SPECIALIZED COMMITTEE

CONGRESS OF VIENNA

Letter to the People:

Honorable Delegates,

        Welcome to the fifth Freeman Model United Nations Conference! Our names are Siona Chakravarty and Joshith Vurimi, and we're incredibly excited to lead you through this committee. Both Siona and Joshith are sophomores at the Center for Leadership, Government, and Global Economics. Together, we've participated in numerous Model UN conferences and are ready to share our experiences with you all. We cannot wait to hear all the interesting and well researched ideas that will be presented and hope that you'll enjoy the diverse discussions that await you.

        As you dive into these engrossing issues, we remind you to keep your research and points strictly to the position of the individual you've been assigned. Please refrain from using personal perspectives inside of the committee as we look forward to precise representations of your delegate position. While we strongly encourage delegates to write position papers, they are not required. However, papers are necessary to be considered for an award. Delegates that demonstrate exemplary performance in committee through caucuses and working papers will be recognized for an award.

        We look forward to being your chairs for this committee and wish you the best for your preparations! If you have any questions, please contact us at freemunvicongressofvienna@gmail.com for additional information.

Your Chairs,
Siona Chakravarty and Joshith Vurimi

FREEMUN

Douglas S. Freeman High School Model United Nations Conference

Congress of Vienna

(1815)

Topic I: *Rebuilding Monarchies*

Topic II: *Nationalist Movement*

Introduction

The Congress of Vienna was a series of meetings held after the Napoleonic Wars. In a campaign led by Austria, Great Britain, Prussia, and Russia, Napoleon I was eventually overthrown which would lead to treaties of peace being discussed with France. It would then be decided that European powers should send their diplomats to a congress in Vienna. While there were over 200 delegations involved, the major powers, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and Great Britain intended to keep key roles for themselves.

During Napoleon's reign, the traditional order for hereditary rulers had been challenged as republican governments and members from Napoleon's own family became the heads of his conquered lands.[1]

These unprecedented changes threatened the balance of power that these nations had sought to protect and also undermined the authority of the Catholic Church, which was no less of a power in this continent.

After Napoleon's fall, the nations of Europe stood at a crossroads. The continent had endured over two decades of war and revolution, and its cost was overbearing. In response, this congress convened to restore peace and order to the land and to ensure revolutionary upheaval wouldn't return.[2]

It is now in the hands of this committee to determine the future of Europe. Will the old order be upheld and conservative values be reinstated? Or will

---

c-wars-triggered-a-rise-in-and-changed-the-nature-of-european-nationalism/.

[1] Drummond-Cormack, F. "How the Napoleonic Wars Triggered a Rise in and Changed the Nature of European Nationalism." Retrospect Journal, 19 Nov. 2023, retrospectjournal.com/2023/11/19/how-the-napoleoni

[2] Fiveable. "Post-Napoleonic Restoration – AP European History." Edited by Becky Bahr, Fiveable, 2024, https://library.fiveable.me/key-terms/ap-euro/post-napoleonic-restoration

new principles guide the continent to a better future? Only time will tell.

Topic I:
Rebuilding Monarachies

Background

Before the revolutionary fires of the 18th century, monarchies were the dominant form of governance across Europe. Most nations were ruled by hereditary monarchs who justified their ruling power by divine right, which was the belief that the monarch's authority was bestowed to them by God. Together with wealthy, aristocratic elites, they were able to maintain hierarchies of class and privilege that benefited themselves.

For centuries, monarchies provided a sense of tradition and stability in an ever-changing and unstable world. Royal dynasties such as the Bourbons of France, the Habsburgs of Austria, Hohenzollerns of Prussia, and Romanovs of Russia, exercised large amounts of power during this time, influencing domestic and international policy alike.

This traditional and well-maintained order, however, was violently threatened with the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789, where the Third Estate, or commoners, of the country revolted in masses against the more elite and powerful First and Second Estates, leading to the abolition of the French monarchy and the establishment of France as a republic.

European monarchies were fearful that the spread of revolutions could reach their homelands, so they formed alliances to counter the French Republic. Their efforts, however, were soon overwhelmed by the military commander Napoleon Bonaparte, who rose in power during revolutionary France and the Republic to eventually crown himself Emperor in 1804.

To sustain his honor and the coffers of his nation, Napoleon started to conquer foreign lands in Europe. As he took over crown after crown, he installed his family members as rulers of his conquered territories to ensure loyalty and control over them while also deposing or exiling the traditional monarchs, completely undermining the monarchical system of Europe.

By 1812, much of Europe was under Napoleon's control or reluctantly allied with him, knowing what Napoleon would do if they were against him. In his conquered lands, Napoleon made many changes to solidify his control such as the suppression of opponents, implementation of a unified, liberal legal code, and weakening the influence of churches and nobles.

This revolutionary period of Europe left it completely transformed but also deeply unstable in many ways. Liberal ideas such as nationalism and equality of all citizens had reached many throughout the continent, but monarchs had lost the order they had spent generations to create.

When Napoleon was finally defeated and exiled in 1814 by the Sixth Coalition, surviving and former monarchical states saw the opportunity not only to reclaim and strengthen their thrones, but also to protect their authority against future revolutions like that of the French. The Congress of Vienna is where they assembled to do just that.

Analysis

The French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, as stated before, completely uprooted the foundations of monarchical rule across Europe. Dynasties were overthrown and new political and social identities emerged. Simply reinstating monarchs without addressing these transformations could lead to further upheaval. Therefore, it would be in the Congress of Vienna's best interests to consider how to restore monarchies to ensure peace is maintained.

Restoring legitimate monarchies would bring about stability and preserve the long-standing traditions of Europe, so it would be favorable for the Congress to carry out such actions. But, it is also important to remain aware of the other aspects of rebuilding monarchies as much has changed in the recent years.

More than anything, a balance of power is crucial in Europe. To let another power like that of the French dominate again would once again tear apart the fabric of Europe and its monarchies. Therefore, the creation of an extended system of cooperation between the powers, like this

Congress, would be best to eliminate any threats to conservative ideals and monarchies and deal with them in a cooperative manner, ensuring they are finished as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Redrawing Europe's borders is also of immediate attention so that power amongst the royals would be more evenly distributed. Balancing territorial gains in the process of redrawing borders would further ensure no one power could gain too much influence over another.

The matter of the French is one that needs to be dealt with carefully or else another radical movement might emerge from the same place if unjust punishment and misrepresentation in European affairs are enacted. However, it should also be ensured that France doesn't expand like it did in the French Revolutionary Wars and Napoleonic Wars and disrupt the balance of power that the Congress should seek to protect. Therefore, it would be wise to reinforce borders and redraw maps accordingly so France's neighbors are strengthened.

Current Status

As of 1815, Europe is in a state of transition and uncertainty. A few monarchies such as the Bourbon monarchy of France under King Louis XVII were established, but were mostly weak due to the influence of progressive ideas still lingering around. The Holy Roman Empire has failed to unite and remains abolished, meaning that the

German states await re-organisation. Italy's borders are still contested currently due to the numerous kingdoms that have their claims there. Meanwhile, France's borders were reduced, while Russia and Austria have taken back some of their former territories. Overall, there are many problems that need to be solved at the Congress for Europe to stabilize once again.

Questions to Consider:

1. Should monarchies be reinstated based solely on legitimacy or should the people of the nation also be considered when making that decision?
2. How should the former German states of the Holy Roman Empire be organised and who should be their leader?
3. How should France be limited or treated so that another revolution doesn't break out there, but in a way that it should still receive fair consequences?
4. Can the ambitions of the larger powers be balanced without harming the sovereignty and interests of smaller nations?
5. How should the Congress of Vienna redraw the borders of European nations? Should the cultural identities of the people who live in certain countries be considered?

Topic II:
Nationalist Movement

Background

Since the dawn of time, nationalism has been the clinging factor held by threatened communities, liberation movements, and many more. Prior to the Napoleonic Wars, it was an integral ideology during the French Revolution. It shifted the focus from monarchical loyalty to that of the entire nation. Born from Enlightenment principles, the movement supports values such as self-determination, individual rights, and the social contract. Each individually challenged the legitimacy of absolute monarchies that were championed for centuries.[3] This would influence revolutionary protests and create distinct national identities throughout Europe.

King Louis XVI's rule was the emerging point for nationalistic sentiments, starting primarily in the colonies, where heavy assimilation was forced on the conquered peoples. France squashed societal customs, imposing their language and culture on the indigenous populations. Outraged by the erosion of their traditions, the marginalized groups began to resist.

Absolute authority was challenged; monarchies feared for the existing political order. Royals believed these revolutions to be a direct threat to their power and social order. This eventually led to many European

---

[3] Khan Academy. "Origins and Impacts of Nationalism." World History Project: Era 6 (1750–1914 CE), Khan Academy, khanacademy.org/humanities/whp-origins/era-6-the-long-nineteenth-century-1750-ce-to-1914-ce/61-liberal-and-national-revolutions-betaa/a/read-origins-and-impacts-of-nationalism-beta.

nations interfering in the French Revolution. Known as the Declaration of Pillnitz, issued on August 27, 1791, the Holy Roman Emperor Leopold II and Prussian King Frederick William II expressed their support for Louis XVI and the French monarchy amidst the revolution. The document, while not an immediate declaration of war, implied potential intervention if other European powers joined them. It was largely seen as a threat by the provisional French government and contributed to escalating tensions between France and other European powers. These external threats intensified the revolutionary movement within France. Many radicals came to believe that the revolution needed to be defended aggressively and even spread to other nations to survive. The desire to preemptively strike led France to declare war on Austria in April 1792, sparking a series of conflicts that drew in other European powers, including Prussia and Great Britain.[4] These wars further intensified the revolution and provided justifications for extreme measures, such as the Reign of Terror. Eventually, the whole of Europe would shake when Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette were executed and Napoleon would claim the throne.[5]

During the rule of Napoleon Bonaparte, he encouraged the French people

[4] Office of the Historian . "Milestones: 1801–1829 - Office of the Historian." State.gov, 2019, history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/napoleonic-wars.

[5] The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Napoleonic Wars". Encyclopedia Britannica, 31 Jul. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/Napoleonic-Wars.

to uphold these ideals from the revolution. These consisted of liberty, equality, fraternity, and French expansion via military campaigns. Napoleon's conquests, while initially aiming to expand French power, spread revolutionary ideals in other nations, fueling nationalist sentiments. So with his defeat in 1814, monarchs rushed to finally make an end to the nationalist movement.

Analysis

With the presence of European monarchies being threatened, more than ever will the nation's diplomats have to find creative solutions to this raging issue. Leaders may try to find stability by suppressing the movement. However, as seen in the French Revolution, it could result in the exasperation of nationalist ideologies as they may feel a sense of oppression that could push them towards more drastic measures. But, if they allow for the nationalist sentiment to continue to grow, they face the potential demise of absolute monarchy. Either way, one thing is clear: as anti-royalist ideology continues to spread, monarchs will have to find a way to either destroy this movement for good or be swallowed by it whole.

Current Status

As of 1815, the nationalist and liberal movements are continuing to grow in traction. Currently, a predominant nationalist group are the Germans seeking to form a unified Germanic nation-state which clashes with the existing political structure and

interests of major powers like Austria. Similarly, Polish groups seek to revive the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, or at least a significant Polish state, from the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars. Other notable groups include the Italians, who wish to unify the fragmented Italian states, and the Hungarians that hope to preserve their traditional privileges from further erosion.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can military intervention effectively eliminate nationalist threats without pushing broader rebellions? What kind of methods can be utilized to fulfill this? Does this risk creating martyrs?
2. What role does diplomacy play in managing tensions between nationalists? Is there a possibility for negotiations or compromise?
3. Is there a specific nationalist group that needs to be prioritized? Can there be exceptions for some but not for others?
4. Are there ways to counter nationalist ideals? Is it possible to fully end them or will they continue to persist?
5. Could there be solutions that will attack the root causes of this ideology?

Bibliography

1. Brown University Library. "Napoleonic Satires." *Brown.edu*, 2020, library.brown.edu/cds/napoleon/time5.html.

2. Drummond-Cormack, F. "How the Napoleonic Wars Triggered a Rise in and Changed the Nature of European Nationalism." Retrospect Journal, 19 Nov. 2023, retrospectjournal.com/2023/11/19/how-the-napoleonic-wars-triggered-a-rise-in-and-changed-the-nature-of-european-nationalism/.

3. Fiveable. "Post-Napoleonic Restoration – AP European History." Edited by Becky Bahr, Fiveable, 2024, https://library.fiveable.me/key-terms/ap-euro/post-napoleonic-restoration.

4. Khan Academy. "Origins and Impacts of Nationalism." World History Project: Era 6 (1750–1914 CE), Khan Academy, khanacademy.org/humanities/whp-origins/era-6-the-long-nineteenth-century-1750-ce-to-1914-ce/61-liberal-and-national-revolutions-betaa/a/read-origins-and-impacts-of-nationalism-beta.

5. National Gallery of Victoria. "Napoleon > Did You Know?" *Www.ngv.vic.gov.au*, 7 Oct. 2012, www.ngv.vic.gov.au/napoleon/facts-and-figures/did-you-know.html.

6. Office of the Historian . "Milestones: 1801–1829 - Office of the Historian." *State.gov*, 2019, history.state.gov/milestones/1801-1829/napoleonic-wars.

7. Scalise, Ronald. "Napoleonic Code (French Civil Code)." *64 Parishes*, 24 Feb. 2023, 64parishes.org/entry/napoleonic-code-adaptation.

8. The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Napoleonic Wars". Encyclopedia Britannica, 31 Jul. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/Napoleonic-Wars.

9. University of Maine. Digital Commons @ University of Maine, digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/honors/147/.

FREEMUN

Douglas S. Freeman High School Model United Nations Conference