

Overview of the age of metternich history essay



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Overview: The French Revolution had seen the rise of nationalist sentiment and the growth of liberalism. However, after the defeat of Napoleon, the leaders of the major European powers (Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria) wanted to provide stability for Europe. They saw the radical ideas of the French Revolution as the source of the 20 year continental war. These European leaders were in support of reactionary measures-measures intended to go back to a preceding era-in this case pre-1789. The program to create stability started with...

The Congress of Vienna: This Congress assembled in 1814, but did not complete its work until 1815. The agreements reached included the following:

Surrounding France with several smaller buffer states in order to check future aggression from France. As a result, Belgium, the Netherlands, and the Kingdom of Sardinia was created. Furthermore, Northern Italy was handed over to Austria and a German Confederation was created.

Principle of Legitimate rule: essentially stating that the only legitimate governments were monarchies. As a result, the Bourbons were restored to the throne of France.

To uphold these two aims, the four major powers formed The Quadruple Alliance (Great Britain, France, Prussia, Austria) would agree to uphold the terms of the Congress of Vienna. This attempt to uphold the principles of Conservatism through an alliance is also referred to as the Concert of Europe-the nations of Europe would unite to preserve the status quo.

One of the principle architects of this plan was Austrian minister Klemens Von Metternich. Metternich had been strongly influenced by the French Revolution. He had personally witnessed the horrors committed during the French Revolution. Moreover, his family had lost property due to Napoleon's conquests. Metternich was further concerned by the rise of nationalism—a feeling that people with a common language and culture should be under a single government. This concern was a result of the fact that Austria was a multi-national state. To preserve the status quo, Metternich developed the idea of balance of power diplomacy. This balance of power should work externally and internally. International peace would be fostered by the creation of European nations who were nearly equal in economic and political power. Metternich believed that nations only go to war when they feel confident of victory. By maintaining equal military power the nations of Europe would then hesitate to go to war with one another. Peace within individual nations would be fostered by providing that should any liberal revolutions occur, the powers of Europe were bound to provide assistance to put down revolutions. Britain, reluctant to have their foreign policy dictated by anything other than national interests, would eventually drop out of the Concert of Europe. However, the Quadruple Alliance would remain essentially intact as France would be included into the alliance.

Challenges to and Defense of the Status Quo

Decembrist Revolution: The death of Tsar Alexander I in 1825 created a temporary crisis in Russia. This crisis was precipitated by the fact that the eldest brother Constantine renounced his inheritance as tsar of Russia. Knowing that Constantine did not want to be tsar, Alexander I had written <https://assignbuster.com/overview-of-the-age-of-metternich-history-essay/>

into his will that his younger brother Nicholas I should become tsar. Both brothers were confused-Nicholas acknowledged Constantine as tsar and Constantine acknowledged Nicholas as tsar. In effect, no one was running Russia. In this power vacuum a group of junior officers called for Constantine to assume the throne and to accept reforms to the feudal system.

Constantine called for Nicholas to take power. Nicholas assumed the throne and sent his cavalry into St. Petersburg to put down the rebellion. The captured rebels were rewarded with a permanent vacation to Siberia. The Liberal movement in Russia had been crushed in its infancy.

Carlsbad Decrees: the liberal movement in Germany was largely centered around the universities. A series of uprisings by students, coupled with their murder of several reactionary leaders, led to increasing concern among European leaders about the possibility of real revolution in France.

Metternich met with the leaders of the German states and the following measures, called the Carlsbad Decrees, were implemented: 1) censorship of the press 2) suppression of student unions and 3) students who were dismissed at one university were to be banned from all universities. The bans succeeded at ending the political dissent at the university levels.

July Revolution: the first serious threat to the Metternich system. Facing dissent from a liberal legislature, Bourbon ruler Charles X (replacing Louis XVIII) called for new elections with the franchise to be restricted only to the wealthiest people in the country. Newspapers called on the public to react to this proclamation by the King. They did and fighting ensued in July 1830 in which Charles X was forced to flee to England.

Louis Phillipe was proclaimed King with several restrictions placed on him. However, the European nations did not feel prompted to act because Louis Phillipe turned out to be an extremely conservative ruler.

Spain: attempts to overthrow the monarch in Spain were quickly put down by a combined European force. However, Europe was relatively unconcerned about Spanish please for help regarding the Creole Revolts in Latin America.

Greek Revolution:

Revolutions of 1848

1848 was marked by a series of poor harvests and an industrial recession.

This

Helped lead to cooperation between liberal intellectuals and unemployed

Workers:

A) France: rallies against the conservative rule of Louis Phillipe ended up

Resulting in the overthrow of Louis. The provisional government