to Austria and her rivalry with Prussia. The animosity that existed between Prussia and Austria was among the greatest barriers on the way of establishing a general alliance, which was among the reasons for Prussia's continued choice of neutrality. Of the two German powers, Grenville's diplomacy unfairly favored Prussia as the presumably more valuable partner in the Coalition. But Grenville's calculations concerning Prussia did not come true. Prussia did not change from her position of neutrality despite all Britain's courtship. Even Russia's participation in the Second Coalition was not sufficient to force Prussia change her mind. Prussia remained apathetic to the idea and judged that neutrality was its best choice, especially in view of her troubled relations with Austria (Jupp 1985, 216).

Grenville's own disposition towards Austria did not promote allied unity. Grenville continued to have doubts about the reliability of Austria as an ally. And even when the Austrians were already fighting the French Army, Grenville would still fear "some wretched peace patched up with the old rugs of Campo Formio"

(Mackesy 1974, 14). Britain's lack of faith in Austria as a reliable ally was an important barrier to British plans for a four-power alliance.

Britain was interested in securing Russia's participation in the war against France but never worked out any rationale for Russia to stay engaged in the Second Coalition. After all, due to such factors as geographic distance from France, Russia enjoyed a wide range of policy choices: from isolationism, to active participation in anti-French coalitions to an alliance with France in an attempt to divide the world into two empires – the Empire of the West and the Empire of the East. While Paul disliked the Directory and the Jacobin ideology, Grenville's plan did not develop any rationale for Russia to remain permanently anti-French. As was true in the Austrian case, the British wanted the Russians to fight but never offered any indemnities for fighting. In fact, Britain herself had a clash of interests with Russia in such issues as Russia's presence in the Mediterranean and her claims to Malta.

For the most part, Russia's participation in the Coalition was an internal development connected to the personal beliefs of the Russian Tsar Paul I. Some of Paul's motives for engagement were strategic while others were ideological, but they both converged in the question of Malta. Malta was the issue that formally led Paul into the war, and it should not be surprising that Britain's occupation of Malta contributed to Russia's decision to withdraw from the Coalition. Being quintessential realists, the British statesmen viewed Paul's claims to Malta exclusively in balance of power terms. This one-sided view of the other state's motives led Pitt and Grenville to underestimate the ideological importance of

Malta for Paul and his struggle against the French Revolution. It was this major British miscalculation and misunderstanding that ultimately let to the Russian withdrawal from the Second Coalition and its final collapse.

Russia's participation and the issue of Malta. Blown out of all proportion, the issue of Malta became the cornerstone of Russia's Europe policy (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 18-19). The question played a large role in the fate of the Second Coalition because of the value attached to it by the Tsar, and therefore requires some consideration.

While often portrayed as impulsive and erratic, Tsar Paul's actions "were not devoid of common sense, or of a sense of the realities of the situation" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 16). Upon his enthronement in 1796, Paul continued Catherine's earlier policy of keeping out of any European entanglements. While the Tsar believed that it was necessary "to tame the French in the name of general security" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 18), his initial choice was to fight the Revolution by cracking down on liberalism at home instead of going to war abroad. It was the rapid spread of French influence and power in 1798, following the Treaty of Campo Formio that prompted the Russian Emperor to become more receptive to Grenville's ideas of a European union (Sherwig 1969, 103).

Personally, Paul had a deep-seated hatred of the ideals of the French Revolution. "[I]n his heart he carried an undying hatred for the French Revolution and viewed the ideas propagated by France as poison, corroding the very essence of civilization and society" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947: 19). Rejecting Jacobinism, Paul cherished what he considered to be the *old regime* virtues of

chivalry, honor and loyalty, which he believed would prevent the advancement of egalitarianism and revolutionary chaos. In Paul's view, the medieval Order of St. John of Jerusalem represented precisely those *old regime* virtues (Mackesy 1974, 33). It was for that reason that the Russian Orthodox Tsar decided to accept the title of Grand Master and Protector of the Order, which was Catholic and had the Pope of Rome as its head. From the British perspective, Malta was a strategic issue, an attempt by Russia to establish a foothold in the Eastern Mediterranean, but all Russian accounts emphasize the *symbolic importance* of Malta to the Tsar. The British failure to appreciate the symbolic importance of Malta for the Tsar eventually alienated Paul and pushed him away, ultimately leading to the collapse of the Coalition.

## The Importance of Grenville's Idea of a European Concert

The importance of Grenville's plan for the Second Coalition is that it "constituted the most comprehensive scheme for a European concert yet envisaged" (Jupp 1985, 213). Despite the fiasco of the Coalition and, consequently, the demise of Grenville's scheme for a European concert, his proposals and diplomacy laid the intellectual groundwork for the formation of the actual Concert in 1814-15 by offering for the first time a formula for a peacetime (or standing) league of the great powers aimed at checking a potential aggressor and maintaining peace in Europe.

Some of these ideas would reappear in Emperor Alexander's plan for European unity which the Tsar urged upon Pitt in 1804-05 during the formation of the Third Coalition (Sherwig 1962, 292). "It was therefore not surprising that it

provided the basis of Pitt's proposals for a concert formulated in 1805, as well as Castlereagh's policy in 1814-1815" (Jupp 1985, 213). A lasting aspect of Grenville's diplomatic legacy was the value placed on closer relations with Russia. Russia was to become that indispensable ally in any future anti-French coalitions which would put pressure on Prussia and Austria to join and/or stay in the coalitions and, by its sheer manpower, would finally serve as a guarantee of military victory.

**Chapter Four**

**The Third Coalition: Pitt's and Alexander's Blueprints for a European Concert**

<u>Britain and France in 1801-03</u>

The Treaty of Lunéville signed between France and Austria in February 1801, left Britain once again alone at war. Unlike the situation following the Treaty of Campo Formio in 1797, this time there was not even the slightest hope for a fresh anti-French coalition: after their crushing defeats at Marengo and Hohenlinden, the Austrians were not even contemplating another round of fighting with France. The Prussians stuck to their policy of neutrality more than ever, and, what was more disturbing, Russia was now attempting to revive the maritime League of Armed Neutrality aimed against Britain and was even threatening a joint Franco-Russian expedition against the British possessions in India. Although the murder of Paul I in a palace coup on 23 March 1801 put an end to his anti-British policy, the new Russian monarch, emperor Alexander I, made it clear that Russia would not re-enter the war against France: his priority was domestic reform.

In addition to these external difficulties, a decade of uninterrupted war left Britain exhausted morally and financially.[34] Her industry was hit by the crisis of 1799, and famine had been rampant ever since the poor harvest of that same year. The termination of shipments from the Baltic caused by Russia's ban on British

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[34] A curious manifestation of the public feeling in Britain took place on 10 October 1801 when Bonaparte's aid-de-camp, General Lauriston, arrived at the Palace of St. James with the ratification of the preliminary peace treaty between Britain and France: "A large multitude with loud cheers escorted the General's carriage; they took off the horses, and drew him in triumph through several streets" (Stanhope 1862, III, 355).

ships in her ports caused a panic on the corn exchange. Calls for "bread or blood" inflamed public opinion (Lefebvre 1969, I, 108).

Under these circumstances, Prime Minister Henry Addington, who formed a new Cabinet following the resignation of Pitt in February 1801, decided to open negotiations with France. The preliminaries were signed in October 1801, and after six months of negotiations at Amiens the final treaty between Britain and France was signed on 27 March 1802. Despite the opposition in Parliament led by the former foreign secretary, Lord Grenville, both houses ratified the treaty by overwhelming majorities.

In was a short-lived peace, however. Even before the signing of the Treaty of Amiens, the First Consul dispatched a large expedition under the command of his brother-in-law, General Leclerc, to recolonize the Island of San Domingo and subdue its black population. Bonaparte's ambitions were not limited to the reestablishment of France's colonial empire in the West Indies. In January 1802, he assumed the title of President of the Cisalpine Republic, a French satellite state in northern Italy, whose name at the same time was ominously changed to the Italian. In September, France consolidated her control of northern Italy by annexing Piedmont, forcing the King of Sardinia for a second time in three years to flee to the island of that name. At around the same time, a 40,000-strong French army marched into Switzerland under the pretext of putting down civil unrest in that country. Napoleon (as Bonaparte began referring to himself after securing from the Senate the consulship for life in August 1802) was proclaimed the "Mediator of the Swiss Republic" and accorded himself a decisive influence

on its internal and foreign affairs. Later, a defensive treaty of alliance was signed between Switzerland and France. Meanwhile, in Germany, French influence was on the rise as the German princes led by the King of Prussia were seeking French backing in their efforts to annex hitherto free cities and appropriate estates of the Catholic Church and of small self-governing feudal seigneurs known as the Imperial Knights (Stanhope 1862, III, 396-97; Lefebvre 1969, I, 170-74). Thus, all hopes that the new regime in Paris would be more conciliating than the Directory proved to be unfounded. As Napoleon himself told a member of the Council of State, Antoine Thibaudeau, "a First Consul cannot be likened to these kings-by-the-grace-of-God, who look upon their states as a heritage …. His actions must be dramatic, and for this, war is indispensable" (cited in Lefebvre 1969, I, 169).

Tensions with Britain resurfaced again when the British Government, alarmed at the developments on the Continent in general and the French intervention in Switzerland in particular, decided to retain Malta instead of evacuating it as provided by the Treaty of Amiens. The foreign secretary Lord Hawkesbury (later Lord Liverpool) expressed his "profound regret" and declared that "England desires for the continent the status quo as of the time of the Treaty of Amiens, and nothing but that" (Lefebvre 1969, I, 176). On 12 May 1803 the British Ambassador left Paris and a week later Britain was again at war with France: the declaration to that effect was issued on 18 May 1803. This time, the war was to last without interruption until France's final defeat and Napoleon's abdication in 1814.

Having declared war on France, Britain resumed her old policy of searching for continental alliances, general or bilateral. A particular emphasis was given to relations with Russia. The British minister at St. Petersburg, John Warren, was instructed to approach the young Russian Emperor with an offer of a bilateral defensive alliance, which would also include Austria, in case she decided to join (Ehrman 1996, 687). Warren's effort was to no avail, however: it was not until two years later that Russia was willing to face France again.

Russia in 1801-03: Alexander's Foreign Policy Drift

It is difficult to speculate what course European politics would take, had it not been for emperor Paul's sudden and violent death in a court coup on 23 March 1801. The disillusionment with the Second Coalition led to a complete overhaul of the Tsar's foreign policy. In the last months of his reign, Paul negotiated a "cordial alliance" with his former enemy, France, and revived the League of Armed Neutrality. Both developments threatened serious consequences for Britain. Not surprisingly, therefore, some contemporaries suspected that the coup that removed Paul was carried out with the knowledge, if not the incitement, of the British Government.[35]

In any case, Britain was the country that benefited the most from the change in Russia's foreign policy following Paul's death and the accession to the throne of his elder son as emperor Alexander I. Alexander quickly abandoned the "cordial alliance" with France and restored Anglo-Russian trade ties by reopening Russian ports for English ships (a treaty to that effect was signed in June 1801).

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[35] For an informed discussion of the coup and Paul's murder, see Czartoryski 1971, I, 230-255.

The League of Armed Neutrality was dissolved. But that was as far as he was willing to go. When the British Government offered to form a defensive alliance against France, to which Austria might be invited to join later, the Russian Emperor declined. In 1801-02, the climate at St. Petersburg was decidedly unfavorable to any calls for joint action against France (Sherwig 1969, 144).

In the first years of his reign, Alexander chose to return to his grandmother's earlier tradition of non-involvement in West European affairs. There were several reasons for this turn in policy. First, it expressed the disappointment the Russians felt about the selfish and unfaithful conduct of their former allies in 1799-1800: the Austrians' abandonment of Suvorov's troops in Switzerland, the British refusal to transfer Malta to the Tsar and to exchange French prisoners of war held in England for Russians held in France, to name a few. Equally, if not more importantly, however, the new Tsar sought good terms with all foreign powers in order to devote all his time and attention to the broad domestic reform that was his top priority. Finally, unlike his grandmother and father, the young Emperor had a favorable view of the French Revolution and admired the First Consul personally and, consequently, did not want to be associated with any fresh anti-French alliance (Czartoryski 1971, I, 279; Schenk 1947, 24; Grimsted 1969, 66-67; Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 68-70).

The chief proponent of the policy of non-involvement was one of Alexander's close associates, Prince Victor Kochubei, who served as his Foreign Minister between October 1801 and September 1802. Even before his appointment, Kochubei had presented the Emperor a memorandum on foreign

policy, which gave an alternative to the plans suggested by the proponents of the interventionist, anti-French policy. His main goal was to keep Russia isolated from Europe and its wars. In a letter to Simon Vorontsov, the Russian Ambassador at London, of 24 May 1801 Kochubei wrote:

> We need peace to heal the enormous ills of the country. [...] Those who want to plunge us into further wars [...] are the real enemies of Russia. [...] Peace and internal reform – those are the words which should be written in golden letters in the offices of our statesmen. (cited in Grimsted 1969, 85)

> Non-involvement was a short-lived policy, however: developments both at

home and abroad soon forced the Emperor to abandon it. At home, Alexander's reform effort was quickly stalled by the resistance of the landed aristocracy. The more important the reforms were, the greater was the resistance:

> In matters of agrarian reform [...] neither the Tsar, autocrat though he was believed to be, nor his enthusiastic Committee [an informal group consisting of Alexander's young liberal associates] were, as a rule, in a position to impose their will upon the obstinate and unruffled body of landowners. (Schenk 1947, 24)

Similarly, the Tsar's foreign policy was opposed in many quarters of Russian society and was considered unwise by some of his advisers. The opposition to non-involvement came from two different political groups. First, there were Russian *interventionists-imperialists*, who believed in Russia's great historical mission and also saw territorial expansion as a natural way of acquiring and distributing new wealth among the Russian nobility.[36] The chief representative of this opinion was Count Nikita Panin, who briefly served as Alexander's first

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[36] Many, although by no means all, in this group also resisted Alexander's internal reforms.

foreign minister from April to October 1801.[37] Panin's opposition to Russia's isolationism dated back many years. An admirer of Catherine the Great, he believed that Russia "was called by her greatness to assume a leading role in Europe." Central to his foreign policy was the demand for a renewed anti-French coalition in conjunction with the major powers of Europe, particularly England and Prussia, with the aim of restoring the French monarchy.[38] Toward that end, he was instrumental in negotiating and concluding in June 1801 a convention with Britain that put an end to Armed Neutrality and restored trade ties between the two countries. Panin's stint at the College of Foreign Affairs was short, however. He quickly became distressed with "Alexander's obstinacy in following the false principles and the most dangerous sophisms which he owes to the perfidious instruction of Laharpe." Following the opening of negotiations with France which led to the signing of a friendship accord, Panin, who declared that his "hand would never sign a treaty of peace with France until after the reestablishment of the monarchy," asked the Emperor for leave, which was granted to him in mid-October (Grimsted 1969, 70-72).[39]

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[37] Strictly speaking, Panin was only the third in rank at the College of Foreign Affairs but, as "the exclusive director of the department [...] charged with editing as well as executing [the Emperor's] orders," he became Alexander's *de facto* foreign minister (Grimsted 1969, 69-70).

[38] In 1797-99, Panin, in his capacity as the Russian ambassador at Berlin, was closely involved in the attempts to create a four-power concert against France.

[39] Aside from sharp disagreement over foreign policy, Alexander's attitude toward Panin was also informed by the fact that the latter was one of the leaders of the conspiracy which assassinated his father in the March 1801 coup. In fact, it was Panin who informed Alexander of the plot in advance and sought his approval. Although Panin did not personally participate in the events of the fateful night, his close association with the conspirators made for a difficult relationship with Alexander (Grimsted 1969, 70).

The second group, which opposed Alexander's initial policy of non-involvement, comprised Russian *liberal internationalists*. Members of this group were inspired by the ideas of the eighteenth century liberal philosophers and sought Russia's involvement in European affairs with the aim of re-organizing the political order in Europe on the principles of liberal constitutionalism, the rights of nations and a loose confederation of states. Its most prominent representative was the Emperor's personal friend and a member of his *Secret Committee*, Polish Prince Adam Czartoryski.

Before I turn to the discussion of Czartoryski's scheme for a new *European concert* and his role as a *de facto* Foreign Minister of Russia in the forming of the Third Coalition, it is necessary to review briefly the ideas and political beliefs of the Russian Emperor himself since, in terms of his *Weltanschauung*, Alexander himself belonged to the liberal interventionists.

Alexander's Personality and Beliefs

Alexander's character and worldview was formed under a number of personal influences, including his grandmother, the Empress Catherine II, and his Swiss tutor Frederick Laharpe. Alexander's biographers agree that it was his upbringing by his grandmother, who adored him, that contributed to the flaws of his character, such as the lack of strong will and work ethics as well as practical experience, which would later adversely affect his rule and ability to carry out his own decisions. At the same time, Laharpe's tutoring inspired the future Emperor with "love of humanity, of justice, and even of equality and liberty for all" (Czartoryski 1971, I, 130). As Alexander would admit himself, "all that I know

[…], all that I am worth of, is due to Laharpe" (Nicolson 1946, 11). Through Laharpe's tutoring, Alexander internalized some of the eighteenth century schemes for a confederation of Europe on the principles of liberalism and constitutionalism. In fact, the Emperor was brought up on the ideals of the Revolution of 1789, which led him to believe that the republican form of government was superior to monarchy and in keeping with "the wishes and the rights of humanity" (Czartoryski 1971, I, 117). Thus, as a result of his tutoring, the young Emperor had an inclination toward universal schemes of the eighteenth century philosophers.[40]

There is enough evidence to support the view that Alexander was sincere in his beliefs (Phillips 1914; Grimsted 1969; Czartoryski 1971) and that his "consciousness of benign, or even divine, mission" had a great influence on his actions and, consequently, on Europe's fate (Nicolson 1946, 12). In his memoirs, Czartoryski writes that the Emperor expressed his views to him in confidence as a Grand Duke, and there was no point in insincerity on the part of Alexander at that time (Czartoryski 1971, I, 119). The elevation to the pinnacle of Russia's autocratic system, following the sudden death of his father, emperor Paul I, did not change Alexander's liberal views:

> The opinions and sentiments which had seemed to me so admirable in Alexander when he was Grand-Duke did not change when he became Emperor; they were somewhat modified by the possession of absolute power, but they remained the foundation of all his principles and thoughts. (Czartoryski 1971, I, 256)

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[40] One of Alexander's tutors, General Alexander Protasov, complained in his private diary that the future Emperor was inadequately educated in Russian traditions and was made to look toward Europe too much (Palmer 1974, 9).

Alexander's admiration for the ideals of the French Revolution, which also led him to admire Napoleon personally in the early years of his reign, is demonstrated in a curious incident related by his Russian biographer, Nikolai Shilder. Upon hearing of Paul's death, Napoleon, in an attempt to salvage his newly-formed "cordial relationship" with Russia, rushed to send his aide-de-camp, General Douroc, to see the new Russian Emperor, Alexander. On 19 May 1801, Douroc was introduced to Alexander, who still thought of the French as republicans and throughout the interview addressed Douroc as *citoyen* ("citizen"). Napoleon's envoy was very uncomfortable with this form of addressing and protested several times saying that it was no longer acceptable in France to be addressed as *citoyen* (Shilder 1897, II, 56-57). Later, in a private conversation with Douroc, the Russian Emperor said, "I have always wished to maintain cordial agreement between France and Russia […]. These are two great nations who […] should enter into agreement with each other to put an end to minor disputes on the Continent" (Shilder 1897, II, 58). The Emperor added that he personally only wished to contribute to the tranquility of Europe (ibid.). As Shilder's account of Douroc's mission demonstrates, not only did Alexander fail to understand at that time the changes that had been taking place in France since the coup of 18 Brumaire 1799, but he also failed to grasp Napoleon's personality who would never tolerate any one trying to play the "arbiter of Europe" on an equal footing with him.

Gradually, however, Napoleon's conduct made Alexander change his opinion of him: his initial admiration was replaced by disappointment which shortly afterwards began to turn towards outright hostility. The turning point

came in August 1802 when Napoleon declared himself a Consul for Life (Shilder 1897, II, 117). At around the same time, Laharpe visited his former pupil and presented the young Tsar with his "Reflections on the Consulship for Life," highly critical of Napoleon. Alexander replied that Napoleon was not a true patriot and that the French Consul had "stripped himself of his best glory." Instead of serving for the glory of his country and remaining loyal to its Constitution, Napoleon "preferred to ape [imitate] a Court in addition to violating the Constitution of his country" (Shilder 1897, II, 117; see also Phillips 1914, 31).[41] Besides the political disappointment with the First Consul, a personal rivalry between Alexander and Napoleon began to develop:

> Alexander [felt] eclipsed by Napoleon, who, at the pinnacle of military glory, introduced into diplomacy, hitherto so discreet, that bluntness and rapidity of decision which were the secrets of his success on the battlefield. He took the initiative in every European question, and daily gained ground, increased his preponderance, and showed that he intended to become the arbiter of Europe. (Czartoryski 1971, I, 331)

Unlike Alexander, who would allow himself to be "grouped" as long as he was the central personality of the group (Phillips 1914, 88), Napoleon could not suffer any rivals in the career upon which he had entered. As Czartoryski writes in his *Memoirs*,

> [a]ll attempts which were made to act on an equal footing with him failed. His ally had either to carry out his plans or become his enemy. Scarcely had my system of policy been decided upon [a reference to Czartoryski's memorandum of 1803 on foreign policy to be adopted by Russia] that by a sort of instinct our relations with the First Consul became colder, and the communications on both sides clearly showed by their tone that neither was disposed to make concessions to the other. (Czartoryski 1971, II, 13)

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[41] This personal animosity grew even stronger in the years 1810-1815. "Either Napoleon or I, I or he but we cannot reign together," Alexander reportedly said after the beginning of the war of 1812 (Shilder, 1897, I, 2).

Thus, a clash of personalities and worldviews between Napoleon and Alexander would become the background against which a clash of policies and interests between France and Russia would play out in the next decade in European politics.

### Adam Czartoryski and Russia's Turn From Isolationism to Liberal Interventionism

The first major change in Russia's European policy occurred towards the end of 1803, when Alexander appointed Prince Czartoryski head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.[42] A scion of one of the most prominent Polish families, Czartoryski, by his upbringing and education, was a Polish patriot and a Jacobin. He himself described his education as "entirely Polish and Republican" (Czartoryski 1971, I, 55). Several months in Paris "in close attendance at the [French] National Assembly in the most brilliant days of Mirabeau" made him an enthusiastic supporter of the Revolution. Another year in London, where he attended the debates in Parliament and became an "idolater of Fox," the leader of the Whig opposition in Parliament, confirmed him in his political ideals of liberalism and constitutional government (Grimsted 1969, 107). These ideals also served as the bond between him and the Tsar, which they had established back in the days when the young Polish prince at St. Petersburg's Court was an aide-de-

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[42] In fact, Czartoryski was given the title of Assistant Minister in deference to the elder statesman, Count Alexander Vorontsov, who had been the Chancellor and Foreign Minister since September 1802. By the time of Czartoryski's appointment, Vorontsov's failing health virtually precluded him from active role in the state affairs and in February 1804 he was given leave for health reasons. He continued to hold his official titles of Chancellor and Minister of Foreign Affairs until his death in December 1805.

camp to the then-Grand Duke Alexander.[43] (To appreciate the extent of Czartoryski's influence on the future Emperor, it is worth bearing in mind that he was seven years older than Alexander and had extensively traveled Europe including Paris, London, Vienna, and Berlin at the height of the Revolution in 1790-93.)

To understand Czartoryski's foreign policy system, which he adopted upon his appointment to the Foreign Ministry, one needs to bear in mind that the main goal of his whole life was the restoration of his beloved motherland, Poland. His devotion to the Polish cause did not blind him to the realities of power politics: he was painfully aware that Poland did not have a chance of being restored unless she could secure a powerful protector among the three powers, which had partitioned her in 1793-95. Coming from an aristocratic family which had traditionally viewed Russia as the guarantor of Poland against Prussian depredations, Czartoryski was ready to accept a restored Poland under the Russian crown (with Alexander himself or his brother, the Grand Duke Constantine, as the King of Poland) with a liberal constitution to ensure her unmolested national development. As he later explained his views about Polish independence to Count Stroganov,

> [c]omplete independence is without a doubt the greatest good which can come to a nation. But when it is probable that it could never be attained, an intermediary existence as an associated kingdom with its own laws and constitution should be readily accepted, especially when through this

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[43] The circumstances of Czartoryski arrival at the Court at St. Petersburg in 1794 are quite remarkable. At the demand of the Russian Empress, the Czartoryski family had to send the young Prince Adam and his brother to the Russian Court as hostages. Otherwise the family was threatened with the loss of its extensive estates in the now Russian part of Poland for its role in the 1794 Kościuszko Uprising.

means many of the evils, calamities, and difficulties could be avoided and the major aspects of [nation's] goals could be obtained on a sounder and more assured basis. (cited in Grimsted 1969, *120-21)*

From his personal experience with Russian society, Czartoryski also knew that whenever he would speak about the plight of the Greek Christians under the Ottoman Turkish yoke and the desirability of restoring their independence, he would meet a lot of sympathy among the Russian public. Should, however, his conversations turn to the analogous question of the restoration of Poland's independence, the same Russian public would instantly turn from a sympathetic to hostile audience. It was obvious to him that a solution to the Polish question could only be found as part of a general reorganization of European politics on the basis of justice, universal laws and rights of nations.

None of these considerations were of course kept secret from Alexander, although some Russian nationalist historians would later insinuate ulterior motives and divided loyalties behind Czartoryski's advice to the Emperor on foreign policy (see, for example, Lobanov-Rostovsky, 1947). Of noble character, Czartoryski had always openly admitted that he was a Polish patriot first, and he honestly informed Alexander of his views when the latter offered him to serve as Russia's *de facto* foreign minister. In addition, any unbiased observer would agree that a new European order promoted by Czartoryski in his capacity as Russia's acting foreign minister would serve not only the interests of European nations aspiring to gain independence, such as Poland, but also Russia's national

interests in the long term, had the Tsar had the courage to adopt his Foreign Minister's advice and act on it.[44]

Czartoryski did not support Alexander's initial policy of isolationism. He was not against the policy of "passivity" as long as it meant abstaining from aggression and conquest. But "he did not admit the possibility of Russia's having no say in European affairs. Her policy must be 'magnanimous, just and sober, worthy of her position and her power'" (Kukiel 1955, 31-32). In fact, he thought that the policy of isolationism, no matter what the motivation behind it, had a distinct "disadvantage of reducing the state to insignificance and humiliation, and it by no means conformed to the feelings of the Russian people themselves" (Kukiel 1955, 28-29).

Upon becoming Russia's *de facto* Foreign Minister in late 1803, Prince Adam put his political views about Russia's foreign policy in an extensive memorandum "On the Political System to Be Adopted by Russia."[45] The memorandum became a blueprint for Russia's new role in Europe. A large part of it was a philosophical statement on the nature of international relations. Czartoryski was in agreement with the eighteenth century philosophers that states were in a state of nature "because there were no institutions or laws to ensure their security from aggression and violence" (Kukiel 1955, 30-31).

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[44] It was in fact those aspirations of the smaller European nations for national independence and their coming struggles for it that marked the history of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It took over a century of political turmoil and wars, and an American president for Czartoryski's vision to become the foundation of European and international politics.

[45] In the 1820s Czartoryski developed many of the ideas of the memorandum into a more extensive Essai sur la Diplomatie (Kukiel 1955, 30).

According to Czartoryski, to redress the problem, nations should seek common prosperity by uniting in an "association." Such a union of states could be achieved provided three conditions were realized. First, there was to be, what Czartoryski called, the "further process of civilization and its growth among backward peoples."[46] Secondly, state frontiers had to be redrawn in accordance with the nationality of the inhabitants and the "natural boundaries" between nations. And thirdly, liberal institutions and representative Governments were to be adopted by most European countries. This way, Czartoryski argued, a "lasting peace would be achieved by means of gradual changes" (Kukiel 1955, 31).

Any reader familiar with the eighteenth century European liberal philosophy would immediately recognize the sources of Czartoryski's inspiration for the 1803 memorandum. Publicists and philosophers, such as the Duke of Sully, Abbé St. Pierre, Rousseau and Kant, had earlier considered the question of a lasting peace in Europe and offered various schemes of attaining it.[47] Czartoryski was the first great power *statesman* to attempt to develop a new world order in Europe based on those ideas. And he was certainly the first to link the idea of a lasting peace with the question of the rights of nationalities, which

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[46] Czartoryski had confidence in the immense influence that the printed word and international trade would have in "civilizing" nations and bringing them closer to each other.

[47] The earlier fate of all schemes for perpetual peace in Europe is aptly summed up in a sardonic remark made by the Prussian King Frederick II on the plan of Abbé St. Pierre: "All is well with the proposed project and nothing lacking but the political will to adopt it."

would help attain what he called a "natural equilibrium" in Europe (Kukiel 1955, 31).[48]

<u>Napoleon and Alexander: a Clash of Two Designs for Europe</u>

Czartoryski's memorandum was favorably received by the Emperor and members of the Secret Committee and Czartoryski was encouraged to develop his ideas into more concrete foreign policy proposals. Alexander's own upbringing and political values made him sympathetic to the proposed plan for a European confederation. It was obvious, however, that the pursuit of this plan in foreign policy would inevitably lead Russia into conflict with Napoleon and France's assumed role of the "arbiter of Europe."

> It was impossible to take a prominent part in European affairs, to come forward as a judicial and moderating influence, to prevent violence, injustice and aggression, without coming into contact with France at every step. She would have been a dangerous rival if she had wished to play the same beneficial part; but being led by the unlimited ambition of Napoleon, she sought to do the very contrary of what we wished. A collision sooner or later was inevitable. (Czartoryski 1971, II, 13)

Several developments in Europe in 1803-04 brought the rupture between Russia and France closer. The two powers clashed in Germany over the settlement of compensations promised by the Treaty of Lunéville to the dispossessed princes of the left bank of the Rhine. France supported the German princes, headed by the King of Prussia, who wanted to annex the estates of several hundred local seigneurs, known as the Imperial Knights. Russia took the side of the Imperial Knights and their sovereign in Vienna. [49] But her protests

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[48] Czartoryski's idea of linking international peace with the rights of nationalities would become the cornerstone of President Woodrow Wilson's system proposed a century later.
[49] The Knights were self-governing and owed their allegiance directly to the Holy Roman Emperor.

that the rights of the Knights were guaranteed in the new Imperial Constitution (the so-called "Recess" adopted on 25 February 1803) were to no avail (Lefebvre 1969, II, 203-04; Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 75).

An even more serious disagreement took place in spring-summer 1803. In March, before Britain's declaration of war, Napoleon wrote to the Russian Emperor requesting his mediation of the Anglo-French disputes, chief among them being Malta (which the British were supposed to evacuate under the terms of the Treaty of Amiens but were now refusing to do). Alexander accepted the offer in early June (by that time Britain had already declared war on France) and in July announced his recommendations: the British were required to evacuate Malta where a Russian garrison would be stationed; France could keep Piedmont in northern Italy but on the condition that the King of Sardinia received a compensation elsewhere; and the neutrality of Holland, Switzerland, and German and Italian states and the Ottoman Empire would be guaranteed by the great powers. Although the Russian proposals did not touch France's "natural frontiers," their sheer scope demonstrated to Napoleon that the young Tsar's ambition was to institute a general European settlement rather than a bilateral Anglo-French one. At the end of August, Napoleon rejected the Russian proposals, reportedly having said that "he had never invited the Tsar to distribute the prizes of his own campaigns" (quoted in Palmer 1974, 79). Alexander, realizing that Napoleon would never recognize him as the "arbiter of Europe," was deeply irritated (Lefebvre 1969, II, 178, 201-202).

Next came Napoleon's demand to recall the Russian Ambassador at Paris, Count Arkadi Morkov, on the grounds that he had associated himself with individuals known to be in opposition to the First Consul. Although Morkov, appointed to Paris by Paul I, had never been a favorite of Alexander, the demand appeared to the Tsar as an insult. Morkov was eventually recalled at the end of October but no new ambassador was appointed to replace him, leaving in Paris only Russia's chargé d'affaires, Count D'Oubril (Grimsted 1969, 104).

But the incident that truly became the point of no-return in the Franco-Russian relations was the kidnapping and execution of the Duke of Enghien in March 1804. The murder of the Duke appeared to have confirmed to the Russian Emperor the worst suspicions about Napoleon's character, after 1802 (Phillips 1914, 32). The details of the incident were as follows. In February 1804, a royalist conspiracy was exposed in Paris. During the interrogation, the plotters revealed that they had expected the arrival of a certain Bourbon prince who was supposed to lead the prepared uprising. Suspicion quickly fell on the Duke of Enghien, a member of the Bourbon family, who resided at Ettenheim in the Grand Duchy of Baden, not far from Strasbourg. On Napoleon's orders, on 14 March 1804 a detachment of French gendarmes crossed the border into Baden, a sovereign, neutral German state, and seized the Duke. He was brought to Paris at five in the evening, dragged before a court marshal in the castle of Vincennes at eleven, and shot in the dungeon at two in the morning.

Upon receiving the news, the Russian Emperor was horrified at such a "detested deed" and decided that such an outrage to justice and international law

could not be left without consequences (Czartoryski 1971, II, 14).[50] From the perspective of a realist, the circumstances of the murder of the Duke of Enghien, tragic as they might be, did not affect Russia's interests or honor: the Duke was neither related to the Russian Royal Family, nor was he a Russian subject, nor was he kidnapped on Russian soil. Russia did not have any formal obligation to protect Baden, whose sovereignty, territory and neutrality were violated by Napoleon's appalling act.[51] But as Czartoryski observed in his *Memoirs*, "the origin of the rupture [between Russia and France in 1804] was of a special kind, as no material interest was involved: it was simply a question of justice and right" (ibid.).

During the extraordinary council convened by Alexander, Count Roumyantsev was the only person who advocated a policy of state interests, and objected to the proposed break-off of diplomatic relations with France. As a diplomat of the realist school developed under Catherine the Great, Roumyantsev thought in terms of state interests rather than general principles of justice and rights. "While recognizing that consideration of honor and respect for international law should have due weight, he [Roumyantsev] thought that material interests should also be considered" (Czartoryski 1971, II, 26-27). The Council led by the Emperor decided, however, that Russia could not continue to have relations with a Government that could only be regarded as "a den of brigands" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 76). Since an outrage "was committed upon

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[50] Curiously, neither the Elector of Baden, nor his suzerain the Holy Roman Emperor, dared to protest the French incursion of the neutral territory.

[51] It is worth noting, though, that Alexander's wife was the daughter of the Prince of Baden.

the whole family of European states", the Russian Emperor could not see with indifference the violation of German territory (Czartoryski 1971, II, 17). Two notes were sent after the council: one note was sent to Paris, demanding an immediate explanation of the violation of the territory of Baden and also of the recent French violations of Sardinia (Piedmont), Naples, and Hanover; the second note was sent to the Imperial Diet at Regensburg encouraging the German parliament to protest the violation of the territory of Baden.

The French reply, signed by Talleyrand but clearly drafted by Napoleon himself, was highly offensive to the Tsar: he was sarcastically asked "whether he, supposing that the English-paid assassins of his father had settled near the Russian frontier, would not have hastened to have them seized" (Lefebvre 1969, II, 202). The identities of Paul's murderers were, of course, commonly known and they continued to reside in Russia and some were even received at the Court. Thus, Napoleon's reply hinted that Alexander had been an accomplice to his father's murder as he was unwilling to bring to justice the conspirators. Such a direct attack on his person could hardly have been allowed to pass unnoticed, but Alexander was unsure how to act. A break-off of diplomatic relations was suggested as a measure dramatic enough but falling short of war. But diplomatic relations with France had already been downgraded since the recall of Morkov. Eventually, Czartoryski was entrusted to draw a memorandum. Dated 5 April 1804, it charged that not just Napoleon but the whole French system of government was an international outlaw by stating that

[t]he incursion which the French have ventured to make upon German territory in order to seize the Duke of Enghien and take him into France for immediate execution, is an event which shows what is to be expected from a Government which does not recognize any checks upon its acts of violence, and which treads under foot the most sacred principles. (Czartoryski 1971, II, 16)

Just as this incident was unfolding, another question arose to increase the tensions between Russia and France. When on 18 May 1804, Napoleon proclaimed himself Emperor, Austria, Prussia and most German states hastened to recognize his new title. Of the continental European states, only Russia and Sweden refused to recognize Napoleon as Emperor. In addition, Russia blocked the recognition of the new title by the Ottoman Sultan thus dealing a serious blow to France's prestige in the Near East (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 77).

Now at open conflict with France and in need of allies, Russia turned of necessity to Britain. Britain herself had approached Russia several times with proposals for a new anti-French coalition, but until the events in spring 1804 (the execution of the Duke of Enghien and the assumption of the title of Emperor by Napoleon) the British Government had "no materials out of which [they] could create a coalition against France" (Sherwig 1969, 144).

Forging the alliance with Britain was not going to be an easy task, however. The need for an Anglo-Russian partnership had been evident to some Russian statesmen. Already in December 1803, in response to Napoleon's insulting demand for the recall of the Russian Ambassador from Paris and French threats against the Russian protectorate over the Ionian Islands, the then Foreign Minister, Alexander Vorontsov (brother of the Russian Ambassador at London, Simon Vorontsov), advised the Tsar to form a strong defensive alliance

with Britain (Grimsted 1969, 96). Yet the problem was that, personally, Alexander had little sympathy for Britain and her policies: "His education had given him ideas and inclinations totally different from those of the policy of Pitt" (Czartoryski 1971, I, 272).

Nonetheless, when Pitt returned to office after the fall of the Addington Cabinet in April 1804, he was informed by the anglophile Russian Ambassador at London that the Tsar wished to form a general *concert* which would arrest the progress of French aims and impose peace on the Continent. Pitt's reply came on 26 June 1804. While the letter was signed by the Foreign Secretary, Harrowby, it was Pitt's personal work.[52] The British Prime Minister stated his willingness to enter into a bilateral alliance with Russia with the goal of forcing France to withdraw from Belgium and the left bank of the Rhine to her old frontiers. The only condition on which he insisted was that Russia must take the lead and carry out the necessary diplomatic offensive to bring the other two powers into the proposed concert. In the event of war, Britain promised to provide the requisite subsidies to any power that would fight France (Sherwig 1969, 147-49; Lefebvre 1969, I, 202).

Pitt's decision to leave the formation of the Third Coalition to Russia was in sharp contrast with Britain's diplomacy during the formation of the Second Coalition: at the time, Britain took the lead in forging a concert of powers and her foreign minister, Lord Grenville, personally directed the conduct of British

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[52] Since Grenville declined to join Pitt's Government, Pitt had now a new Foreign Secretary, Lord Harrowby. He was a poor choice, however, and the Prime Minister had to attend to the administration of the Foreign Office himself (Sherwig 1969, 147-48).

diplomacy. This time, however, Pitt expected that Russia would be more successful in bringing forth a new coalition using the Tsar's personal influence with Frederick William III of Prussia as well as Russia's influence at Vienna resulting from her pro-Austrian efforts to halt the process of "mediatization" (appropriation by princes of ecclesiastical estates and estates of the Imperial Knights) in Germany in 1803-04 (Sherwig 1969, 149).

On the Russian side, diplomatic efforts to form the Third Coalition were in the hands of Czartoryski, although the Emperor worked closely with his Foreign Minister (Grimsted 1969, 130). At the heart of Czartoryski's diplomatic strategy was forging an understanding with Britain of the coalition's aims in the coming war and in the post-war settlement. He was convinced that once a "permanent bond" was established between Britain and Russia, the other continental powers would be compelled to accede to it. To accomplish that goal, Czartoryski sent to London in September 1804 his close political associate, Count Nicolai Novossiltsov, as a special envoy.[53] Novossiltsov, a member of Alexander's *Secret Committee*, was known for his Anglophilia, which would guarantee him a good reception at London, where he would personally present to Pitt his Instructions from the Russian Emperor. The Instructions (hence known as the Novossiltsov

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[53] Both Alexander and Czartoryski were suspicious of the strong pro-English sympathies of the Russian Ambassador at London, Simon Vorontsov, and particularly of his high regard for Pitt (Grimsted 1969, 131). During the formation of the Second Coalition Vorontsov had often acted more to protect British interests than in the service of the Russian Emperor by such tactics as delaying the dispatch of memorandums, which he received from or was to send to St. Petersburg (see Sherwig 1969). For these reasons they chose Novossiltsov as the extraordinary and plenipotentiary envoy for the mission, keeping Vorontsov largely in the dark.

Instructions) were intended as a kind of a master plan for the new coalition (Sherwig 1969, 151).

### Novossiltsov's Instructions: Alexander's Plan for a European Concert

According to some historians, Novossiltsov's Instructions were written by Alexander himself (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 80). Although I tend to accept that the author of the Instructions was Czartoryski, they undoubtedly reflected the Tsar's personal political philosophy, which "notwithstanding the evolution of the Czar's character, remained constant" in subsequent years (ibid.).

The question raised in the Instructions was, "could the common danger created by Napoleon be used for putting an end to European anarchy and for the initiation of a 'new era of justice and right in European politics?'" (Frederiksen 1943, 12). According to Alexander and Czartoryski, only a "permanent," "indissoluble" bond between Russia and Britain could achieve that by ridding Europe of the "tyrant," establishing a just peace on the Continent and guaranteeing the post-war settlement against future tyrants. But that bond could not develop out of "a common feeling of revenge" – having a common adversary might have sufficed to create a defensive or offensive alliance between the two countries but the Tsar's proposal required it to be based on "the most elevated principles of justice and philanthropy" (Czartoryski 1971, II, 35-6). In other words, Alexander revived Grenville's earlier idea that a successful coalition against France should be based on the commonality of aims in and after war, which could only stem from shared values and ideals.

The Instructions were Alexander's blueprint for reforming European politics on the basis of the eighteenth century ideals of liberal constitutionalism as well as Russia's newly-found policy of justice and rights of smaller nationalities. The scheme for a New Europe included a number of revolutionary propositions. First, Alexander advocated the establishment of liberal political institutions in most European states: the Tsar recommended that feudalism in Europe should be replaced by liberal Governments, and that all monarchs should give their subjects constitutions (Webster 1950, 54; Nicolson 1946, 54; Kissinger 1994, 75).[54] Next, he proposed to organize European states into a League, or some kind of a confederacy (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 81). The proposed League would bind its members under clearly defined international law, which would become the "basis of reciprocal relations between the states of Europe" (ibid.). The League would also be the linchpin of a system of collective security: should any state dare challenge the new European system, it could expect a coalition of all the other states form against it instantly. Members of the League would be assured, however, the privilege of neutrality should they choose it (Webster 1950, 54-5; Nicolson 1946, 54). Smaller nations subjugated by France, such as Switzerland, Holland, and Sardinia, were to be liberated and restored to their independence. At the same time, "the character of national desires must be considered before deciding upon the form of the government established" in the

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[54] It may appear strange that a Russian autocrat would advocate liberal institutions, but the reasons for this were clear: being personally helpless to reform Russia from within, the Tsar was hopeful that the triumph of constitutionalism and liberalism in international politics would help him overcome domestic opposition to them since liberal reforms in Russia would then become part of a larger scheme of European reform.

liberated nations. France herself would have to accept the Alps and the Rhine (up to a certain point) as her frontiers. In general, frontiers of states would be drawn in accordance with the rights of nationalities so as to include "homogeneous population [...] in agreement among themselves and with the Government that rules them" and also taking into account "natural (or geographic) boundaries" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 80-81). Thus, the Novossiltsov Instructions mark the first time that the principle of self-determination of nations is raised in international politics.

In an obvious attempt to eradicate international wars, the Instructions contained recommendations which were meant to make war a fruitless endeavor. One such recommendation was the recognition of the principle of territorial integrity of states: to preserve peace and tranquility in Europe, "[i]t would be necessary to fix frontiers which properly belong to each separate state" and recognize them as permanent (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 81).

Another measure aimed at the eradication of war was the recommendation to restrict the state's sovereign right to resort to war: the pact of the proposed League would consecrate an obligation to never commence war without having exhausted all the means of mediation or arbitration (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 81; Kissinger, 1994, 75). "Why should not states accept an obligation not to go to war without first invoking the mediation of a third party for an inquiry into the causes of their dispute?" asked Alexander (Webster 1950, 54). It was the first time that a European statesman was seeking to establish conditions for the renunciation of war as an instrument of foreign policy or at least to limit the

exercise of the sovereign right of war (Nicolson 1946, 54). Finally, to make the whole plan workable, Alexander proposed to back it up with the joint power of Russia and Britain who were to act as "world policemen" (ibid.).

Compared to the Europe of the *ancient régime*, the Novossiltsov Instructions proposed a revolution in European politics. They marked a turn towards development and eventual adoption of universal principles as a means of conflict prevention and management of international politics. As a historian of the period put it, "[i]n writing these remarkable instructions Alexander [and Czartoryski] not only revealed a great political mind but became the precursor of Wilson, Briand, and Kellogg" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 82).

Pitt's Reply: Defining British Interests

When Novossiltsov arrived at London in October 1804, the British Foreign Secretary, Harrowby, was ill, his substitute, Lord Mulgrave, was new to the office and ineffective, and it was left to Pitt himself to conduct the negotiations (Sherwig 1969, 51). Although the British had a keen interest in forging an alliance with Russia, the negotiations in London were difficult: the Russian proposals, as outlined in the Instructions, were contrary to the spirit of Britain's traditional foreign policy as well as its key objectives. The British historian Webster says that "there was much in the Russian proposition that must have been either incomprehensible or [even] obnoxious to Pitt's mind" (Webster 1950, 55-56). Under a different set of circumstances, he would probably have dismissed the proposals altogether. In 1804, however, the need for Russia as an ally compelled Pitt to formulate his own counter-proposals (Nicolson 1946, 54).

Pitt's reply addressed to the Russian Ambassador Vorontsov, dated 19 January 1805, was a major policy statement. It defined British interests as to the post-war settlement and was later used by Lord Castlereagh as a plan of action in 1813-1815 (Sherwig 1969, 152).[55] Evaluating Pitt's reply, British historians argue that he turned "the vague suggestions of the Tsar into a practical scheme for the reconstruction of Europe" (Webster 1950, 60). In reality, however, Pitt managed to replace Alexander's set of principles for the post-war settlement with a completely different vision of a settlement. In fact, he took advantage of the occasion to revive the plan developed by Lord Grenville in 1798 (Sherwig 1962, 292).

Pitt did not agree with the Tsar in thinking that the rights and interests of the other great powers, Prussia and Austria, could be ignored (Nicolson 1946, 55).  His first concern was that "the objects of the war must be defined and the outline of the new Europe sketched in such a manner that each of the Great Powers would see its main interest in joining it" (Webster 1950, 56). For the British, "it was a war for *security* not for doctrine, against *universal conquest,* not against *revolution*" (Kissinger 1964:39, emphasis added). To attain that goal, France were to be reduced to her former frontiers, and some countries, which had been occupied by France since the mid-1790s, were to be restored to their former independence and boundaries (Nicolson 1946, 54-55). As a concession to Alexander, Pitt proposed that the territories recovered from France (the Low Countries, the Rhenish provinces on the left bank, and northern Italy) should be

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[55]As Temperley and Penson put it, "what the master first sketched in 1792 and formulated in 1805, the pupil [Castlereagh] put into practice at the Congress of Vienna in 1815" (Temperley and Penson 1966: 9).

made subject to such arrangements as to "provide for the internal happiness of their inhabitants" implying that when their new Government was formed, the will of the population *might* be consulted. "But in looking at this object, [the concerted powers] must not lose sight of the general security of Europe, on which even that separate object [restoration of the countries which had been subjugated since the beginning of the Revolution] must principally depend" (Pitt's Memorandum of 19 January 1805, cited in Temperley and Penson 1966, 13).

In practical terms, Pitt proposed to make Holland a more formidable barrier to French expansionism by transferring to her most of the formerly Austrian Belgium; Prussia was to be awarded the northern stretch of the left bank of the Rhine; the Kingdom of Piedmont in Italy would be strengthened by adding to it Genoa; Venetia, Lombardy and Tuscany would be awarded to Austria. "Thus the Alps were protected against France by an enlarged Piedmont and an interested great Power (Austria), while on the Rhine and on the Flemish barrier an enlarged Holland and a new great Power (Prussia) stood as sentries" (Temperley and Penson 1966, 10). From Pitt's reply, it was clear that all the proposals were pure balance of power ideas (see also, Schenk 1947, 31; Nicolson 1946, 54-55; Lefebvre 1969, I, 202-3).

Pitt agreed with Alexander that to give the post-war settlement an aura of permanence, the principal powers of Europe should form a treaty, "by which their respective rights and possessions, as they then have been established, should be fixed and recognized, and they should all bind themselves mutually to protect and support each other against any attempt to infringe them" (Pitt's

Memorandum, as cited in Temperley and Penson 1966, 18). Thus, he proposed to keep the concert of powers even after the war with Napoleonic France was over (Schenk 1947, 30). It was not, however, to be the kind of confederation envisaged by Alexander and Czartoryski. In addition, since neither Britain nor Russia were considered to have any territorial claims in Central and Western Europe, Pitt proceeded to suggest that by a separate engagement these two powers bind themselves to jointly guarantee the new treaty (Pitt's Memorandum, cited in Temperley and Penson 1966, 19; see also Webster 1950, 60).

The major differences between Russia and Britain were over the proposed universal liberal constitutionalism and the principle of national self-determination or the rights of nationalities. Pitt's reply did not include any promise to embark on a crusade for liberty and constitutionalism in Europe. In fact, Britain was the first major power to formulate the principle of non-interference into the domestic affairs of other states. This cornerstone of Britain's foreign policy meant that she would reject engagement in any "crusade either for constitutional liberty or republican freedom" (Webster 1950, 56).[56] His ideas were also "marked by no special tenderness to [the principle of] nationality." He argued that it might be impractical to restore some smaller European countries as their situation had dramatically changed since their subjugation (Temperley and Penson 1966, 9; Webster 1950, 58).

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[56] In practice, it meant selective non-interference. In 1814-15 Britain would support the restoration of Bourbons in France as a guarantee against any future French hegemony, but the British were not interested in unconditional support of monarchic rules as advocated by Alexander I at that time.

Finally, demonstrating that the war for Britain was "against universal conquest, not against revolution," Pitt stressed that while the re-establishment of monarchy in France and the restoration of the Bourbons might be "highly desirable for the future of both France and Europe," it was only a "secondary object" for the proposed concert and,

> should in no case justify the prolongation of the war, if a peace could be obtained on the principles of security. Therefore, in the conduct of the war, and in the public declarations and language of the Allied Courts, the greatest care should be taken to prevent any misapprehension in the minds of any part of the French Nation, of any desire either to dictate to them by force any particular form of government, or to attempt to dismember the ancient territories of France. (Pitt's Memorandum, cited in Temperley and Penson 1966, 20)

The British perspective, as outlined in Pitt's memorandum, was based on the principle of the balance of power. It was "so phrased that it appeared to accept the basic principles of Alexander, but utilized them in a manner more consonant with the interests of the other Great Powers and Britain than the Tsar and his advisers had attempted or perhaps desired" (Webster 1950, 60).

The Formation of the Third Coalition

Drafting the Novossiltsov Instructions the Russian Emperor and his Foreign Minister envisioned the converting of a temporary coalition against Napoleonic France into a permanent League of European states with the Tsar as the arbiter of her destiny (Phillips 1914, 32). The reality of negotiations turned out to be different. From the perspective of the Russian liberal interventionists, such as Prince Czartoryski, Novossiltsov's mission was a failure: he failed to insist on the demands contained in his Instructions for a just post-war settlement based on liberal constitutionalism and the rights of nationalities and allowed the

negotiations to take the direction of the pure territorial balance of power negotiations desired by Britain (Phillips 1914, 37). Thus, Novossiltsov abandoned the whole program and instead accepted ideas of his negotiating partner as approximate to those of his Emperor (Kukiel 1955, 52).

Czartoryski realized that he had little reason to admire his friend's achievements when he read the British project of the treaty. He was not, however, politically strong enough to disavow the mission of his friend as he himself was coming under increasing attacks at home by Russian nationalists (led by Alexander's confidant, Prince Dolgorouki) incensed by the fact that a Polish aristocrat was serving as Russia's foreign minister (Kukiel 1955, 54-55). Officially, therefore, the mission to London was declared a success of Novossiltsov's Instructions; Pitt's memorandum of 19 January 1805 and the preliminary subsidy treaty signed in St. Petersburg on 11 April 1805 by Pitt's personal envoy, Lord Granville Levenson Gower, became the basis of the Third Coalition (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 83).[57]

Curiously enough, although Alexander and Czartoryski virtually conceded their "programmatic" plan to secure an alliance with Britain, they almost wrecked the Anglo-Russian alliance during the ratification process because of disagreements with Pitt over two issues that had little to do with their "program":

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[57] Some historians argue that aspects of Novossiltsov's Instructions found a way into the secret articles of the treaty, "in which the two powers pledged themselves to discuss the establishment after the war of a federative system of nations which would assure the independence of the small states" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 84). If true, that part of the agreement was not to be kept and might actually constitute a strategic maneuver by the British to get Russia into a coalition.

these were Malta and the maritime neutrality rights. Although upon his enthronement Alexander gave up the title of Grand Master of the Maltese Order and initially refused the British offer of sending Russian troops to garrison the island, he was now interested in assuming a protectorate over Malta. Meanwhile the British, since the resumption of war with France, changed their mind on the issue, and their Foreign Secretary, Hawkesbury, declared to the Russian Ambassador that the security of Southern Italy and the Eastern Mediterranean depended on Malta's remaining in the hands of Britain. Alexander was incensed but, eager to obtain the British alliance, he did not press the issue during negotiations with Pitt's personal envoy in St. Petersburg, Lord Gower (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 84-86).

After the preliminary convention between Britain and Russia was signed in April 1805, the Tsar informed Count Vorontsov in London that he must insist now that an article should be added to the treaty which would clearly state the British intention to evacuate Malta and transfer the garrisoning of the island to Russia until it is returned after the war to its rightful owner, the Order of the Knights of St. John. Should the British Government refuse to do so, Russia would not be able to ratify the treaty. Pitt sharply refused to accept the Tsar's demand insisting that the decision in the matter was not his or the King's, for neither the British parliament nor the popular sentiment would accept the abandonment of Malta. When the Russian Ambassador pointed out that this would mean the end of the coalition against France, Pitt said that the British decision over Malta was irrevocable: "We will continue the war alone" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 87).

As the deadlock over Malta had been reached, another old issue – the maritime rights of neutrals – resurfaced to add to the Anglo-Russian tensions. In April 1805, Czartoryski instructed Vorontsov to make a formal protest to the British over the issue of detentions and searches of Russian merchant vessels by the Royal Navy: the Tsar found it "very disagreeable" that Russian merchants "should continually be subjected to more annoyances by [...] a friendly and allied power than by the enemy itself." To resolve the issue, Russia proposed a conference to discuss the problems of international law on the high seas. The British Government categorically rejected the Tsar's proposal as an "unexpected and unfriendly move" and declared that Britain "would never give up the rights she had exercised since the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the abandonment of which would lead her to ruin" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 87-88).

Upon receiving the negative replies to both Russian suggestions, Alexander was furious. Thus, contrary to one's expectations, the process of ratification of the preliminary treaty between Russia and Britain instead of illustrating convergence of interests between the two powers served to illustrate their profound disagreements. The treaty remained void and almost lapsed when the coming of war with France led to its hurried ratification in August 1805 in order to obtain the accession to the coalition of Austria and Prussia.

Prussia and the Third Coalition

Securing the alliance with Britain (no matter how imperfect from the point of view of the original intentions) was only part of Russian diplomacy's work: there were still Austria and Prussia and for some time neither of them offered hope.

The Prussians as always had set their sights on some territorial acquisition. This time it was Hanover. France, which had occupied Hanover since the beginning of the Anglo-French war, wanted an alliance with Prussia in exchange for it. But no matter how passionately Prussia coveted Hanover, she was willing to offer only her neutrality in return, which of course did not satisfy Napoleon. On the other hand, neither the Russian nor British Governments could make an offer of Hanover to Prussia in exchange for her alliance because it was the personal possession of the British King George III, who was the Elector of Hanover.

In order to obtain Prussia's cooperation with the Coalition, Czartoryski was even prepared to threaten her with war. In February 1805, he confidently asked Novossiltsov in London to sound out Britain on the issue, which appeared willing to back such an action (Grimsted 1969, 134). Tensions between Prussia and the Allies continued to build up through the summer. In July, Frederick William III refused to allow the passage of Russian troops from Swedish Pomerania on the Baltic coast to Germany. In September, a war with Russia became a distinct possibility. When the Tsar arrived at the headquarters of the Russian army assembled in the Austrian province of Galicia, Czartoryski advised him to enter Warsaw (then under Prussian rule) and declare his intention of restoring the Polish state. This threat would presumably force the Court of Berlin to give its full support to the Allies against Napoleon.[58] But at that time Alexander did not dare endorse the idea of proclaiming a restoration of the Polish kingdom.

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[58] Evidently, "he [also] hoped that in the course of his entry into Prussian Poland, Polish enthusiasm would be great enough to provide an occasion which might induce Alexander to proclaim himself a king of a reunited Polish state" (Grimsted 1969, 134-135).

In October, however, the situation changed dramatically. When on Napoleon's orders, the Bernadotte corps marched through the Prussian exclave of Ansbach on its way to the main theater of war on the upper Danube, the King, encouraged by the war party led by his wife, Queen Louise, and Hardenberg was aroused and retaliated by giving the Russian troops permission to cross Silesia on their way to central Germany. He then occupied Hanover, which had been vacated by the French, without consulting Napoleon and invited Tsar Alexander for a meeting to Berlin. Alexander's visit to the Prussian King's palace at Potsdam resulted in the two monarchs swearing an oath of Prussian-Russian solidarity on the tomb of Frederick the Great and signing the Treaty of Potsdam on 3 November.[59] Under the terms of the treaty, Frederick William III was to offer to Napoleon his mediation with an aim of restoring a peace along the lines of the Treaty of Lunéville and, should the French Emperor decline the offer, to enter into the war with an army of 180,000 men.

Following the signing of the treaty, however, the Prussians returned to their customary ways: the King insisted that Napoleon should be given time until 15 December to declare his intentions; Haugwitz, who was sent to deliver the ultimatum, was moving extremely slowly and reached the French headquarters in Brünn only at the end of November. Napoleon, who at that time was on the verge of delivering a decisive blow to the Allied army, sent Haugwitz on to Vienna to

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[59] In a very symbolic manner, by swearing an oath of Prussian-Russian solidarity on the tomb of Frederick the Great,  Alexander I effectively "buried" the ideals of the Novossiltsov Instructions. From then onwards, the coalitions against Napoleon were to be the *Coalitions of Kings* and not the *Coalitions of Nations,* despite the fact that the rhetoric of the rights of nations would continue to be employed by Alexander, especially later during the formation of the Grand Coalition in 1813-1814.

negotiate with Talleyrand. In the end, the Prussians offered too little too late and even that half-heartedly: on 2 December 1805 Napoleon won his greatest victory at Austerlitz, which signaled a *de facto* end of the Third Coalition.

Austria and the Third Coalition

Austria's road to war was as usual long and fraught with reversals. Her recovery after the Treaty of Lunéville was slow and difficult. In January 1804 she was approached by Russia with an offer of 100,000 troops if she were willing to confront France with a demand to return to the status quo in Germany and Italy. Despite French advances in the course of the previous two years, which had violated the Treaty of Lunéville, emperor Francis II declared "France has done nothing to me."

The two events that stirred up Austria and brought her eventually into war with France were Napoleon's proclamation of the French Empire in May 1804 and his coronation as the King of Italy a year later. Napoleon's choice of the title of emperor and not just of king had serious repercussions for the Holy Roman Empire and the Hapsburgs because it implied something of a European dimension (Lefebvre 1969, I, 207). Everyone understood that the old (German) Holy Roman Empire would not survive the birth of a new, French one. Moreover, "since tradition linked the Kingdom of Italy to the Holy Roman Empire," the Austrians feared a fresh round of French expansionism in Italy (ibid.). The result was an Austrian-Russian defensive pact signed in November 1804.

With regard to their expectations of French expansion in Italy, the Austrians were not mistaken. In January 1805, news came that the Italian

Republic would be transformed into a hereditary kingdom. On 18 May, Napoleon crowned himself in Milan as the King of Italy. Several weeks later, the Treaty of Lunéville was violated when France simply annexed the Ligurian Republic (Genoa). The Austrians then abandoned their hesitations and on 9 August acceded to the Anglo-Russian Treaty.

<u>The Collapse of the Third Coalition</u>

On 2 December 1805, with a single stroke at Austerlitz, Napoleon crushed the Third Coalition. First, the Austrians left the Coalition almost instantly. Following a meeting at the French headquarters between Napoleon and emperor Francis II, the Austrians signed a truce on December 6. Three weeks later, they signed the definite treaty at Pressburg, by which they were completely excluded from Italy and Germany.

Next were the Prussians. Having found themselves after Austerlitz alone vis-à-vis Napoleon, they promptly abandoned the Treaty of Potsdam and signed the treaty of Schönbrunn on 15 December 1805, by terms of which they finally entered into an alliance with France. The treaty, which provided for the Prussian annexation of Hanover, invited a British declaration of war on Prussia in May 1806.

After Austerlitz, the humiliated and furious Russian Tsar announced that he was returning to Russia. Disregarding his Foreign Minister's advice to continue to support Austria to prevent a Franco-Austrian alliance, Alexander resolved "to remain absolutely passive and not budge in any way until the time when we are attacked on our own soil" (Grimsted 1969, 142-43). In May, he

decided to open peace treaty negotiations with Napoleon by sending to Paris his envoy D'Oubril. By the time D'Oubril returned to St. Petersburg with a preliminary peace treaty, Czartoryski had already left office.[60]

In Britain, Pitt died on 23 January 1806, devastated by the news of the failure of his continental policy. His death was considered at St. Petersburg an event as unfortunate as Austerlitz since Pitt had always been a staunch supporter of the Anglo-Russian alliance (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 121).[61] Pitt was succeeded by the "Ministry of All the Talents" with Grenville as the Prime Minister and Fox in the Foreign Office, which almost immediately opened negotiations with France, with the aim of concluding a peace treaty jointly with Russia. In July 1806, however, Britain was abandoned by Russia, when the Russian Emperor's personal envoy D'Oubril signed a separate preliminary peace treaty in Paris, although it had never been ratified by Alexander.

Peace between Russia and France had to wait for another year and several bloody campaigns in the forests and marshes of Poland and east Prussia. After another major Russian disaster at Friedland in June 1807, an armistice was

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[60] After his resignation, Czartoryski wrote a memorandum for Alexander, dated 17 December 1806 and entitled "On the Necessity of Restoring Poland to Forestall Bonaparte." In the memorandum, Czartoryski argued that it was in Russia's interest to restore a Polish kingdom with the Russian Emperor as the king. A Poland with a constitution and in free and personal association with Russia could have a civilizing affect on Russia. It would also be a test for Russia to demonstrate its peaceful attitude to Europe. There was no immediate response from Alexander to the memorandum. However, the Russian Emperor did not forget its ideas and returned to them in 1810-11 and again during the campaign of 1813-1814 (Dzewanowski 1971, 591).

[61] Despite the disastrous end of the military campaign of the Third Coalition, the Alexander-Pitt correspondence had a profound effect on the future of Europe as it would serve as the basis for Castlereagh's more successful effort to create a concert of Europe in 1814-1815. "The ideas presented in Pitt's memorandum were to become 'the text of all his efforts'" (Sherwig 1962, 292). The blueprint would guide Castlereagh via the intricacies of Allied politics in 1813-1815 (Webster 1950, 57).

signed on 21 June 1807 and a personal conference arranged between Napoleon and Alexander at Tilsit. The final peace treaty between the two powers and an alliance pact, which were signed on 7 July, once again left Britain alone at war with France.

<u>Conclusion</u>

The negotiations which led to the formation of the Third Coalition were for the most part conducted prior to the commencement of hostilities and were thus unaffected by the fortunes of the military campaign. Nonetheless, they did not produce the desired all-power concert to fight against Napoleonic France. Although the Coalition was eventually formed, it was not based on any *shared* political aims, which in turn prevented a coordinated military strategy resulting in the ultimate defeat of the Coalition. Both Britain and Russia were committed to fight France but for different reasons and in pursuit of different goals, while the Austrians, as usual, were forced into war by their geographic exposure and vulnerability.

The Third Coalition saw no lack of ideas as to what the political aims of an all-power concert should be: both the Russians and the British came up with their own comprehensive plans for a post-war settlement in Europe. What the proposed schemes highlighted, however, was not the convergence or commonality of interests in the face of an immediate threat by a revolutionary power, but the differences of principle between the Allied governments: for Alexander, it was to be a war for the rights of smaller nations and a crusade for

liberal constitutionalism; for Pitt, it was a war for Britain's security and the restoration of the pre-war balance of power on the Continent.

The negotiations over the Third Coalition produced two *intellectual* leaders (Russia's Alexander and Britain's Prime Minister Pitt), whose contributions shaped the eventual concert created in 1814-15 but they failed to produce a skillful diplomat, an *entrepreneurial* leader who could bridge the differences between the members of the Coalition (though some would argue that the suggested schemes were simply irreconcilable).

**Chapter Five**

**The Grand Coalition and the Concert of Europe**

Europe Between Tilsit and Napoleon's Invasion of Russia: a Breakdown in
the Search for a European Concert

The campaign of 1807 ended with a crushing defeat of the Russian Army at
Friedland on 14 June. Alexander was forced to sue for peace and following a
series of interviews between the two emperors, a treaty signed at Tilsit on 7 July
ended the war between France and Russia. Despite the fact that the war ended
with Russia's defeat, Tilsit was heralded as a treaty of peace and friendship
between the two nations. The terms of Tilsit were designed to demonstrate
Napoleon's generosity and interest in the newly established alliance with Russia.
A French historian notes that by 1807 Napoleon had come to appreciate "Russia
at her true value" and thought that by rallying that power to his side he would be
able not only to control continental Europe but also rise against England (Vandal
1910, I, 33). In fact, Tilsit consisted of two treaties: the peace treaty which was
made public (with the exception of several secret articles) and the secret treaty of
alliance between the two countries. Alexander undertook to act as a mediator
between France and Britain. Should the Tsar's mediation effort fail, Russia
pledged to declare war on Britain and join France's Continental System, which
imposed an embargo on all trade with Britain (Weiner 1971, 5; Lobanov-
Rostovsky 1947, 156-158).

The Continental System was first conceived as a policy in 1796, when the
French Government sought to force Britain to beg for peace by ruining her
commerce. It became a policy of Napoleon after Britain herself proclaimed the

coast from the river Elbe to Brest in a state of blockade in May 1806 (Robinson and Beard 1908, I, 345). In response, Napoleon issued the Berlin Decree of 21 November 1806, which later was superseded by the Milan Decree of 17 December 1807. Under the terms of Napoleon's Continental System, any neutral vessel, heading to or returning from Britain or any of her colonies, would be deemed British property and hence a lawful prize. Thus, all trade with Britain would cease (Robinson and Beard 1908, I, 348-349; Lefebvre 1969, 10-11). With the system of mutual trade embargoes Britain and France embarked on a total war with each other.

As a policy choice, the Continental System was more problematic for France than for England because France could not effectively enforce the policy without the voluntary or forced cooperation of all other European states. It was sufficient for any single power to be either unable or unwilling to enforce the Continental System for it to be rendered fruitless (Robinson and Beard 1908, I, 350). In light of this, it is not surprising that by December 1810 Napoleon himself had identified the adherence to the Continental System as the main issue in his relations with Russia: should Alexander open his ports to neutral ships carrying colonial and English goods, it would in effect mean war with France (Parker 1990, 144).

In 1807, when Russia joined the Continental System, Alexander was apparently sincere in his indignation at Britain who had not provided any tangible assistance to Russia during the 1806-07 war. Reportedly, when the two Emperors met at Tilsit, Alexander's first words to Napoleon were: "Sire, I hate

the English as much as you do." "Then we have concluded peace," Napoleon replied. However, if the alliance with France was premised on Russia's rigid adherence to the Continental System, then it was not meant to last long as the System was ruinous to Russia's trade and economy (Weiner 1971, 7).

Besides the economic costs of the Continental System for Russia, Alexander's momentary disappointment with Britain could not displace his more profound personal and political disagreements with Napoleon. He was certainly impressed by the French Emperor, especially by his military prowess and reform projects (Grimsted 1969, 165). But it must be remembered that Alexander signed the Treaty of Tilsit under the distress of a crushing defeat. The Tsar felt that he had little choice. "There are circumstances when one must think in preference of one's own survival and follow no other rule than that of the good of state," he remarked (quoted in Grimsted 1969, 165). In addition, he could never accept a permanent position of subordination to Napoleon, whose mode of communication with his allies was usually dictating what they could or could not do. Already in 1807, the Tsar wrote to his sister, the Grand Duchess Catherine of Oldenburg, "these devilish politics go from bad to worse, and the infernal being who is the curse of the human race becomes from day to day more abominable" (Weiner 1971, 7).

Domestically, the alliance with Napoleon was politically costly for the Tsar as Tilsit became a cause of popular discontent among both the aristocracy and the commoners. The attitude of the aristocracy, which was affected by considerations of prestige and the loss of profitable trade with England, was best

expressed by Count Simon Vorontsov, former Ambassador to Britain, who went so far as to publicly propose that that the Russian diplomats who had signed the Tilsit treaty "should ride into the capital on donkeys" (Strakhnovsky 1947, 88). Common Russian people were no less antagonistic. Under the influence of preaching by the Russian Orthodox Church, they had come to view Napoleon as the Anti-Christ and regarded their Tsar's friendship with the Emperor of the French as questionable and inappropriate of an Orthodox Christian monarch (Shilder 1897, II, 211; Strakhnovsky 1947, 88). As Napoleon's envoy at St. Petersburg, General Savary, wrote back to his master in December 1807, "The Tsar and his [Foreign] Minister, the Count Roumyantsev, are the only friends of France in Russia" (cited in Grimsted 1969, 167).[62]

Each of these factors alone could be reason enough for renewed war, but taken together, they made the forthcoming war inevitable. The economic reasons weighed the heaviest, and, when on 31 December 1810 Russia gave up the Continental blockade claiming her inability to sustain the economic costs of the system, war with France was only a matter of time. The French Emperor refused to accept the fact that rigid adherence to the blockade was "economic suicide" for Russia (Weiner 1971, 7). The whole of 1811 seemed to be nothing more than an armed vigil. Finally, on 24 June 1812, using Alexander's end of imports control as

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[62] Count Nikolai Roumyantsev was appointed Foreign Minister in September 1807. Throughout the early years of Alexander's reign, he had consistently advocated *rapprochement* with Napoleonic France. Following the execution of the Duke of Enghien in 1804, he was the lone voice in the Council who spoke against breaking off diplomatic relations with France. He consistently opposed the formation of the Third Coalition and urged an immediate arrangement with Napoleon after the defeat at Austerlitz (Grimsted 1969, 167).

a *casus belli*, Napoleon crossed the River Niemen into Russia with an expectation of a quick and easy victory.

Europe and the War of 1812

The war of 1812 was more than just about the fate of Russia. A French historian remarks, "with Russia conquered, there would be no more Europe. There would be but one empire, the empire of Napoleon. […] The very existence of Europe was at stake" (Driault 1919, 615). In view of the gravity of the situation for Europe, some kind of a concerted action on the part of other European powers could be expected. Yet such expectations proved futile as the Continental powers were either totally subjugated or chose individual guarantees of their security to any concerted action. As early as February 1811, Alexander had put out secret feelers to Prussia, Sweden and Austria for a possible alliance against Napoleon, yet none of them replied positively. The Prussian King was so worked up over rumors of Napoleon's plan to completely eliminate his Kingdom that he and his Foreign Minister, Hardenberg, rushed to solicit "the honor of an alliance with France." Turning the initial request down, Napoleon later decided to demonstrate the "spirit of conciliation" and a treaty to that effect was signed on 2 March 1812 (Lefebvre 1969, II, 149). A Prussian army corps led by General Yorck was to assist the French armies on the left flank of the Russian front (Nicholson 1946, 21). Historians often stress that the Prussian King entered the alliance against Russia unwillingly and with a "heavy heart." It is difficult to judge whether this uneasiness was caused by feelings of guilt vis-à-vis Alexander or by the uncertainty of what Prussia would be getting into. In any case, Prussia's "uneasy"

alliance with France had its own share of promised benefits: following Russia's defeat, Prussia was promised the Baltic provinces of Russia. In her usual manner, Prussia displayed "a dog-like, if somewhat bewildered, devotion to the winning side" (Nicholson 1946, 20).

Austria's position vis-à-vis France was not as desperate as that of Prussia, and in 1812 Austria was still a great power. However, she was tied to France by the dynastic marriage of Napoleon to the daughter of Emperor Francis I, Marie-Louise (Webster 1950, 103). Prince Metternich, the architect of the dynastic union of the two Courts, was now Austria's permanent minister and in charge of the conduct of her foreign policy. He did not expect Napoleon to secure an overwhelming victory in Russia; but he did not foresee any overwhelming victory by Alexander, either. His estimate was that Napoleon would achieve a partial victory (Nicholson 1947, 41). He decided therefore to play safe with both sides. According to the treaty of alliance with France (concluded on 14 March 1812), Austria placed at the disposal of Napoleon a corps of 50,000 men under the command of General Schwarzenberg. It would be deployed on the right flank of the Grand Army. At the same time, Metternich secretly communicated to the Tsar through his personal envoy, the Comte de Saint-Julien, that "Russia would find an active friend in the French camp without having to meet an enemy in war" (Nicholson 1947, 41; Lefebvre 1969, II, 153).

Sweden's Crown Prince, Napoleon's former Marshal Jean Baptiste Bernadotte, initially also took the French Emperor's side by offering a contingent of 50,000 men for war against Russia provided he was allowed to take over

Norway. Napoleon would not even hear of such a thing: Norway belonged to the King of Denmark, whose alliance he needed to secure the Baltic from the Royal Navy. Eventually Bernadotte swung towards Russia, following a violent interview with Napoleon, during which the French Emperor accused him of persistent and widespread violations of the Continental System. In June 1812, diplomatic relations with France were broken off and Swedish ports were declared open to the ships of all neutrals (Lefebvre 1969, II, 149; Heathcote 1987, 30-31). After the beginning of Napoleon's invasion of Russia, Sweden offered her no tangible aid. Nonetheless the meeting between Bernadotte and Alexander at Abe, Finland, in July 1812, at a time when the Grand Army was marching on Moscow, marked the beginning of a personal friendship between the two that proved significant several years later when Alexander began to entertain the idea of replacing Napoleon on the French throne with his liberal-minded former marshal.

Of Russia's former allies, Britain was the only power at war with France. But while the British foreign secretary in Lord Liverpool's cabinet, Lord Castlereagh, watched Russia's fight against Napoleon with sympathy, it did not translate into any kind of tangible aid (Webster 1950, 92-93). It is true that Britain was somewhat prevented from rushing to Russia's assistance either militarily or financially by her engagement in the Peninsular War and the looming war with her former colonies in North America. Overlooking earlier British solicitations of an alliance with Russia against France, Castlereagh somewhat disingenuously claimed that, "it has never been the policy of this country to incite Russia to war. It has been, on the contrary, the uniform wish of the British government to leave the decision of that question entirely to Russia

upon a view of her own situation and resources" (Webster 1950, 92). In the war of 1812 Russia would have to fight Napoleon alone.

The popular sentiment in Europe was an expectation of a quick and easy victory for Napoleon. But by December 1812, the unexpected happened: the Grand Army was defeated by a combination of factors including a severe Russian winter, the spontaneous guerilla war waged by Russian peasants, the dogged resistance of the Russian army under the command of Field Marshall Koutuzov, and Alexander's stubborn refusal to treat the loss of Moscow as a defeat in the war. Napoleon's offer of a peace treaty remained unanswered. Eventually Napoleon was forced to evacuate Moscow and retreat along his invasion route, pursued by Koutuzov. In December, the remnants of the Grand Army crossed the Niemen bringing the Russian campaign to an ignominious end.

The Russian disaster did not mean, however, the end of French domination of Continental Europe. Napoleon's position was not irreparable. There was no indication that either Metternich or emperor Francis I would consider any alliance with Alexander against him (Nicholson 1946, 10-15). Prussia was as usual fearful and undecided: the Prussian King Frederick William III was paralyzed with fear "at the thought of staking his country's existence on a commitment to either side" (Bridge and Bullen 2005, 21). In early 1813, Napoleon had only two real enemies in the field: Britain and Russia. The future did not hold any threats of an imminent defeat as his only two adversaries were not even in a formal alliance with each other. As the small British army was fully occupied in the Peninsular campaign, and the Tsar's army emerged from the

Russian campaign victorious but decimated, the military and political fortunes of both Napoleon and his adversaries were still undecided.

<u>Alexander at the Crossroads</u>

Having expelled Napoleon from Russia, Alexander faced a historic question, what next? He had four courses of action to choose from. The first course was to end the war at Russia's borders. This policy of *isolationism* was recommended by Alexander's "victorious, ailing, and conservative commander in chief" Koutuzov and supported by some generals (Gulick 1955, 104). Arguing that Russian blood should only be shed for Russia's interests and not for those of "Europe," Russian isolationists had no desire to cross the Niemen, seeing no national interests being served by fighting Napoleon in Europe. They advocated a peace treaty with Napoleon which would transfer to Russia part of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw up to the line of the Vistula as a compensation for the victorious war (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 242). These ideas were not completely unfounded as Napoleon himself viewed a separate treaty with Russia at the cost of the Grand Duchy as advantageous to him too. As late as April 1813 he still entertained the idea of a separate peace with Russia as a means of keeping the German powers in check: "It would be easier to enter into direct agreement with emperor Alexander. I have always believed that the Polish Question is a means and not an end in itself" (Shilder 1897, III, 137).

The second course of action was advised by the Foreign Minister Roumyantsev, who advocated the pursuit of Napoleon across Europe as a purely Russian endeavor without forming any coalition with other powers (Gulick 1955,

105). This policy reflected the beliefs and values of Russia's *interventionist-imperialist* circles, who were ready to fight for territorial aggrandizement and the glory of their country.

Alternatively, Alexander could thrust at Napoleon across Europe with the help of other continental powers, Austria and Prussia, as suggested by his young adviser, Count Karl Nesselrode.[63] Such a military campaign would require the formation of a coalition of monarchs against France. The policy, advocated by Nesselrode, was close to the British thinking on the issue, but did not explicitly include Britain.

Finally, there was yet another political group which advocated the pursuit of Napoleon in Europe – Russian *liberal internationalists* who were hopeful that the Tsar would act on his earlier views, expressed in Novossiltsov's Instructions, and turn the war against Napoleon into a war for national liberation and constitutionalism in Europe. In 1813, the most prominent representatives of this group were the former foreign minister Adam Czartoryski and a Prussian liberal reformer, Baron Friedrich von Stein.[64] Czartoryski appeared at the headquarters of the Emperor in Kalisch in February 1813 to remind Alexander of his earlier promises of restoring Poland (Shilder 1897, III, 141), while Stein had been imploring the Tsar to "set Germany free" (Lefebvre 1969, II, 318).

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[63] While Count Roumyantsev continued officially as Chancellor and Foreign Minister until August 1814, when the Tsar left St. Petersburg in December 1812 to join the army he took with him the young Count Nesselrode to serve as secretary in diplomatic negotiations to be conducted from the Imperial headquarters (Grimsted 1969, 193).

[64] Stein, who was removed by the Prussian King at Napoleon's demand, entered the Russian service in the spring of 1812 and remained in the Russian Emperor's entourage through the Congress of Vienna serving as an adviser on German affairs (Grimsted 1969, 215).

Of these policy choices, isolationism was the least realistic option. The sentiment at home among both the aristocracy and the common people was such that Alexander would risk his crown had he not decided to pursue Napoleon and victoriously enter Paris to avenge the burning of Moscow. The fate of his father and the circumstances of his own accession to the throne made the Tsar painfully aware that he could only ignore the sentiments of St. Petersburg's aristocracy at his own peril. In addition to these considerations, Alexander was opposed to the policy of isolationism out of his personal feelings toward Napoleon. Thus, the real choice for him was not whether to pursue the war into Europe or not, but what objectives to adopt for the forthcoming European campaign. In early 1813, his war aims were not yet publicly defined in any clear fashion.

The Treaty of Kalisch and the Russo-Prussian Alliance

When the extent of the Grand Army's defeat became clear, the commander of the Prussian auxiliary corps, General Yorck, encouraged by German *émigrés* in the Russian service, entered into secret negotiations with the Russians and on 30 December 1812 signed a convention of neutrality at Tauroggen. The defection of Yorck's corps had significant strategic repercussions as it weakened the left flank of the Grand Army, making it impossible for her to hold on to the defense line east of the Vistula. Thus Napoleon would have to fight the spring campaign of 1813 in the increasingly restive Germany. Although king Frederick William III rushed to distance himself from Tauroggen by dismissing Yorck and publicly repudiating his action, the convention irretrievably compromised Prussia in Napoleon's eyes (Nicholson 1946, 20-21).

Pressures on the Prussian King to choose sides grew further when on 13 January 1813 Alexander, who left St. Petersburg to join the army, crossed the Niemen into East Prussia, "proclaiming his mission as the liberator of Europe" (Phillips 1914, 57). Inciting nationalist feelings among the Prussian subjects, Alexander issued a proclamation in which he invited all patriots to join in the struggle for "peace and independence" of the German nation promising to "put an end to the misfortunes which have fallen upon it and [...] to give back to the Kingdom of Frederick the Great its former frontiers and luster." At the same time, in a personal letter to the Prussian king Alexander informed him that Baron Stein was appointed the administrator of the liberated Prussian territories and the liaison between the Russian army and the Prussian population (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 244).

The activities of Stein and other German patriots threatened to create in Germany a revolutionary situation not unlike the one in France in 1789. In early February, Stein appeared at Königsberg and took the initiative of calling the local Estates. Subject to the king's approval, the Estates set up a militia, the *Landwehr*, which General Yorck was commissioned to organize. Paralyzed with fear, the King neither challenged this step nor approved it. He was attempting to negotiate in Paris with Napoleon by offering troops against Russia and was also waiting to see what position Austria's Chancellor, Metternich, would take. The tsar, however, writing through Stein demanded a clear-cut answer. Accompanied by Alexander's envoy, Stein traveled to the king's headquarters in Breslau, where he scared the king and his foreign minister, Hardenberg, by claiming that a number of German princes had already appealed to the tsar asking him for protection

(Nicholson 1946, 26). The panic-stricken king finally collapsed and Stein obtained Hardenberg's signature on the Russian draft of the treaty of alliance. The draft was signed by Koutuzov at the Imperial headquarters in Kalisch on 28 February and ratified by both monarchs the next day. Two weeks later, on 16 March, Prussia issued a declaration of war against France and the king expanded the *Landwehr* throughout his kingdom by calling up all men between the ages of seventeen and forty. *The War of Liberation* had begun in Europe.

The Treaty of Kalisch, which formed the Prussian-Russian alliance, is of special importance for us because it contained several provisions concerning Poland and Saxony which later became the main stumbling blocks during the negotiations of the final settlement at the Congress of Vienna. The preamble to the treaty contained a vague assertion of the principle of independence of nations, which was combined with a hint that it would be guaranteed by the establishment of a particular system of international relations (Phillips 1914, 59). Prussia would be "reconstituted" as the power she was in 1806; but the treaty did not explicitly promise the restoration of her former frontiers (Nicholson 1946, 27-28). Instead, a pledge was made to return to her part of western Poland and to compensate the loss of her other Polish territories with Saxony, whose king was still Napoleon's ally (Nicholson 1946, 27; Kukiel 1955, 106).

Any promises of compensation for Prussia in Germany were bound to raise the ire of the Austrians. But the two sovereigns went even further. On 25 March 1813, the tsar and the king issued a joint proclamation to the German people, in which they called on "every German still worth the name" to join them in their

fight "to recover the hereditary possessions of the people which have been taken away from them, but which are their inalienable right: their liberty and their independence, honor and country" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 245). The proclamation also promised not to interfere with France's domestic affairs provided that she would limit herself to her "natural frontiers." The language of the proclamation was completely new in the relations of European sovereigns to their peoples. It horrified Metternich, who declared it to be written in the spirit of Jacobinism. Instead of appealing to the monarchs and governments to aid him against France, Alexander was appealing directly to the people (Lobanov-Rostovsky, 1947, 246).

### Metternich's Diplomacy

<u>Austria Joins the Alliance. Napoleon's Defeat in Germany</u>. Russia's and Prussia's conduct and proclamations to the German people began to put pressure on Austria which was once again placed in a difficult position. Having achieved individual security by means of the dynastic marriage of Marie Louise to Napoleon, neither Austria's permanent minister, Prince Metternich, nor the Austrian emperor Francis I were inclined to rush into any alliance with Russia (Nicholson 1946, 10-15). Austria preferred to play her cards cautiously and chose to assume the role of mediator between the Russo-Prussian alliance and Napoleon.

Metternich had begun his deliberations for Austria's mediation in the forthcoming Continental war as early as October 1812 when it became clear that there would be no quick victory for Napoleon in Russia. At the end of December,

Metternich sent his personal envoy, Count Bubna, to Paris to inform Napoleon that the Austrians would not commit more troops against Russia. In fact, several weeks later, on 30 January, the Austrian commander, General Schwarzenberg, signed an armistice with the Russians and the Austrian corps retreated from the Russian territory to Galicia.

When the Russian tsar decided to pursue his enemy in Europe and the Prussian king eventually joined him as an ally, Austria was faced with a completely new security situation. During the previous coalitions her primary security concerns had been the threat of French expansionism in Germany and Italy and her own rivalry with Prussia. But in 1813, the greatest challenge for Metternich was not forcing France to her "old frontiers" but thwarting the plans of the Russian emperor to secure Poland for himself and Saxony for his Prussian ally. Thus, for Austria, the new principal security threats of Russia's continental hegemony and Prussia's regional hegemony in Germany converged in the question of the restoration of Poland and the related question of the annexation of Saxony.

To secure a significant role in the coming important decisions, the Austrian minister had to act quickly. So he did. To the French emperor, Metternich wrote that he should not take the Austrian alliance for granted by counting on the rivalry between Austria and Prussia and on his dynastic ties with the House of Hapsburg. To the tsar, he sent a warning that Napoleon should not be underestimated, as he was quickly raising a new large army for a campaign in Germany. Finally, to the Cabinet in London, he communicated that a general

peace was now conceivable and invited the British Government to join in the deliberations (Nicholson 1946, 42-43). The allies (particularly, the tsar) reluctantly accepted Metternich's mediation but his mission to London failed because the British Government made it clear they had no intention of signing any peace with Napoleon if it did not include maritime rights and the complete restoration of the Low Countries.

On 25 May, following a short, bloody but indecisive campaign, Napoleon sent his personal envoy, General Caulaincourt, to the Allied monarchs offering an armistice. The surprised monarchs accepted the offer and the armistice was signed at Pleiswiz on 4 June. Metternich realized that a window of opportunity had opened for a purely "Continental peace," one which would focus on a settlement between France, Russia Prussia, and Austria in central and southern Europe, leaving the British completely out (Nicholson 1946, 43). Metternich's plan proposed returning France to her "natural frontiers" of the Pyrenees and the Rhine. The Confederation of the Rhine and the Duchy of Warsaw were to be disbanded and the German states put under the protection of Austria and Prussia. Russia was expected to resume her position before the Treaty of Tilsit. Austria would regain her Illyrian provinces on the Adriatic coast and annex Italian territory up to the Mincio (Nicholson 1946, 41-43). Thus, Metternich sought guarantees of Austria's security in new territorial arrangements rather than in new principles of international politics or new security institutions in Europe. It is also noteworthy that he viewed Napoleon as a partner with whom a negotiated settlement was possible.

The price Metternich had to pay for his chance of brokering a continental peace was a pledge made in the Treaty of Reichenbach, signed on 24 June 1813, whereby Austria agreed to join the anti-French Coalition, should Napoleon turn the proposed Austrian mediation down (Nicholson 1946, 43).

As a result of Metternich's mediation efforts, a cessation of hostilities, scheduled to expire on 20 July, was extended until a peace conference convened in Prague by Napoleon and the Allies could work out the terms of a continental pacification. Neither of the principal antagonists – Napoleon and Alexander – genuinely pursued the negotiations in Prague, however. "Napoleon himself remained obdurate in his conviction that to surrender a single one of his conquests would be to sacrifice his throne," while Alexander had made up his mind in December 1812 that a "permanent and secure peace could only be established if signed in Paris" (Nicholson 1946, 47; Shilder 1897, III, 128). On 12 August 1813, Metternich had to accept the failure of the Prague Conference and Austria was left with no choice but to formally join the armies of Prussia and Russia against Napoleonic France. "Metternich's daring, and it must be admitted brilliant, diplomatic offensive had collapsed" (Nicholson 1946, 47).

The subsequent campaign culminating in the "Battle of Nations" at Leipzig on 16-18 October resulted in the decisive defeat of Napoleon. On 2 November, the French retreated behind the Rhine. As the Allies approached the border of France, the old question of the ultimate aims of the war resurfaced again. This time, the antagonism was between Metternich, who entertained the idea of a continental peace with Napoleon, and Alexander, who wanted to avenge the

burning of Moscow by a triumphal entry to Paris and the dethronement of the "tyrant."

In November 1813, Metternich seized on another chance to opportunistically pursue his aims. The French minister at Weimar, Baron de Saint Aignan, arrived in Frankfurt on his way to Paris. Making use of this opportunity, Metternich informed the French minister that he was willing to accept the offer of negotiations which Napoleon himself had made after the first day of the Battle of Leipzig. The key element of the peace offer, which became known as the Frankfurt proposals, was reducing France to her "natural borders." If Napoleon had accepted the proposals immediately, he would probably have retained his throne, and he and Metternich could have secured a continental peace. However, in his usual manner, Napoleon dragged his feet and his immediate reply through his Foreign Minister Maret was ambiguous: it suggested a conference but did not explicitly accept the "natural frontiers." In the first days of December, Napoleon replaced Maret, an outspoken advocate of a fight to the bitter end, with Caulaincourt, who was known to be in favor of peace. The new Foreign Minister immediately communicated to the Allies his acceptance of the Frankfurt proposals as the basis for negotiations. By that time, however, the Russian Emperor had refused to treat with Napoleon on the basis of the Frankfurt proposals (Nicholson 1946, 61-63). Instead Alexander made public his own aims in the war: he intended to uphold his bargain with Prussia to give her Saxony as a compensation for Poland; he was prepared to restore the Italian sovereigns (including the King of Sardinia and the King of Naples) and, at the insistence of his former tutor, Laharpe, to assume the role of the protector of the

Swiss. Most importantly, Alexander was determined to dethrone Napoleon and replace him with Sweden's Prince-Regent Bernadotte (Lefebvre 1969, II, 340).

Castlereagh's Mission to the Continent

Up until December 1813, Britain had been represented in the Continental councils by Lord Cathcart and Sir Charles Stewart, Castlereagh's brother, who, since June 1813, were attached to the Russian and Prussian headquarters respectively, and the young and inexperienced Lord Aberdeen, attached to the entourage of the Austrian Emperor (Nicholson 1946, 60). Despite the presence of three diplomats, British position on issues of vital interest to her, such as maritime rights and the fate of the Low Countries, was not effectively represented: as Alexander's emissary to London, Count Pozzo di Borgo, complained, the Allies did not have a clear picture of Britain's position since the three British envoys – Aberdeen, Cathcart and Charles Stewart – would constantly contradict each other. Attempting to coordinate their positions from London was not an option: the British Government had already experienced the negative effects of extremely slow communication between London and her envoys at the European courts during the Second Coalition when the envoys had to either use outdated instructions or postpone important decisions because of the time needed for dispatches to travel to and from London. As events towards the end of 1813 were making the achievement of the long-cherished British strategic plans possible, having a higher ranking representative of the Government at the Allied headquarters became imperative. The Government also believed that the British representative should be given a free hand to make

important decisions without reference home. Eventually, a decision was made to send the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh, himself.

The Memorandum of 26 December 1813

Castlereagh, a pupil of the late Prime Minister Pitt, took the unusual step of outlining his negotiating instructions in a Cabinet memorandum of 26 December 1813 (Webster 1965, 32). The memorandum, which drew on Pitt's heritage, was a comprehensive plan for Castlereagh's subsequent actions, which resulted in the creation of the Concert of Europe, and is therefore worth a more detailed look. First, Castlereagh set himself the task of ensuring that the question of maritime rights would not even be raised at any peace conference or congress: this was Britain's non-negotiable demand in exchange for any alliance against France. Second, as a general objective, Britain was to pursue her traditional goal of establishing and maintaining a balance of power on the Continent (Phillips 1914, 87-88). A third objective was to establish an understanding among the Allies not only on all matters of common interest but on all issues which they would discuss with the adversary. In other words, the Allied powers should be brought to act in "perfect concert" against France (Webster 1965, 33-34). To accomplish the latter task, Castlereagh would have to coordinate several separate treaties already existing between the Allies into a single comprehensive treaty binding all members of the coalition together (Nicholson 1947, 59).

While France was identified as the main threat, which a concert of Great Powers had to contain, Castlereagh was not blind to the threat of Russia's expansion which had become a distinct possibility after her triumph in the war of

1812. As a result, his diplomacy was based on several premises: Russia's expansion had to be counter-balanced by the strengthening of the German powers; Prussia should increase her area of influence in northern and western Germany; Austria should receive compensations in Italy; and in return for the "just equilibrium" thus achieved Britain would restore to France, Spain and the Netherlands at least some of their former colonies conquered by Britain (Nicholson 1946, 55-56). Concerning the dynastic question, there was an expectation that Austria would not be interested in dethroning Napoleon, so the British Government was ready to consent to Napoleon retaining the throne provided that France was driven to her pre-1792 borders. The most important provision of Castlereagh's plan, however, one that he borrowed from Grenville's and Pitt's earlier schemes for a European concert, was that "the alliance against France was to continue after peace had been made" (Webster 1965, 36; Nicholson 1946, 68).

On 28 December 1813, Castlereagh left London for the Continent (Nicholson 1947, 61). At the time, the prevailing mood in London was an expectation of a quick victory over Napoleon. Thus Castlereagh was rushing to divide the spoils of victory over France. When on 10 January 1814, he reached the Austrian headquarters at Basle, the Allied armies had already crossed the Rhine and were advancing onto Paris. After a fortnight stay at Basle, Castlereagh traveled to the headquarters of the Tsar at Langres on 23 January.

It did not take the British Foreign Minister long to realize that the perception in London of the situation on the Continent was not grounded in the

realities of the day. The victory over Napoleon was still uncertain as the Allies continued to remain bitterly divided over their war aims and strategy. There was no agreement even over the question whether the Allies should treat with Napoleon or not: Alexander was against any negotiations, while Metternich was ready to open peace talks promised to the French Foreign Minister Caulaincourt at Châtillon (Phillips 1914, 71-2). In addition, Alexander continued to employ the language of national rights, which Metternich refused to accept. On 1 January 1814, the Russian Emperor communicated his plans for Europe to his aid Count Capo d'Istria. When Napoleon was overthrown, Alexander declared, his goal would be

> to restore to each nation the full and entire enjoyment of its rights and of its institutions; to place all, including ourselves, under the safeguard of a general alliance, in order to guarantee ourselves and to save them from the ambitions of a conqueror [...]. (Phillips 1914, 64-65)

To Castlereagh's surprise and relief, during his week-long stay in Basle, he learned from Metternich that the positions of Britain and Austria were not as far from each other as London had believed them to be, yet another misconception that the British Government had. He was pleased to learn that Metternich understood the British position concerning maritime rights and the Low Countries. For his part, Metternich was relieved to learn that Castlereagh did not favor ideas of a liberal and united Germany advocated by Stein and other German patriots. "The English Minister's conception of a "just equilibrium" accorded very much with his own theories of the balance of power" (Nicholson 1946, 70).

Metternich made it clear to the British Foreign Secretary that the real difficulty now was not the future boundaries of France, but Alexander's ideas

including his designs for Poland and Saxony and plans to replace Napoleon on the throne with the Swedish Crown Prince Bernadotte. Now Alexander's aspirations began to worry not only Austria but Britain too. This shared view of the danger of Russia's growing influence and Alexander's war aims became the basis for the Anglo-Austrian rapprochement. The Basle meeting between Castlereagh and Metternich established an "identity of thought and feeling" between them personally, thus cementing the new alliance between Britain and Austria (Nicholson 1946, 71).

<u>The Treaty of Chaumont: the Formation of the Grand Alliance</u>

Up until the beginning of the campaign in France in February 1814, the Allies were tied to each other through several separate treaties of alliance and subsidies: no single treaty bound all four powers together despite the fact that they had been fighting Napoleon side by side. The perils of this situation were highlighted by military developments in February 1814.

Between February 10 and 18, Napoleon used the lack of a coordinated war strategy between the Russian-Prussian and the Austrian armies to inflict on them a series of defeats at Champaubert, Montmirail, and Montereau. The military setback brought the alliance almost to the verge of collapse. At the allied headquarters at Troyes, everyone was uncertain, dilatory and frightened. "The Tsar," recorded Hardenberg in his diary, "has gone to pieces and the King [Frederick William] talks all the time like Cassandra" (Nicholson 1946, 79). At this moment the Austrians took it upon themselves to offer Napoleon an armistice. Napoleon seized the opportunity to press on the Allies the Frankfurt

proposals as the basis for negotiations: in a letter of February 22 to his father-in-law, emperor Francis, Napoleon offered to treat on the basis of the recognition of the "natural frontiers" declaring that he "could not reduce France to smaller proportions than when he had assumed control" (Lefebvre 1969, II, 349).

When he learned about the Austrian initiative, Castlereagh energetically protested and on 9 March, following a reversal of fortunes on the battlefield, he obtained the signing of a treaty at Chaumont which bound all four powers in a single alliance against France for a period of twenty years. A few days later, on 9 March, the Treaty of Chaumont was published and thus the Grand Alliance had come into existence. Castlereagh's personal efforts at replacing all previous bilateral treaties with one general treaty of alliance were finally successful (Nicholson 1946, 81; Lefebvre 1969, II, 349).[65]

The terms of Chaumont were simple and conclusive. The four great powers pledged themselves to continue the war until their objects were attained. The stated aims avoided addressing the more controversial issues, such as Poland and Saxony, that had divided the Allies. Instead, they included non-controversial aims such as an independent Holland enlarged to include Belgium, a confederated Germany, an independent Switzerland, a Spain under the Bourbon dynasty, and the restoration of the Italian states. The most important provision of Chaumont was the pledge that the newly-formed Quadruple Alliance should last for twenty years after the conclusion of hostilities (Webster 1965, 51). The four

[65] Now that they had finally secured their goal, which they had been hoping to achieve for two decades, the British finally granted their Coalition partners five million pounds in subsidies promised in the conventions signed in summer and fall 1813.

great powers were to assist each other in the event of any attempt on the part of France to disturb the arrangements worked out at the forthcoming peace congress (Webster 1965, 51).[66]

Chaumont not only set up the Quadruple Alliance but became the first of several major treaties that would constitute the legal basis for the future Concert of Europe (Webster 1965, 51). It was Castlereagh's first great diplomatic achievement and he would refer to Chaumont as "my treaty" (Nicholson 1946, 82). Its major weakness, however, was that it was a traditional treaty of alliance and as such it could not provide any institutional framework within which the twenty-year Quadruple Alliance would operate.

Following the signing of Chaumont, negotiations with Caulaincourt at Châtillon were broken off on 19 March and the Allied armies began the final push onto Paris. The French capital fell on 31 March 1814. Two days later, on 2 April, the French Senate decided that emperor Napoleon was deposed and set up a Provisional Government under the former Foreign Minister, Talleyrand. On 6 April, after a violent confrontation with his marshals, Napoleon finally gave his consent to abdication. On 11 April, the Treaty of Fontainebleau sealed the fate of emperor of the French by exiling him to the Mediterranean island of Elba and granting him an annual allowance. The Allies could now turn their undivided attention to the peace arrangements.

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[66] The expression "Great Powers" entered diplomatic vocabulary after the Treaty of Chaumont when it was used for the first time.

The Question of Succession to Napoleon

Between 31 March 1814 (the capitulation of Paris) and 13 April (the ratification of the Treaty of Fontainebleau) disagreements among the Allies continued to grow. Shortly after his splendid entry into Paris at the head of the Russian and Prussian troops, the Tsar began to behave as if he were the sole ruler of France, dispensing with important questions without any input from his British or Austrian allies. Alexander seemed to believe that he alone had freed the French people from the tyranny of Napoleon, and was the provider and defender of liberty and justice in France as well as in Europe. This attitude was reinforced by the circumstances of the first weeks after the victory when the Austrian Emperor Francis I, Metternich and Castlereagh all stayed in the rear of the armies, and Alexander lost all contact with them.[67]

Napoleon's abdication, which had not been initially desired by either Metternich or Castlereagh, raised the question of who would succeed him as the legitimate ruler of France. Now that Napoleon was dethroned, Castlereagh and Metternich favored the restoration of the Bourbons (Nicholson 1946, 90). For them, the Bourbons on the French throne were the best guarantee against the revival of the revolutionary spirit of that country. But their plans met little sympathy with the Russian Emperor.

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[67] Castlereagh was not in a hurry to enter Paris as he did not wish to be identified either with the terms of Napoleon's abdication or with those of a Bourbon restoration, whereas the Austrian Emperor did not find it appropriate to be in Paris when his son-in-law would be dethroned (Nicholson 1946, 87-88).

Alexander personally despised the Bourbons and believed that they deserved their political fate because of their incompetence.[68] His own ideas included either establishing Bernadotte on the French throne or, to the horror of Castlereagh and Metternich, calling up an Assembly of the French people to decide what type of government they want to have. The Austrians and the British saw the threat of yet another Franco-Russian alliance, in which the "visionary autocrat of All the Russias would figure as the patron of Jacobinism in France and Europe" (Phillips 1914, 87). Should Alexander's unilateralism be allowed to continue, it would mean for Austria and Britain that Russia was beginning to play the same role in Europe as Revolutionary France had done before.

Castlereagh and Metternich realized now that the dethronement of Napoleon was not sufficient to guarantee the tranquility of Europe - it was equally important to "contain" his victor, the Russian Emperor. Ensuring that Alexander's plans to enthrone Bernadotte were defeated and that the Bourbons came into their "legitimate rights" became one of the key elements of their plan to contain the hegemonic tendencies of the Tsar.

For Alexander, the enthronement of Bernadotte was one of his last attempts to act, at least in part on the promises of Novossiltsov's Instructions: granting the peoples of Europe liberal, constitutional monarchies. To understand why the Tsar would entertain such ideas about Bernadotte, one should take a brief look at the latter's career.

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[68] Being initially more eager to dethrone Napoleon then any other members of the Coalition, Alexander was the least punitive victor among the Allies after Napoleon's defeat. During the negotiations of the treaty of Fontainebleau, he was the one to insist on the milder terms of Napoleon's abdication (see Nicolson 1946, 91-95).

<u>Bernadotte as Alexander's Vision of a Liberal Monarch</u>

A common soldier in 1789, Bernadotte was a man made by the French Revolution which opened great opportunities for his talents. He first attracted attention when he was promoted to brigadier general after one of the greatest victories of the Republican armies at Fleurus in June 1794. By 1799, he rose to the position of the Minister of War but shortly thereafter was dismissed at the insistence of one of the members of the Directory, Siéyès, who had become alarmed at the growing popularity and influence of the young general. A committed republican, Bernadotte refused to support Napoleon in the coup d'état of 18 Brumaire which ended the Republic. Despite their uneasy relationship, Napoleon nonetheless promoted him to the rank of Marshal of France in 1804.[69] In 1805-09, Bernadotte participated in several campaigns of the Grand Army as a corps commander but without any particular triumph. During the Prussian campaign of 1806, Bernadotte received the surrender of a Swedish division which had arrived at Lubeck to support the Prussians. His gallant behavior toward the Swedish officers began a connection that would prove significant a few years later (Heathcote 1987, 28).

In 1809, a coup d'état in Sweden had forced king Gustavus IV into exile. He was replaced by his childless and elderly uncle, who was crowned Charles XIII. In August 1810, the Swedes, seeking an alliance with Napoleon in order to secure the return of Finland, which they had lost to Russia in the previous year,

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[69] Bernadotte's marriage to Napoleon's former fiancée (and the sister of Joseph Bonaparte's wife), Désirée Clary, was widely and uncharitably canvassed as the main reason for his promotion (Heathcote 1987).

offered Bernadotte the crown as Prince Regent of Sweden, entrusting him with the conduct of the country's foreign policy.

Contrary to his new subjects' expectations, Bernadotte guided Sweden away from Napoleon and closer to Napoleon's great antagonist, Alexander. His friendship with Alexander began in 1812, after a personal interview at Abe, Finland, which sealed a political alliance between the Russian autocrat and the parvenu of the French Revolution. Bernadotte's courage in challenging Napoleon by breaking the Continental System in June 1812 and opening the Swedish ports to the ships of all neutrals, impressed the Russian Tsar and gave him an idea that "he might be able to establish this liberal-minded prince on the wrecked throne of Napoleon" (Scott 1933, 465-466). This idea also received the support of Alexander's former tutor Laharpe who saw Bernadotte as a first consul of a French Republic.

In 1813, Bernadotte joined the Allies and brought a Swedish army to Germany that fought his former comrades-in-arms at the battle of Leipzig. He did not participate, however, in the campaign of 1814 in France, apparently for fear of being seen as a traitor by the French people.

Bernadotte's bid for the French throne eventually failed. To some extent, it was because at the critical time – the first weeks of April 1814 – he was absent from Paris. Ignoring the Tsar's advice, he was not in his entourage when the Russian and Prussian armies entered Paris. The news of Napoleon's abdication reached him in Liège. Although he hurried to Paris, he remained largely

"invisible" during the subsequent weeks, undermining by his own inactivity the expectations of Parisians concerning his enthronement (Scott 1933, 474).

The failure of the plan to enthrone Bernadotte was also a reflection of the weaknesses of the Tsar's character: he, unlike his great antagonist, Napoleon, was not able to see his plans through in the face of determined opposition from his "allies." Unlike the issue of Poland, where he had the Prussian King as an ally, the question of the enthronement of Bernadotte the Tsar was completely alone: the Prussian King and his Foreign Minister Hardenberg were extremely concerned about the ambitions of Napoleon's former marshal; Metternich was furious and managed to secure Castlereagh's opposition to Bernadotte's candidacy. Thus, a combination of Alexander's inability to pursue any unilateral schemes, Bernadotte's absence from Paris during the crucial weeks following the Allied victory, Talleyrand's intrigues and support he received from Metternich and Castlereagh ended with the proclamation of the Bourbons as legitimate rulers of France. The Tsar's dream of a liberated France with a liberal-minded, constitutional ruler was crushed.

The newly enthroned Louis XVIII returned to France on 23 April. At the insistence of Alexander, who declared that the Bourbon restoration was contingent on the granting of a constitution to the French people, the King accepted the new Constitution or Charter, which had been passed by the French Senate under Talleyrand's direction on April 6. This opened the door for peace treaty negotiations between the Allied Powers and the new legitimate monarch of

France, which were concluded on 30 May 1814 by the signing of the First Treaty of Paris (Nicholson 1946, 100; Phillips 1914, 85).

The terms of the First Treaty of Paris seem rather lenient. Although France had to renounce all her claims on the Low Countries, Germany, Italy, and Switzerland and thus was reduced to her "ancient borders," she was spared the payment of reparations and was even allowed to keep for the moment, at least, the works of art that she had looted in the course of her wars. But, as a historian of the Congress of Vienna has noted, the generosity of the Allies "was not sentimental but politic." What the Allies desired was security from the resurgence of the French threat (which had been achieved through the restoration of the Bourbons and the reduction of France to her "ancient limits") and repose before they addressed the outstanding issues among themselves (Nicholson 1946, 100; Webster 1965, 63).

The Congress of Vienna

Selecting a successor to Napoleon and determining the new frontiers of France were the first issues settled upon the Allied victory in the First Treaty of Paris. "Outside France [however] hardly anything had been settled as to the territorial reconstruction of Europe. From the Rhine to the Vistula, from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, the frontier of every state had to be reconstructed" (Webster 1950, 327-8). This final settlement of nearly a quarter century of war in Europe was reserved for a congress to be held in Vienna in the fall of 1814. All the powers that had participated in the war, including France had the right to be represented at the Congress; but under a secret article of the First Treaty of Paris, all the

issues related to the "system of a real and permanent balance of power" in Europe were to be decided at the Congress by the members of the Quadruple Alliance strictly among themselves (Nicholson 1946, 134-135).

The Congress started on 15 September 1814. The negotiations at once demonstrated the true measure of disunity among the Allies. Writing to the Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, Castlereagh complained, "I witness every day the astonishing tenacity with which all the Powers cling to the smallest point of separate interest" (Nicholson 1946, 175). But the bitterest disagreements among the Allies emerged over the issue of Poland. It not only divided the Grand Coalition into two counter-balancing alliances but threatened to disrupt the proceedings of the Congress as a whole.

The Question of Poland

Alexander's ideas about Poland grew out of his earlier scheme for European unity. In the Novossiltsov Instructions of 1804, the Tsar had already outlined an idea of a confederated Europe of "constitutional states, demarcated by their national boundaries and by homogeneity of population" (Phillips 1914, 116). During the negotiations over the Third Coalition, the revolutionary aspects of the Novossiltsov Instructions met opposition by Pitt whose own plan for a new Europe was based on a new territorial division rather than new principles of international politics. To obtain the urgently needed British alliance against Napoleon, Alexander had to quietly abandon the Novossiltsov Instructions but he had never forgotten them. In early 1813, taking his war against Napoleon to Germany, Alexander once again revived the language of constitutionalism and

the rights of nations. But by its very nature the Coalition of Monarchs, which the Grand Coalition turned out to be, could not deliver the promised liberation to the nations of Europe and the restoration of the Bourbons on the French throne was the best illustration of this. Thus, by the fall of 1814, no aspiration of Alexander from his earlier years had been realized except for the dethronement of Napoleon. It was obvious that the great revolution in European politics that Alexander had advocated in 1804-05 was not to be. The last and only question from the earlier scheme that was yet to be settled was the question of the restoration of Poland and the Tsar was determined to at least partly realize the Novossiltsov Instructions.[70] In addition, in the question of Poland Alexander was backed by the Prussian King. The alliance with Prussia gave the Tsar enough structural power and personal courage to see the issue through on his own terms.

Alexander's decision was itself problematic in many aspects. But it was made even more problematic by being connected to the question of Saxony. If a larger Polish kingdom were to be set up, Austria and Prussia would lose Polish provinces they had acquired from the partitions of 1772-95, and would have to seek compensation elsewhere. Austria could find compensations in Italy and possibly the Balkans; Prussia, however, could only find compensation in Germany and in that case she would demand Saxony and the left bank of the

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[70] Despite accusations of imperialism thrown against Alexander by some liberal historians, the restoration of Poland was conceived by him as anything but imperialistic. In fact, the more informed historians agree that it "was certainly not inspired by consideration for the interests of Russia" (Phillips 1914, 114). The Tsar's Polish policy "was hated by his people and condemned by his Russian advisors" (Phillips 1914, 114-15). It was opposed by the Russian imperialist aristocracy as the establishment of liberal institutions in a neighboring province "would be bound to produce an unsettling effect in Russia itself" (Nicholson 1946, 150).

Rhine (Nicholson 1946, 150-151). But Austria would never accept Saxony as a compensation for Prussia as it would disrupt the balance of power between the two German powers.

Prussia's position on the Polish Question was pragmatic. She realized that Russia's growing power in the east could not be resisted and switched her focus from Eastern Europe to Germany. Since the suggested acquisition of Saxony would alter the balance of power in Germany in her favor, "no matter what fears of Russia Prussia might have [in the east], those fears were outweighed by the Prussian desire to secure Russian support for their designs with regard to Saxony" (Phillips 1914, 108). At Vienna, the Prussian generals and Hardenberg personally were determined that "Prussia should emerge from the Congress with such additions of territory as would render her a Germanic Power of the first magnitude" (Nicholson 1946, 151).

Austria saw Alexander's plan for Poland and Prussia's demand for Saxony as particularly threatening. It was quite clear to the Austrians that Prussia's aspirations at the Congress were not limited to extending her territorial possessions but included placing herself at the head of a reconstituted German Confederation. The Austrian view of Alexander was even more negative. The Russian Emperor was regarded as nothing less than a declared enemy. The relations were worsened by the personal antagonism between Alexander and Metternich who represented their countries at the Congress of Vienna. The proposed plans for Poland and Saxony would entail for Austria not only the loss of Polish lands in the east but the realization of the worst Austrian nightmare: the

rise of Prussia's hegemony in Germany and the extension of Russia's presence right into central Europe up to the Oder (Robinson and Beard 1908, 2, 348-352).

To counterbalance the Russo-Prussian alliance, Austria needed allies. The two potential allies available to her were France and Britain. Metternich and Talleyrand, who represented France at the Congress, were in perfect agreement with each other over the questions of Poland and Germany but there were tensions between the two regarding proposed Austrian compensations in Italy. But the choice of Britain as an ally also had problems: Metternich was concerned that once the British secured their own interests in the Low Countries and their maritime rights, the only remaining interest they would have would be peace on the Continent at any cost. In that case should war break out with Prussia and Russia, Britain might refuse to ally with Austria or even to provide a war subsidy. France of course could be relied on in the eventuality of war with the Russo-Prussian alliance but any French assistance would not be welcome in Germany. In fact, any alliance of the type between Austria and France would set the opinion of the whole of Germany against Austria (Robinson and Beard 1908, II, 348-352). Thus, in choosing between the two potential allies, Austria would prefer the alliance of Britain. Moreover, any ties with France were still theoretical as France was not yet admitted to the ranks of the Great Powers who were alone to work out all the major decisions at the Vienna gathering.

For Castlereagh, who personally represented Britain at Vienna, Britain's security could be best achieved by a system of what the British considered to be a "just equilibrium" or a balance of power on the Continent. The British view of the

"just equilibrium" included securing non-negotiable British interests: maritime rights, the creation of a single state in the Low Countries, closely allied to Great Britain, as a barrier against any future French aggression, and the exclusion of French influence from the Iberian Peninsula (Nicholson 1946, 205-206). Skillfully managing the rivalries of the Continental powers, Castlereagh's diplomacy at Vienna guaranteed that the settlement and institutions coming out of the Congress would advance all these vital British interests.

At the same time Castlereagh was not blind to the threat of Alexander's hegemonic tendencies. He had come to share Metternich's concern about the growing Russian influence in Europe and had suspicions that Alexander's plan for a restored Poland could in fact be a disguise for Russia's drive into central Europe. For that reason, in the Polish Question Castlereagh personally sided with Metternich. The British public was sympathetic to the Polish cause and would like to see the injustice done to Poland redressed. The Cabinet was even prepared to agree to the restoration of Poland. But since any real guarantees that the restored Poland would be a genuinely independent state were out of reach for Britain, the Cabinet eventually went along with Castlereagh's personal preference for an alliance with Austria in the question. The result was the split within the Grand Alliance as two balancing coalitions emerged.

In the face of the mounting opposition to the Tsar's plans, Russia began to make small but important unilateral steps. On 8 November 1814, the Russian general commanding the Russian army of occupation in Saxony, Prince Repnin, transferred the administration of the Kingdom to the Prussian authorities. A few

days later it became known in Vienna that the Russian Grand Duke Constantine had issued a proclamation in Warsaw calling on the Poles to unite and fight for the independence of their country. These developments began to put pressure on the Austrians who had to prepare for a possible military action in the east.

The threat of a military confrontation among the Allies took place against the backdrop of the growing timidity of British Government that had to take into account the growing public disapproval of Castlereagh's actions: the public interpreted his support of Austria as his personal desire to keep Poland partitioned (Nicholson 1946, 175-176). As a result, Castlereagh's authority to act at Vienna was diminished by the lack of the Cabinet support and public disapproval precisely at the time when the Continental powers were nearing a military confrontation.

The Polish Question could have remained unresolved, threatening all future agreements to be made at the Congress, had it not been for the intervention of Talleyrand in December 1814. On the one hand, Talleyrand realized that the political salvation of France (her acceptance to the rank of Great Powers) was in the discord among the Allies and since the Polish Question was contributing to that discord, it might well be left festering. On the other hand, since France would be affected by any Allied solution to the Polish Question, it was in her interest to contribute to a "just" resolution of the conflict that would uphold the balance of power in Europe.

Unlike Castlereagh, who believed that once every major power would get what she wanted, there would be no need for any further conflicts, Talleyrand

viewed the balance of power in Europe as relative rather than absolute. To Talleyrand, the balance of power in Europe was about finding a political formula of coexistence rather then about any mechanical divisions into "equal" parts. As the French Minister stressed,

> [t]he general equilibrium of Europe cannot be composed of simple elements; it can only be a system of partial equilibrium. An absolute equality of power between all the States, not only can never exist, but is not necessary to the political equilibrium and would perhaps in some respects be hurtful to it. That equilibrium consists in a relation between the power of resistance and the power of aggression. If Europe were composed of States being so related to one another than the minimum of resisting power of the smallest were equal to the maximum of aggressive power of the greatest, then there would be a real equilibrium. But the Situation of Europe is not, and will never be, such. The actual situation admits solely of an equilibrium which is artificial and precarious and which can only last so long as certain large States are animated by a spirit of moderation and justice which will preserve that equilibrium. (cited in Nicholson, 1946, 154)

Prior to the commencement of the Congress, Talleyrand wrote a set of instructions concerning the Polish Question, in which he asserted that the formation of an independent Poland would be beneficial to Europe provided that the following conditions were met. First, Poland must be absolutely independent. Second, she must be strong enough to maintain her independence. And lastly, the restoration of Poland must not entail undue compensations to Austria or Prussia (Nicholson 1946, 155). If these conditions could not be secured, Talleyrand believed, the partition of Poland should be maintained in the larger interests of *Europe.*

Talleyrand objected to the Russo-Prussian plan for Poland because he believed that the territorial compensation promised to Prussia in Saxony and the left bank of the Rhine would make her too strong a power in the center of Europe.

In a prophetic manner, as if foreseeing the coming two centuries, Talleyrand complained that if "the Prussian generals obtained their desires, then Prussia "would in a few years form a militarist monarchy which would be very dangerous to her neighbors.'" At the same time, having championed the restoration of the Bourbons in France, Talleyrand was not oblivious to the fact that in the Polish-Saxon Question the Great Powers were acting against the principle of legitimacy (which they now publicly endorsed), and which did not allow them to violate the legitimate rights of the ancient Saxon dynasty (Nicholson 1946, 156). In two important memoranda of 19 and 26 December 1814, addressed to the Allies, Talleyrand insisted that the dethronement of the King of Saxony was against the fundamental principles of legitimacy in Europe. He also mentioned that he had arranged with minor German states an address to the Congress in which they protested against the annexation of Saxony by Prussia.

The Prussians were furious at the demonstration, and on 29 December Hardenberg issued a warning that if Prussia's claims to Saxony were not granted, she would regard it as a declaration of war. On 3 January 1815, in the face of Prussia's declaration and Russia's actions in occupied Saxony and Poland, a secret treaty was signed among Austria, France and Britain pledging common action in case of war with Russia and Prussia. Although the terms of the treaty were secret, its existence shortly became known in Vienna. Stein acquired definite though highly colored information regarding its contents, which he immediately communicated to the Tsar (Nicholson 1946, 176-178). Talleyrand's memoranda and the signing of the Secret Treaty escalated the tensions to the point where few people doubted that war among the Allies was imminent. But in

a quite unexpected way, the Secret Treaty contributed to the resolution of the deadlock.

Historians tend to dismiss the Secret Treaty calling it a bluff, which may be true to some extent: it is hardly conceivable that either Austria or France or Britain would have gone to war with Prussia and Russia over Saxony and Poland. However, the signing of the Treaty contributed to the realization that Russia and Prussia were not prepared to face a renewal of hostilities, either. Alexander could not alienate his army and generals and public opinion by going to war over an issue that was considered by Russian public opinion fantastic or unwise. Indeed, why would the Russian soldiers be fighting for the restoration of Poland when Alexander's earlier promises of domestic reform and the abolition of serfdom remained nothing but empty promises? For their part, the Prussians were concerned about and did not want to alienate German opinion (Nicholson 1946, 178). "It was not so much that the Secret Treaty was in itself a bluff; it was rather that its conclusion called the bluff which had so long been practiced in concert by Alexander and his Prussian friends" (Nicholson 1946, 178).

Having just concluded the exhausting war against Napoleon, the Great Powers did not have unanimity of views and opinions but at the same time they were each individually or even in combination with another power too weak to impose their will on the other Allies and needed the cooperation of the others to impose their collective will on France and the rest of Europe. By transferring some scenarios from the realm of hypothetical to more concrete proposals, Talleyrand's intervention in the Polish Question made every Great Power

statesmen at Vienna realize the existence of that mutual dependency, something that the Allies were beginning to forget, being carried away by their own interests, ambitions and public declarations.

The final agreement on Poland was reached on 11 February 1815. It was a compromise whereby no Power received everything it wanted but everyone received enough to agree to close the issue that had so sharply divided them. Prussia retained Posen; Austria kept Galicia. Cracow with a surrounding area was to become a free city. The remaining area of Napoleon's Duchy of Warsaw was formed into the Kingdom of Poland and placed under the Tsar of Russia. By way of compensation, Prussia gained two-fifths of Saxony; the remainder of that country was restored to her ancient dynasty (Nicholson 194, 179-180).

### The Hundred Days

It is not quite clear what course the Congress would take, had it not been for Napoleon's escape from Elba, his landing in France on 1 March 1815, and the Hundred Days that followed. The reemergence of Napoleon's threat pushed the Allies gathered at Vienna to put aside their bitter disputes and renew their commitment to fight against the common adversary. Even more importantly, it triggered among some Allied leaders (Castlereagh and Alexander) a search for an institutional formula within which the Great Power alliance could operate to guarantee the final settlement and with it peace in Europe.

The news of Napoleon's escape reached Vienna in the early morning of 7 March (Nicholson 1946, 225). Outwardly, the Allies demonstrated unity and determination to resist the "tyrant" but fear was palpable in all the corners of the

Assembly. As Lord Clan Carty, one of the British envoys at the Congress, noted, "it was not difficult to perceive that fear was predominant in all the Imperial and Royal personages" (Nicholson 1946, 228).

On 12 March, in a letter from London to the Duke of Wellington, who had replaced him in February as the first British plenipotentiary at the Congress, Castlereagh suggested that the Allied Sovereigns should issue a joint declaration against Napoleon. The next day a public declaration was signed by Austria, France, Great Britain, Prussia, Russia, Spain, Portugal and Sweden. The eight Powers declared that Napoleon had placed himself outside the pale of civil and social relations and pledged to reestablish public tranquility in Europe by dethroning him. Shortly after the joint declaration, on 25 March 1815, the Four Great Powers signed a treaty reaffirming their Grand Coalition formed at Chaumont (Nicholson 1946, 227).

While satisfied with the hasty revival of the original Grand Alliance, Castlereagh understood that it was done "to meet the particular emergency of the moment." To have guarantees of Europe's longer-term tranquility, the Great Powers would have to establish a *permanent alliance* (Webster 1950a, 479). The formation of such an alliance or concert of the Great Powers, which had earlier been advocated by Grenville and Pitt, became the primary goal of Castlereagh's diplomacy in the second half of 1815.

But while having been informed by Pitt's legacy, Castlereagh's diplomacy had to pursue objectives different from those of Pitt. Unlike Pitt's proposals of 1805, which were aimed at the containing of France, the concert pursued by

Castlereagh in 1815 had to contain the future threats posed by both vanquished France and victorious Russia. In that sense, Castlereagh's Concert would be designed to manage the acrimonious relations among the Allies as much as, if not more than, the relations between the defeated France and her victors.

Castlereagh's *concert* would also take an institutional formula different from the one envisaged by Pitt. In Pitt's plan, the institutional formula, which such a permanent alliance would take, was *a treaty of guarantee* among the Great Powers. Such a treaty of guarantee was to follow the general European settlement (Webster 1950, 427). Following Pitt's original blueprint, Castlereagh had initially insisted that the reconstruction of Europe would have to be accompanied by such a treaty guarantee of the new Europe (Webster 1950, 429). By 1815, the domestic situation in Britain had changed, however: the Cabinet was no longer ready to endorse the suggested guarantee treaty because, following the end of the war against Napoleon, the public was becoming increasingly isolationist and wary of any continental entanglements (Nicholson 1946, 244). These domestic considerations forced Castlereagh to abandon the idea of a general treaty of guarantee and search for a new approach to the question.

In coming up with his solution, Castlereagh once again demonstrated his superb skills as a diplomat. Based on his experience of the past year and a half, he realized that most of the problems among the Allies had been overcome not because there was a commonality of interest among them but, rather, the differences were overcome because the European statesmen, who were in charge of the foreign policies of their countries, had been in proximity to each other, in

daily face-to-face contact and communication with each other without any need for dispatches, envoys or ambassadors. This manner of communication and decision-making had been an *ad hoc* development coming out of the necessities of the military campaigns of 1813 and 1814. Institutionalizing that constant face-to-face contact among the monarchs and ministers of the Great Powers was Castlereagh's solution to the problem. Thus, Castlereagh's analysis of the experience of the Grand Coalition led him to the idea of *diplomacy by conference* that would replace Pitt's idea of a treaty of guarantee. A new Treaty of Alliance would contain a special provision to that effect. Having finally found the formula of success, Castlereagh now had to work towards acceptance of his idea by the other Great Powers. And here the circumstances of the military campaign of the Hundred Days made all the difference.

Although in 1812-14 the English army under the command of the Duke of Wellington inflicted a series of defeats on the French forces in Spain and eventually invaded the south of France, those efforts were viewed by the Allied statesmen as largely subsidiary to the war waged in Central Europe and North-Eastern France, where the Russian and Prussian forces were particularly instrumental in the eventual defeat of Napoleon. Correspondingly, in spring and summer 1814 tsar Alexander was in a position to assume the role of the "Agamemnon of Kings" (Nicholson 1946), with the King of Prussia obediently on his side, and force his agenda (most importantly, the Polish Question) on the Congress. But the campaign of 1815 had ended before the Russian troops reached the Rhine: at Waterloo, Napoleon was defeated by the combined Anglo-Prussian forces under the command of the Duke of Wellington. As a result, Castlereagh

now found himself in the position of supreme arbiter of France and Europe. He used it with imagination and understanding to seal the destinies of both.

The question of France was disposed of first. King Louis XVIII returned to Paris on 8 July 1815 and in the following negotiations over a new peace treaty with France Castlereagh was able to secure a middle ground between the excessive demands of the Prussians, who demanded huge indemnities and the cession of Alsace-Lorraine and some other territories, and the lenient attitude of the Russian Tsar. (Eventually, under the terms of the Second Treaty of Paris, signed on 20 November 1815, France lost several small strips of territory along its Belgian, Swiss, and Italian frontiers; she was also obliged to pay the Allies an indemnity and to support an 150,000-strong Allied army of occupation for five years.)

The question of the European concert proved to be much more difficult. The Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, signed on 9 June 1815, had merely redrawn the boundaries of states but was lacking a mechanism to guarantee the final settlement (Nicholson 1946, 241). As mentioned above, Castlereagh eventually arrived at the idea of conference diplomacy as "the great machine of European safety" (Nicholson 1946: 257). But before he was able to insert it in the Second Treaty of Paris, emperor Alexander had pre-empted him with an offer of his own.

<u>The Holy Alliance as a Russian Substitute of the Treaty of Guarantee</u>

While the popular version of history attributes the idea of the Holy Alliance to the influence of the baroness von Krüdener on the Russian Emperor, who was immersed at the time in a state of religious mysticism (Nicholson 1946, 245-47), the origins of the treaty in reality lie in Alexander's earlier Jacobin ideas. Castlereagh was searching for institutional arrangements to guarantee the final settlement at Vienna; for the Tsar, if a guarantee of peace were needed, then "*peace was to be found in a [reconstituted] society* in which all sovereigns and their peoples were to act as true Christians" (Webster 1950a, 481, *emphasis added).* Thus, the original idea had nothing to do with the sinister interpretation that was given to the Holy Alliance subsequently by liberal historians and "progressive opinion" in Europe. "It generally stated the intention of the signatory sovereigns to govern henceforth in accordance with the principles of the Gospel of Christ: to regard each other as brothers and their subjects as their children" (Phillips 1914, 149).  Governments and peoples were now to behave as "members of one and the same Christian nation" (cited in Nicholson 1946, 250).

There were two major points underscoring the suggested Holy Alliance. The first point was the belief that the governments of Europe had a God-given responsibility to preserve the peace.  The second point was that the "people" had failed to make good use of the rights which they had seized during the French Revolution. As a result of their misuse, these rights had accordingly reverted to the divinely appointed rulers who had originally held them. In this new interpretation, the Holy Alliance was "a new and mystical approach to the old

ideal of the Novossiltsov Instructions – the ideal of a united Europe, to be kept united through confederation" (Frederiksen 1943, 17).

In this manner Alexander wanted to justify his own failure to act on his earlier promises as the protector of smaller nations and the grantor of liberal constitutions. The revolution in European politics which the Tsar had dreamed of since his early years did not come true. But instead of viewing the outcome as his personal failure, Alexander had come to believe that, it was the people, who had been given a chance and had failed. Once again the monarchs, guided by the ideals of Christianity, had the right to rule and guide their nations. Supporting the argument of a connection between Novossiltsov's Instructions and the Holy Alliance, one of the most informed British biographers of the Tsar notes that for years to come after the Congress of Vienna, Alexander would try to persuade his conservative allies "that the granting of liberal constitutions was the logical outcome of the sacred principles to which they had subscribed" (Phillips 1914, 149).

When, in September of 1815, Alexander approached Castlereagh with a draft of the Treaty of the Holy Alliance as the very guarantee of the final settlement and hence peace in Europe that Castlereagh had advocated, it placed the British statesman in a difficult position. Alexander came up with the idea of the Holy Alliance at the time when Castlereagh himself was engaged in discussions with the Tsar about a suggested Treaty of Alliance as a more practical form of a guarantee (Webster 1950a, 482-483). For this reason and also for the sheer military strength that Russia possessed at the time, Castlereagh was not in

a position to reject Alexander's proposed treaty.[71] But the British monarch had no constitutional authority to sign an international treaty even of such benevolent character. Eventually, the British Minister found a way out: the Prince Regent would send a personal letter to the Tsar expressing his entire agreement with the sentiments of the Treaty. To Castlereagh's great relief, Alexander was willing to accept the British support of his treaty expressed in this manner (Webster 1950a, 482).

The Austrian emperor and the Prussian king also found the treaty's messianic rhetoric quite disconcerting. The draft treaty contained two elements which invoked particular dissatisfaction of the Prussian and Austrian monarchs: the draft treaty spoke of the coming unity 'whereby subjects of the three powers were to "see each other as fellow-countrymen," and their armies as "part of one army" (Zorin 2003, 325). The Prussians and Austrians were able to remove this text from the final draft of the treaty. The second features of Alexander's draft was even less acceptable to the allies. It demanded a total reformation of the system of international relations in Europe. The draft stated that "the form of mutual relations previously established by the powers must change completely and it is absolutely necessary to strive to replace it with an order based on the supreme truths inspired by the eternal law of the Divine Savior" (Zorin 2003, 325). However, in light of Russia's preeminent military and political authority after Napoleon's defeat, the two monarchs decided to accept the treaty after

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[71] In a show of strength, on 10 September 1815 the Tsar staged a tremendous review of the entire 150,000 strong Russian army, which had finally reached French territory, to which he invited all the Allied sovereigns and generals (Nicholson 1946,248).

Alexander agreed to remove more radical formulas from the text (Zorin 2003, 314).

Unlike the treaties on which the Grand (Quadruple) Alliance was based, the Treaty of the Holy Alliance, which was signed on 26 September 1815 by the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, was eventually acceded to by all the other powers, except for Muslim Turkey and the Pope of Rome, and thus, at least, for Alexander "it represented [...] a revival of a "Universal Union" or a "Confederation of Europe" [that] he had propounded to Pitt in 1804" (Phillips 1914, 151).

Castlereagh could hardly accept, however, a "union with vague and indefinite ends" (Phillips 1914, 152) as the treaty that he needed to guarantee the long-term security in Europe. While because of the vagueness of the Holy Alliance he was prepared to adhere to it in public in order not to antagonize his powerful ally (in fact, he defended it in Parliament in such sympathetic language that the Russian Emperor was touched), what he really wanted to create was "some permanent institutional device which would enable the united nations to co-operate indefinitely in preventing the threat of war wherever it might arise" (Nicholson 1946, 242). Thus, while Alexander regarded his Holy Alliance as the eventual fulfillment of his scheme for European unity, Castlereagh continued his search for an *institutionalized* European Concert.[72]

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[72] Reflecting this belief, Alexander would say to Chateaubriand at the Congress of Verona in 1822: "In the civilized world there must be no more English, French, Russian or Austrian policies, but only a general policy which, for the salvation of all, must be recognized by both the peoples and by monarchs" (Weiner 1971, 251)

<u>The Treaty of Quadruple Alliance and the Institutionalization of the</u>
<u>Concert of Europe</u>

Castlereagh's idea of a permanent concert of the great powers was finally realized in the Treaty of Quadruple Alliance, which he designed and which was signed by the other Great Powers on 20 November 1815, the same day as the Second Treaty of Paris (Nicholson 1946, 238-239). On the surface, the Quadruple Alliance was a security treaty against France: in Articles I through V the signatory Powers bound themselves to act against France, if necessary with the whole of their forces in case she attacked the new frontiers or allowed Napoleon or any of the Bonaparte family to return to the throne. If a revolution occurred in France, the four powers were to decide in conjunction with the King of France what action was to be taken (Webster 1950a, 483-484). Castlereagh's catch, however, was in Article VI of the Treaty, which read as follows:

> [T]o assure and facilitate the execution of the present Treaty, and to consolidate the intimate relations which today unite the four Sovereigns for the good of the world, the High Contracting Parties have agreed to renew, at fixed periods, where under the immediate auspices of the Sovereigns, or by their respective Ministers, reunions devoted to the great common interests and to the examination o f the measures which, at any of these periods, shall be judged most salutary for the repose and prosperity of the peoples, and for the maintenance of the peace of the State. (cited in Morgenthau 1960, 457)

It established the *institutional mechanism* of the new security regime: diplomacy by periodic congresses of sovereigns or conferences of foreign ministers of the Great Powers, to which France was admitted at the Congress of Aux-la-Chapelle in 1818 (Webster 1965, 163).

<u>The Holy Alliance and the Treaty of Alliance: Two Aspects of the Same Regime</u>?

The holding of regular congresses or conferences by the great powers was the institutional mechanism of the newly established Concert of Europe. However, each of the Great Powers had her own interpretation of the regime's objectives reflected, among other things, in her statesmen's understanding of the relationship they entered into by signing the Treaty of Alliance and the Treaty of the Holy Alliance. The peculiarity of the situation was that no single understanding of the 1815 security regime existed among its creators or among contemporaries of the events.

Many contemporaries of the Vienna Congress and, especially, the assailants of the idea of the European Concert, did not distinguish between the Concert of Europe and the Holy Alliance, and exclusively referred to the Vienna security arrangements as the Holy Alliance. Linking the two, the opponents of the Concert viewed the Holy Alliance as the ideological cloak of the new system (Holbraad 1971, 4). It is not only the contemporaries who held this view. Most Russian historians of Emperor Alexander and the Napoleonic wars do not make any references to the "Concert of Europe" (see, for example, Shilder 1897; Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947; Grand-Duke Romanoff 1912). But they write about the Holy Alliance as the major institutional arrangement coming out of the Vienna settlement designed by Alexander. An identical view of the Concert, as the institutional framework of the Holy Alliance, was accepted by major scholars working in the tradition of sociological realism (see Morgenthau 1960). What is even more important is that Alexander himself understood 'diplomacy by

conference' as the institutional framework within which the Holy Alliance would function. The Tsar viewed the Quadruple Alliance that came out of the Treaty of Alliance as the political instrument of the Holy Alliance (Nicolson 1946, 260). In Alexander's view, the two treaties combined were "to serve as the skeleton of the grand alliance of European nations, an alliance which in the mind of Alexander was to restore peace to embattled Europe" (Lobanov-Rostovsky 1947, 357).

Alexander's interpretation of the security regime established at Vienna was hardly acceptable to Castlereagh or the British Government. On the other hand, given the need for Russia's participation in his institutional design, Castlereagh understood that some formal acceptance of the Holy Alliance by Britain was necessary to guarantee the pacification of Alexander and his consent to the British scheme. Towards that goal, a letter was arranged from the British monarch expressing his support for the principles of the Holy Alliance. From Castlereagh's perspective, the King's letter was nothing but a nicety, and that the regime created by Castlereagh on behalf of Britain was separate from the Holy Alliance (see Webster 1965).[73] The formalities surrounding the British adherence to the treaty of the Holy Alliance allowed Castlereagh to distance Britain from it as a formal treaty obligation without alienating Alexander and successfully connecting him to the Concert arrangements.

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[73] This interpretation of the 1815 regime was not accepted by some segments of the British public which were highly critical of the outcomes of the Vienna Settlement and Castlereagh's role in its establishment. For a while Castlereagh got a reputation as a retrograde, who had crushed the Irish Rebellion and the aspirations of the European nations for liberty. Beginning in the early 20th century, a number of prominent British historians published revisionist works on Castlereagh's biography, praising his efforts in the formation of the Concert. They also began to challenge assumptions about the relationship between The Concert of Europe and the Holy Alliance, arguing that the two were always separate.

For Castlereagh and the British Government, the Treaty of Alliance alone established the Concert of Europe. It was the Treaty of Alliance which they viewed as a "civil contract" entered into by the four great powers to prevent the revival of militarism in France and to serve as a guarantee that no great power would take any unilateral moves or decisions in European affairs. The civil contract also guaranteed that the Continental powers would never take decisions without Britain. In this way Castlereagh ensured that Britain would always have a voice and a veto in the affairs of the Continent.

Metternich disliked both the legalistic view of Castlereagh and the ideological view of Emperor Alexander:

> [H]e sought for a formula which, one the one hand, would deter the Tsar from sending Russian armies of intervention across Germany, and on the other hand would prevent Great Britain from withdrawing into isolation. He though he had found that formula in the phrase "moral solidarity." (Nicolson 1946, 260)

While dismissive of the Treaty of the Holy Alliance, Metternich nevertheless would refer to it in need. On the one hand, he would attempt to distance himself from the bad publicity of the Holy Alliance by arguing that the Treaty served only as a 'moral demonstration' in the eyes of Alexander. According to Metternich, in the eyes of individuals other than its originator the Treaty did not even have such a meaning (Metternich 1888, 1, 261). After all, it was never mentioned in communications between the cabinets. On the other hand, Austria's Minister believed that the greatest difference between the modern world and the ancient world lay in the tendency of nations of the modern world to draw near to each other, "and in some fashion to enter into a social league" that would rest on the

principles and norms developed in the bosom of Christianity (Metternich 1888, 1, 37).

It is obvious that Metternich's interpretation of the 1815 security regime stands in-between those of Castlereagh and Alexander. Austria's Minister would make strategic use of each treaty to protect the interests of Austria. Metternich was ready to use the Treaty of the Holy Alliance and the Congress system as brakes on Russia's meddling in areas and issues of vital interest to Austria. He was also quick to appeal to the Holy Alliance and request support to suppress any sights of revolutionary discontent, especially where and when Austria's interests were threatened.

Out of the defeat of Napoleon and the Vienna settlement came three different understandings of the security regime, which we have come to refer to as the Concert of Europe. These visions are exemplified by Alexander, Metternich and Castlereagh. Each of them accepted and used the same institutional framework of diplomacy by conference or congress for different objectives. An interesting and unusual situation emerged when the *rules* and *decision-making procedures* of the 1815 regime were the same for all the great powers. But each great power had her understanding of the regime concerning its *principles* and *norms*.

In terms of longevity Castlereagh's vision of the European Concert continued to function until the Great War of 1914. In its original form Castlereagh's Concert lasted till 1853 when it broke down with the Crimean war. After the Crimean war, Castlereagh's Concert continued to function in a modified

form of congresses held after major wars to reach agreement on post-war settlements among the great powers regardless of whether some of the great powers had participated in the war or not.[74]

Metternich's Concert of Europe based on the moral solidarity of monarchs survived until the nationalist Revolutions of 1848. Its final collapse occurred with the Crimean War, when the former allies of the grand Coalition fought against each other, putting aside the solidarity of Christian monarchs that should have prevented the war from breaking out in the first place.

Alexander's Concert did not outlive its master. Contrary to Alexander's unrealistic expectations that Christian kings would voluntarily grant constitutions to their subjects, the Holy Alliance led to the installation of the most regressive and repressive kings in Europe. Not only did the Holy Alliance serve as a barrier against constitutionalism and liberalism, but it also served as a barrier against national aspirations of smaller European nations. The 1815 regime did not allow Alexander to rapidly respond to the Greek uprising against the Ottoman Turks as Austria and, to a lesser extent, Britain opposed any assistance to the Greeks. What was even more disappointing for Alexander was to learn that his fellow "Christian" monarchs conspired behind his back with the Sultan in the question of the Greek uprising. By 1825 Alexander had been so bitterly disillusioned with the fruits of his own labor that he began an adjustment of his worldview and policies: the Russian charge d'affaires in Constantinople were

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[74] The battlefield was no longer the ultimate determinant of the settlement coming out of a particular war.

informed that "the Porte's intransigence had provoked the Tsar's righteous anger and had opened his eyes to the role played by the ambassadors of Austria, France and Prussia at Constantinople" (Schenk 1947, 213). "Consequently, a circular dispatch instructed the Russian diplomats in Vienna, Paris, and Berlin not to enter into any more negotiations about the Eastern Question with the governments to which they were accredited" (Schenk 1947, 213). Realizing that the only great power that Russia could not ignore was Britain, Alexander authorized the Russian Cabinet to enter into separate negotiations with Great Britain with a limited objective of finding a solution to the Greek crisis. "The Concert of Europe had definitely come to an end" (Schenk 1947, 213).

The last moves of Alexander's reign leave the question of his future adherence to the Holy Alliance and the Vienna arrangements open: should the Tsar have lived longer to *formally* proclaim the Holy Alliance null and void, it would also indicate Russia's withdrawal from the Concert arrangements. The last time Russia applied the principles of the Holy Alliance in her foreign policy was during the fateful intervention of emperor Nicholas I in Hungary, on behalf of the Habsburg monarchy, in 1848. The Holy Alliance did not survive the Crimean War and the death of emperor Nicholas, "the last uncompromising champion of its principles" (Phillips, 1914:292-293).

### The "What is Europe?" Debate

No matter how different the visions of the European Concert were, they all shared one common feature, which was the consent by the members of the Quadruple Alliance to take decisions collectively rather than unilaterally. Given the major

differences that existed among the Great Powers, the question to be reckoned is why Alexander's Russia, Metternich's Austria and Castlereagh's Britain would ever come to an agreement on this defining feature of the Concert of Europe. It was because of "Europe." In the late 18th and early 19th centuries "Europe" as an ideal became the reference point for the great powers in their debates and disputes over European affairs. "Europe" became the entity of legitimate if not legitimizing discourse. "Europe" as an ideal became the arbiter of political ambitions and aspirations in Europe as a region. The power of "Europe" as an ideal was clearly demonstrated in the success of the efforts by Castlereagh and Metternich to "group" Alexander's hegemonic tendencies in 1813-1815. A discussion of these efforts follows.

The success of Alexander's *grouping* efforts should not be surprising since Alexander was raised on the ideas of the 18th century European philosophers, who saw Europe as one civilization, one Christian Republic. Based on these notions of Europe, a number of political schemes for European unity were developed and widely publicized.[75] However, the writings of the European philosophers were mismatched with the political realities of the time. Eighteenth century Europe saw a marked discrepancy between the practice of *Realpolitik* by European statesmen and the various schemes for European unity offered by European thinkers (Sorel 1947, 3). The statesmen considered the schemes for European unity to be daydreams. However, those daydreams produced a profound impact on the general public and the statesmen alike. Popularized by

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[75] For a discussion of schemes for European unity see Schenk 1947, 1-23.

the printing press, and reinforced by the printing of maps, they introduced into the intellectual and political discourse of the time their central concept, *Europe.* As a result, European politics was no longer about the politics of royal houses and dynasties. Napoleon and Alexander, Metternich and Talleyrand all spoke about *Europe's* interests and claimed to act in the name of *Europe* and her tranquility. Appeals to the interests of *Europe* would become the ultimate weapon of legitimizing one's decisions and interests in European politics.

The European statesmen attempted to define and redefine *Europe* according to their visions, but they could not challenge the fact that *Europe* had become the ultimate reference point for the legitimization of state conduct. The greatest political crimes to be committed would be *crimes against Europe.*

But what was Europe? Was Europe the Europe of the *Old Regime*? The Europe of sovereign states, each acting out of their own *raison d'état* (Cardinal Richelieu's Europe)? Was Europe the Europe of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity? The Europe of Republicanism, Constitutionalism and Liberalism (the Europe of the French Revolution)? Or was Europe the Europe of the French Empire (Napoleon's Europe)? Or was Europe a Europe of the rights of nationalities and nationalism (Czartoryski's but also Alexander's Europe)? Or maybe Europe was the Europe of legitimate rule and the divine right of monarchs to rule (Metternich's but also Alexander's Europe)? Or was Europe the Europe of consensus decision-making by the great powers (Castlereagh's Europe)?

Between 1789 and 1815 *Europe* underwent a redefinition: the Europe of the *Old Regime* and the balance of power became a Concert of Europe, a Europe

as a society of states bound to each other by the common norm of collective great power decision-making. Reflecting these changes in the perception of Europe and the principles of European politics, Metternich would write in his *Memoirs,*

> [I]solated states exist only as the abstractions of so-called philosophers. In the society of states each state has interests, ... which connect it with the others. The great axioms of political science derive from the recognition of the true interests of all states; it is in the general interests that the guarantee of existence is to be found, while particular interests - the cultivation of which is considered political wisdom by restless and short-sighted men – have only a secondary importance …. (Metternich cited by Kissinger 1964, 13)

One can contrast Metternich's vision of Europe as a society of states with the vision of Europe established at Tilsit, where, some would argue, Napoleon's generosity made Alexander forget the interests of Europe temporarily attaching the Tsar to a dream of dividing the world into two Empires. A British historian of the Concert writes about Alexander at Tilsit, "[i]n the contemplation of his new greatness the interests of Europe were forgotten" (Phillips 1914, 44). But then again, one can also argue that Tilsit constituted but one of several definitions of Europe – the Europe of self-interest and personal aggrandizement. "What is Europe?" said the Russian Emperor to Savory, the French ambassador; "What is it, if it be not you and we?" (Phillips 1914, 44)

Broadly speaking, between 1789 and 1815 Europe saw two major battles being waged; one was the battle on the ground, where the European statesmen fought to match their military might. The second battle was the battle of ideas, where the European statesmen fought to redefine what Europe was to become to accommodate their own views and interests. Because of his upbringing and particularities of character, Alexander never felt comfortable with the Europe of

Tilsit, the Europe of "you and we." Unlike Napoleon, whose allies had only two choices: either to do as he told them or to become adversaries, Alexander would dream of acting as the leader of a group of peers, the first among equals in Europe. These traits of the Tsar's character made the strategy of *grouping* him successful. "Napoleon could never have been grouped, whereas Alexander could – was, indeed, an enthusiast for grouping, as long as he was allowed to pose in the center of the picture" (Phillips 1914, 88).

Alexander's tendency to be grouped is best illustrated by a dispute between Alexander and Metternich at Langres in 1814. It was already known that Alexander was not interested in imposing the Bourbons on the French nation. Instead, Alexander suggested issuing a Proclamation to the French people, declaring the determination to have nothing to do with the choice of a form of government or the selection of a ruler. Metternich objected saying that such a plan would "cause France and the whole of Europe years of confusion and sorrow" (Metternich 1880, 1, 227-228). Metternich continued,

> If M. Laharpe thinks himself able to answer for the result, he is mistaken; and I speak only of the material disadvantages, for what will become of *Europe* even from the mere stating of the principle on which the idea rests? (Metternich 1880, 1, 228, *emphasis added*)

To convince Alexander to change his mind, Metternich appealed to the higher moral entity – the interests of Europe. He insisted that for the salvation of Europe the Bourbons should "take possession again of their undying rights" (Metternich 1880, 1, 228). One could expect Alexander to continue the debate demonstrating the courage of his convictions, but surprisingly enough Alexander immediately gave in: "I do not insist on my idea against the wish of my allies, I

have spoken according to my conscience; time will do the rest; it will also teach us who was right" (Metternich 1880, 1, 229). Almost instantaneously, Alexander gave up the Europe of the rights of nations to accept the Europe of legitimate rule.

The Europe of the 18th century philosophers, upon which Alexander was brought up, was a Europe of unity, and Alexander did not have the courage or the convictions to go against the collective will of his fellow monarchs for such conduct would have equated him with Napoleon, this antithesis of what Europe was to stand for. However, in the early 19th century a Europe of unity could only be based on the unity of monarchs. The Grand Coalition of monarchs could not produce a Europe of liberalism, constitutionalism or nationalism. For that Europe would have to produce a Bonaparte or wait for the revolutionary upheavals and wars that were to come in the 19th and the 20th century.  In the early 19th century, after the defeat of the French Revolution and Bonapartism by a coalition of monarchs, European unity could only be based on a unity of Kings. The security regime established in Vienna in 1815 reflected those realities and understandings.

**Chapter Six**

**The Concert of Europe: Theoretical Findings**

The two major theoretical questions that I have addressed in the dissertation are the following:

> Why do the great powers choose to establish international security regimes? What factors explain the success of the great powers in establishing security regimes in some cases and their failure in other cases?

These are related but different questions. The first question deals with the initial stage of regime formation efforts. At that stage regimes are only one possible means of cooperation, and the great powers may choose to cooperate by other means (e.g. alliances etc.). The second question focuses on actual negotiations among the great powers over the establishment of regimes. At each of these two stages of regime formation, power, interests, ideas and leadership are the four key factors, the role of which I have examined in my case studies. This section is organized around the discussion of these four factors in the formation of the Concert of Europe.

<u>Knowledge: Learning</u>

A common view of the Concert of Europe is that it was formed in response to the new security threats posed by the French Revolution (see, for example, Kissinger 1994). My study of the First and Second Coalitions, however, demonstrates that the efforts of the great powers to form a new security regime were neither launched in response to the beginning of the Revolution in 1789 nor even to its subsequent radicalization. The First Coalition began to be formed only in 1792-93. It did not include all great powers (Russia preferred to stay out). Moreover, it

operated as an old balance of power coalition, divided by internal rivalries, with coalition members balancing against each other as much as they were collectively balancing against France. It was the *failure* of the First Coalition and the old strategy of the balance of power to deal with Revolutionary France that triggered a search among some great powers for a new solution to their security problem. These efforts, first led by the British and later Russian statesmen, resulted in several plans to create an all-great power concert.

Thus, it is safe to conclude that the emergence of a new threat in itself does not automatically change strategies or interests of the great powers. Nor does it put the question of creating a security regime on their agenda. It is the failure of old strategies to deal with new threats that may lead some great powers to *reassess* the security situation and prompt them to start searching for a new security solution. That new solution may or may not take the form of a security regime. The regime option will be chosen if the great powers *learn* about the inadequacy of the old security management mechanism as well as their inability to *unilaterally* provide for their own security. In other words, the great powers need to *learn* that, under the given circumstances, a *collective* rather than a *unilateral* effort is required.

This was precisely the case with Great Britain in the late 1790s. It became obvious to Pitt and Grenville that the First Coalition was failing, that Revolutionary France could not be appeased, and that Britain alone was not in a position to fight against her. Britain needed a new arrangement with her continental allies, which would commit the allies to each other and to the anti-

French cause permanently. Having drawn these conclusions, Grenville and Pitt began their search for a new solution, which ultimately led them to advocate a European concert, an anti-French alliance of the great powers tied to each other in war as well as in peace that would follow.

It is important to note that, while some states may learn from failures, others may not. In fact, states may continue to try to adjust their old strategies only slightly even in the face of repeated failures. That certainly was the case with Austria and Prussia during and after the First Coalition. Neither came up with a new security strategy to deal with France. Both countries continued their old rivalry, alliance politics, and traditional coalition wars. Whenever these strategies failed, they preferred to find some sort of compromise and accommodation with France in the form of neutrality, a dynastic union or even subordination.

<u>Leadership</u>

The focus on *learning* inevitably brings into our discussion individual statesmen, who play key roles in the formation of respective regimes. All four case studies demonstrate convincingly that learning will occur only if there emerges an *intellectual leader* or a group of leaders from among the great power statesmen able to grasp the novelty of the challenges and devise new strategies of dealing with them. An example of learning and associated with it intellectual leadership is demonstrated by Grenville when he started developing plans for a European concert in the 1790s. With slight modifications by Pitt (in 1804-05) and Castlereagh (in 1814-15), his proposals served as the basis for British diplomatic efforts to establish a European concert between 1797 and 1815. Similarly, in

1804-05 Russia's Emperor Alexander and his Foreign Secretary Czartoryski provided intellectual leadership by developing their own set of proposals for a European concert (Novossiltsov's Instructions). Later, in 1815 Alexander once again provided intellectual leadership when he came up with the idea of the Holy Alliance as the spiritual foundation for the maintenance of the Vienna settlement.

While *learning* was the factor that set into motion the development of a European concert, in the case of Britain and Russia the sources of learning were different. Whereas Grenville and Pitt learned their lessons from actual policy failures of the First Coalition, the concert plans of Alexander and Czartoryski were informed by the ideas of the eighteenth century European philosophers and their schemes for European unity. For Alexander and Czartoryski, learning was part of their upbringing and education rather than actual experience in politics.[76]

The four case studies demonstrate that in addition to *intellectual leadership*, successful regime formation requires that statesmen also demonstrate another kind of leadership, namely *entrepreneurial leadership*. In fact, intellectual leadership is more important at the earlier stage of regime formation (the agenda-setting stage), whereas entrepreneurial leadership may acquire greater importance during the stage of actual negotiations over the regime, guaranteeing their ultimate success. In 1814-15, Castlereagh demonstrated both *intellectual* and *entrepreneurial leadership* when he formed the Quadruple Alliance and later transformed it into the basis for the Concert of Europe.

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[76] One may view the eighteenth century European philosophers as an *epistemic community*.

Castlereagh's *entrepreneurial leadership* qualities became evident shortly after his arrival in Europe in January 1814. In the face of the disunity and disarray that marked relations among the allies at the time, he skillfully managed to unite the allies and form the Quadruple Alliance in March 1814. It was due to Castlereagh's entrepreneurial skills that the Quadruple Alliance was revived in the summer and fall of 1815. In the summer-fall of 1815, Castlereagh also came up with a novel formula – diplomacy by conference, which became the institutional mechanism of the new security regime in Europe. And he once again managed to maneuver among the conflicting sides within the Alliance, ensuring that all members of the Grand Coalition accept his plan for a post-Napoleon regime.

As the presence of an *entrepreneurial leader* may guarantee the ultimate success of regime negotiations, the absence of such a statesman at critical moments during negotiations may negatively impact the chances to form a regime. For example, the proposals put forward by Alexander and Czartoryski in Novossiltsov's Instructions were sweeping and innovative, and both statesmen displayed the qualities of intellectual leaders. But the lack of entrepreneurial skills on the part of Count Novossiltsov, the Russian special envoy to London, resulted in Russia's failure to engage Britain in negotiations based on the Russian proposals. A somewhat similar case is represented by Grenville's failure to form the Second Coalition on the basis of his blueprint of a great power concert. While he demonstrated unmatched intellectual leadership, it was his noticeable lack of entrepreneurial skills and his almost irrational obstinacy (evidenced by his treatment of the Austrian loan issue) that crashed British diplomatic efforts to create a European concert between 1797 and 1799.

<u>Interests</u>

Learning from failures may lead great power statesmen to search for new strategies. It may or may not involve, however, the redefinition of national interests by the great powers. Britain and Russia offer instructive cases in this respect. In Britain's case, learning did not lead to any major redefinition of her vital interests. Between 1789 and 1815, Britain always defined her vital interests as Maritime Rights, the independence of the Low Countries, and the return of France to her ancient borders.[77] These were the issues which Britain viewed as non-negotiable. Thus, Britain's case confirms the view in the regime literature that some actors may adjust their strategies in the process of regime formation but their interests may be treated as permanent and externally given. In fact, Britain's decision to form the Concert constituted a change in the strategy to achieve her permanent interests.

Russia represents a different case where the impact of ideas and learning led her to redefine both her strategy and interests. Due to her geographic and power position, Russia always had a set of foreign policy choices available to her ranging from neutrality and non-involvement in the affairs of western Europe, to an alliance with France to divide continental Europe, to unilateral attempts to impose her own will on Europe, and, finally, to active participation in the creation of a European concert. Between 1789 and 1815, Russia's interests and strategy depended on the views and beliefs of her successive monarchs. Catherine the

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[77] This definition of Britain's interests was constant except for two failed attempts to appease France when Britain was willing to allow France to keep some of her territorial acquisitions.

Great was a realist. A Russian Richelieu, she pursued a balance of power in central and Western Europe with Russia being the holder of the balance. Paul was a neurotic ruler torn between his repulsion and fear of Jacobinism and his realist drive to divide Europe between Russia and France. Alexander was an idealist day-dreamer, divided between his personal admiration for Jacobin ideas and Napoleon as well as jealousy of him, and his own personal weakness in the face of domestic and European opposition to his liberal ideas.

While Russia's and Britain's interests were not similar, both states chose to pursue the creation of a European concert as their strategy in Europe. The comparison of these cases demonstrates that with regard to interests, it is not necessary for participants in regime negotiations to have *shared* interests. The important condition for regime formation is that the great powers should see the *solution* to their individual concerns in the formation of a common institution, a security regime.

Power

In combination with *learning* and *leadership*, *power* was a key factor leading the great power statesmen to begin negotiations over a European concert. What role does power play in the later stage of regime formation? What is the relationship between different configurations of power in the system (the balance of power and hegemony) and security regimes?

It may be difficult to categorize the European system between 1789 and 1815 since it experienced several periods, during which the distribution of power in Europe changed significantly. Nonetheless, one can distinguish between three

distinct periods. The earlier attempts at the formation of a European Concert (1797-99 and 1804-05) were made when the European system was characterized by the continuing French drive for hegemony, on the one hand, and the existence of mutual dependence among the great powers opposing France (Austria, Russia and Britain during the Second Coalition, or Britain and Russia during the Third Coalition). Between 1807 and 1812, when Napoleon established France's hegemony in continental Europe, the other great powers temporarily gave up (or, more correctly, were forced to give up) any plans for a European concert. Finally in 1814-15, when the Concert of Europe was created after Napoleon's defeat, the relations among the Coalition members were marked by the balance of power between Britain and Austria, on the one hand, and Russia and Prussia, on the other.

Hegemony. Since the Concert of Europe was created by the great powers when they were in a position of relative power parity *vis-à-vis* each other, the study of the Grand Coalition does not entail a discussion of the relationship between hegemony and security regimes. However, a brief analysis of France's behavior allows me to draw several conclusions about hegemony and regimes. Between 1789 and 1815, France changed her position from an aspiring hegemon to an established hegemon in Continental Europe before it became a defeated hegemon in 1814-15.

France's case demonstrates that the hegemon may be interested in the creation of international regimes. However, the established regimes will always reflect the interests of the hegemon, regardless of any consideration for the

interests of those states who have to comply with them. The Continental System may be viewed as such a regime, which was designed to help Napoleon defeat Britain. Needless to say the economic consequences of the Continental System for those European states that were forced into compliance were devastating.

This view of hegemony is not new: regime scholars have written about it extensively. However, comparing the regimes created by France with the Concert of Europe leads me to an important and new conclusion. France's conduct demonstrates the absence of any regime that could restrict the right of the hegemon to resort to war at will. In other words, regimes created by Napoleon never restricted his right to wage war at his own discretion.

This fact has been largely ignored in the literature but it should not be surprising. Hegemony is based on the expectation that there is a price to be paid for non-compliance with the hegemon's wishes, whether institutionalized or not. Consequently, for the hegemon, war is the policing tool by means of which he can ensure compliance with his dominance. It is only rational that the hegemon will not be interested in limiting his own right and ability to resort to war by forming any regimes. Thus, security regimes like the Concert of Europe cannot be established under hegemony. Their establishment requires that the hegemon be defeated and that the relationship among the members of the anti-hegemon coalition be based on the balance of power.[78]

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[78] In light of this finding, it should not be surprising that after the end of the Cold War with the shift from bi-polarity to American hegemony, the United States has become interested in abolishing the 1945 UN regime that bans preventive use of force and a sovereign state's unilateral resort to war as a foreign policy tool.

It is frequently stressed that the Concert was created after the Allied defeat of Napoleon. Although the study of the factors that led to Napoleon's defeat is outside the scope of my work, I would like to briefly discuss some of them to set the stage for the further discussion of *power* as a factor in the formation of the Concert in 1814-1815.

After Napoleon's defeat in Russia in 1812, his final military and political demise was not predetermined. Apart from Napoleon's failings in judgment, which prevented him from using the internal rivalries of his challengers, two factors were of consequence: the changed character of the 1813-1814 wars and the irreversibility of the allied commitment to the anti-Napoleon cause, which made the Grand Coalition different from the earlier Coalitions.

The new character of the war in Europe. Rather than being wars of the European monarchs against Napoleon, the Russian war of 1812 and the subsequent war of German Liberation in Europe in 1813 were the wars of *peoples* against French hegemony. In the case of the Germans we may even speak about the emergence of a "nation-in-arms" much like the French had earlier become a nation-in-arms after the Revolution of 1789.

The emergence of popular resistance to France in Europe was a result of more than a decade of French hegemony and the bitter resentment that it had evoked in the subjugated peoples of Europe. It was also a result of the impact of the earlier blueprints for a European concert developed by Alexander I and Czartoryski, which promised to guarantee the rights of nationalities and grant liberal constitutions to the peoples of Europe. These earlier blueprints were

skillfully used by Alexander in 1813 and even 1814 to mobilize European public opinion against Napoleon and to scare the reluctant European monarchs (such as the King of Prussia) into committing themselves to the anti-French, anti-Napoleon cause. Hence, the propaganda impact of the earlier blueprints for a concert contributed to the allied victory over Napoleon.

The irreversibility of the allied commitment. The new character of the war against Napoleon led to the second factor of his military defeat: the irreversibility of the commitment by the great powers to the anti-Napoleon cause from 1813 onwards. The irrevocable nature of their commitment to the cause for the first time deprived them of any space for maneuvers in their dealings with Napoleon, and, consequently, prevented any subsequent coalition defections. The irreversible commitment was itself an outcome of a snowballing effect of a series of decisions. Some of these decisions were based on the perception that, should the European monarchs fail to commit themselves to Alexander's war against Napoleon, their own people would rebel against them. That was the case with the King of Prussia. Other decisions were based on a false (at the time) belief that Napoleon's defeat by Russia was inevitable, and, should the European monarchs fail to commit themselves, they would be left out of the final settlement. That was the case with Austria and Britain.[79] Alexander's own commitment to fight Napoleon to the end stemmed, at least in part, from his own precarious situation at home. Given the prevailing mood among the aristocrats and the people in

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[79] Since Britain was always committed to defeating France, in her case it was about the irreversibility of her commitment to that last (Grand) Coalition, which the British government made in 1813 under the false belief that victory over Napoleon was close and imminent, and had Britain hesitated to join the Coalition, she would have been left out of the final settlement.

Russia, should Alexander not have avenged the burning of Moscow with a triumphant entry into Paris, he could have shared the same fate as his father.

As a result of these developments, the dynamics of relations between Napoleon and the other European monarchs changed dramatically. If in late 1812 Britain and Russia were Napoleon's only great power challengers, and not even formally in any alliance with each other, in 1813–1814 they were joined by Prussia and Austria who were now irreversibly committed to the anti-French cause. For the first time, the formed coalition united all four great powers. This commitment was reinforced later by the *Hundred Days* episode, which reminded all the members of the Grand Coalition that Napoleon's return would mean their demise.

These factors contributed to the success of the allied military campaigns and set the stage for the establishment of the Concert. However, while the Concert could not have been established without Napoleon's defeat, his defeat was necessary but not sufficient for the establishment of the Concert. What other factors played a role in its formation?

The balance of power. The study of the Grand Coalition demonstrates that the Concert of Europe was negotiated under the condition of the balance of power among the participating states. Napoleon's defeat was a *coalitional* victory and not a *hegemonic* one. As a result, the choices each of the allies had were constrained by the existing balance of power.[80] Based on the study of the Grand

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[80] It is an error to conceptualize the international system after Napoleon's defeat as a moment "when the basic organization of international order was up for grabs" as done by Ickenberry in his 2001 book *After Victory*.

Coalition I can argue that the balance of power is conducive to the creation of security regimes, which are designed to limit or avoid major war among the great powers. In the case of the Concert, the balance of power was a necessary but not sufficient condition for its creation. The Grand Coalition demonstrates that security regimes such as the Concert are successfully negotiated *only* when the balance of power is accompanied by a set of other interlocking factors.

Among these factors I will first identify the threat of another hegemonic contender rising from among the Coalition members and the need to contain the new challenger. As the allied victory over Napoleon was getting closer, there emerged a threat that one of the Coalition members, Russia, was in a position to replace the hegemony of France with her own bid for hegemony in continental Europe. After 1813, the threat of Russia's military and political power was exacerbated by Alexander's growing tendency to act unilaterally and by his plans for a post-Napoleon Europe based on constitutionalism and the rights of nationalities, which he had always wanted to see installed in Europe. I should stress that the question was not whether Russia was strong enough to actually establish her hegemony; the challenge was that it was in a position to <u>attempt</u> to do so, and that, should she proceed, she was strong enough to 'cause trouble' in Europe for quite some time after Napoleon's defeat. The prospect of Russia's hegemony replacing that of France was  perceived as a major threat, first by Austria and later by Britain, both of whom were now confronted with a two-folded task: to defeat Napoleon and to contain the growing Russian threat.

Had it not been for the emerging threat of Russia's hegemony, the members of the Grand Coalition may not have established any security regime after Napoleon's defeat. After all, the Grand Coalition never demonstrated any unity of purpose for which the great powers were fighting. First, they were divided as to whether Napoleon had to be dethroned or forced to return to the pre-1789 frontiers. After Napoleon's dethronement, they were divided over the restoration of the Bourbons. And there were some issues concerning the post-war settlement such as the fates of Poland and Saxony, over which the allies were almost ready to fight each other.

Thus, the need to contain a new potential hegemon emerging from among their own ranks, and to resolve their clash of interests short of another war forced the allies to create a security regime, aimed to maintain the post-Napoleon settlement and, at the same time, to ensure that disputes among the allies be resolved peacefully in the future. The established security regime would set the parameters of the allies' future interactions ensuring the preservation of peace among them. The situation may be described as "they can't live with or without each other."

<u>Knowledge: The Power of Ideas</u>

The power of Alexander's Russia was on the rise in 1813-1815. And yet, he did not launch a bid similar to Napoleon's France to dominate Europe. The question is why? An examination of the Grand Coalition leads me to conclude that Alexander's unilateralist tendencies were not contained by military power per se but by the power of shared ideas. In 1814-15, the British and, to a lesser extent,

Austrian statesmen were able to tame Alexander by devising an innovative strategy of *grouping* him, in this way curbing his tendency to act unilaterally.

The strategy of grouping was based on the idea of *Europe* and *Europe's interests* as the ultimate measure of the right and wrong in European politics. Castlereagh and Metternich saw a major difference between Napoleon and Alexander: while, due to Napoleon's personality, it would never be possible to group Napoleon, Alexander personally was a great enthusiast for such grouping as long as he was allowed to occupy the center stage. As part of the strategy of grouping, the idea of *Europe*, created by the epistemic community of the 18th century European philosophers and publicists, became accepted by the great power statesmen as the aim and criterion of their conduct. Every great power was 'expected' to act in the name of *Europe's interests* and not her own. As a result, the main political conflicts among the allies gradually moved to the sphere of the debates about what *Europe* was. In the end, Europe was defined as a great power club of Christian monarchs expected to take major decisions *unanimously* at regularly held congresses. The battle of ideas defining Europe was the final battle that the members of the Grand Coalition fought after Napoleon's defeat. And it was the power of the idea of Europe that ultimately tamed Russia's military power and Alexander's unilateralist tendencies, allowing for the creation and functioning of the Concert of Europe.

Prospects for Future Research

The study of the formation of the Concert demonstrates that there is no single path towards the formation of security regimes. The process is characterized by the interplay of all the four factors at different stages of regime formation.

The Concert was the first security regime established in Europe. Its key goal was aimed at preventing major war among the great powers. In that sense, it was the first regime to limit the unrestrained and absolute right of the great powers to resort to war at their own discretion. This purpose would come to characterize a number of later attempts by the great powers to create similar security regimes. Under different circumstances, the great powers would continue their quest for limiting the resort to war in the late 19th and in the 20th centuries. They would try to do so at The Hague conferences, by means of international treaties aimed to make arbitration mandatory in security and non-security issues. In 1919 they would establish the League of Nations, and in 1945 they would finally establish the United Nations.

I believe that multivariate analysis, which I have used to study the formation of the Concert, may successfully be used to study these other instances of regime formation analogous to the Concert of Europe. I see the future of my project in testing the conclusions reached in the present work *vis-à-vis* these other cases. Such a comparison of several major attempts to form international security regimes will enrich our understanding as to why the great powers are sometimes interested in creating such regimes rather than resorting to other forms of cooperation, and why they succeed in some cases and fail in others.

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