

Congress of Verona

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The **Congress of Verona** met at Verona on October 20, 1822 as part of the series of international conferences or congresses that opened with the Congress of Vienna in 1814-15, which had instituted the Concert of Europe at the close of theNapoleonic Wars.

The Quintuple Alliance was represented by the following persons:

- Russia: Emperor Alexander I and Count Karl Robert Nesselrode (minister of foreign affairs). Count George Mocenigo (Ambassador of Russia in Torino), was also present;
- Austria: Prince Metternich;
- Prussia: Prince Hardenberg and Count Christian Gunther von Bernstorff;
- France: The duc de Montmorency-Laval (minister of Foreign Affairs) and François-René de Chateaubriand;
- United Kingdom: The Duke of Wellington, who was taking the place ofViscount Castlereagh after his tragic suicide on the eve of the congress.



Satirical depiction of the Congress of Verona.

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Issues

While the representatives of the United Kingdom and the European powers had at first, during the Congress of Vienna, acted largely in concert, the extent to which the concord epitomized in the expression the "Concert of Europe" had unraveled in seven years became apparent in the way in which the three main questions before this Congress were handled.

The instructions drawn up by Londonderry, as he then was, for his own guidance, had been handed to Wellington by George Canning without alteration. They defined the United Kingdom's position towards the three questions which it was supposed would be discussed: the Turkish Question (currently surfacing in the Greek insurrection), the question of intervention in favor of the Bourbon royal power in Spain and the revolted Spanish colonies, and the Italian Question.

Italian Question

The matter of the **Italian Question** dealt with the continued Austrian rule in Northern Italy. Since the United Kingdom could not undertake to support a system in which she had merely acquiesced, Wellington did not even formally present his credentials until the other Powers had disposed of the matter, a British minister (Castlereagh's half-brother and successor in the Londonderry title) attending merely to keep informed and to see that nothing was done inconsistent with the European system and the treaties.

Greek Question

In the **Greek Question**, the probable raising of which had alone induced the British government to send a minister plenipotentiary to the Congress, Wellington was instructed to suggest the eventual necessity for recognizing the belligerent rights of the Greeks, and, in the event of concerted intervention, to be careful not to commit the United Kingdom, beyond a supporting role. (See Greek War of Independence.)

As for Russia and Austria, the immediate problems arising out of the Greek Question had already been privately settled between the emperor Alexander and Metternich, to their mutual satisfaction, at the preliminary conferences held at Vienna in September.

Spanish Question

When the plenipotentiaries met in Verona, the only question raised was the **Spanish Question**, of the proposed French intervention in Spain, in which Wellington's instructions were to express the uncompromising opposition of the United Kingdom to the whole principle of intervention.

The discussion was opened by three questions formally propounded by Montmorency:

1. Would the Allies withdraw their ministers from Madrid in the event of France being compelled to do so?
2. In case of war, under what form and by what acts would the powers give France their moral support, so as to give to her action the force of the Quintuple Alliance, and inspire a salutary fear in the revolutionaries of all countries?
3. What material aid would the powers give if asked by France to intervene, under restrictions which France would declare and they would recognize?

A series of gilt-copper medals apparently struck in England represent participants of the Congress in less than flattering lights: the "Count de Chateaubriand" (Ludwig Ernst Bramsen, *Médallier*) bears an inscription that offers the British view of the French position in a nutshell: THE KING OF FRANCE MY MASTER DEMANDS THE FREEDOM OF FERDINAND VII TO GIVE HIS PEOPLE INSTITUTIONS WHICH THEY CANNOT HOLD BUT FROM HIM, while the emperor Francis I of Austria asserts MY TROOPS OCCUPY NAPLES TO CHASTISE THE NEAPOLITANS FOR DARING TO CHANGE THEIR CONSTITUTION.

The reply of Alexander, who expressed his surprise at the desire of France to keep the intervention wholly French, was to offer to march 150,000 Russians through Germany to Piedmont, where they could be held ready to act against any Jacobins, whether in Spain or France. This solution appealed as little to Metternich and Montmorency as to Wellington; but though united in opposing it, four days of confidential communications revealed a fundamental difference of opinion. Wellington, firmly based on the principle of non-intervention, refused to have anything to do with the suggestion, made by Metternich, that the powers should address a common note to the Spanish government in support of the action of France. Finally, Metternich proposed that the Allies should hold a common language, but in separate notes, though uniform in their principles and objects. This solution was adopted by the continental powers; but Wellington, in accordance with his instructions not to countenance any intervention in Spanish affairs, took no part in the conferences that followed. On October 30 the powers handed in their formal replies to the French memorandum.

Russia, Austria and Prussia would act as France should in respect of withdrawing their ministers, and would give to France every assistance she might require, the details to be specified in a treaty. Wellington, on the other hand, replied on behalf of the United Kingdom that having no knowledge of the cause of dispute, and not being able to form a judgment upon a hypothetical case, he could give no answer to any of the questions.

Thus was proclaimed the open breach of the United Kingdom with the principles and policy of the Quintuple Alliance, as it had become with the admission of France in 1818, which development is what gives to the congress its main historical interest. The ensuing French intervention ended with the Battle of Trocadero, which reinstated Ferdinand VII of Spain and opened a reactionary period of Spanish and European politics that led to the Year of Revolutions, 1848.

The Treaty of Verona

This treaty, which has a main goal of stopping all representative governments, was put into the Congressional record of the United State Senate in 1916 and is as follows.

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25 April 1916

I wish to put in the RECORD the secret treaty of Verona of November 22, 1822, showing what this ancient conflict is between the rule of the few and the rule of the many. I wish to call the attention of the Senate to this treaty because it is the threat of this treaty which was the basis of the Monroe doctrine. It throws a powerful white light upon the conflict between monarchical government and government by the people. The Holy Alliance under the influence of Metternich, the Premier of Austria, in 1822, issued this remarkable secret document : [American Diplomatic Code, 1778 - 1884, vol. 2 ; Elliott, p. 179.]

SECRET TREATY OF VERONA The undersigned, specially authorized to make some additions to the treaty of the Holy Alliance, after having exchanged their respective credentials, have agreed as follows :

ARTICLE 1. The high contracting powers being convinced that the system of representative government is equally as incompatible with the monarchical principles as the maxim of the sovereignty of the people with the high divine right, engage mutually in the most solemn manner, to use all their efforts to put an end to the system of representative governments, in whatever country it may exist in Europe, and to prevent its being introduced in those countries where it is not yet known.

ART. 2. As it can not be doubted that the liberty of the press is the most powerful means used by the pretended supporters of the rights of nations to the detriment of those princes, the high contracting parties promise reciprocally to adopt all proper measures to suppress it, not only in their own states but also in the rest of Europe.

ART. 3. Convinced that the principles of religion contribute most powerfully to keep nations in the state of passive obedience which they owe to their princes, the high contracting parties declare it to be their intention to sustain in their respective States those measures which the clergy may adopt, with the aim of ameliorating their own interests, so intimately connected with the preservation of the authority of the princes ; and the contracting powers join in offering their thanks to the Pope for what he has already done for them, and solicit his constant cooperation in their views of submitting the nations.

ART. 4. The situation of Spain and Portugal unite unhappily all the circumstances to which this treaty has particular reference. The high contracting parties, in confiding to France the care of putting an end to them, engaged to assist her in the manner which may the least compromit them with their own people and the people of France by means of a subsidy on the part of the two empires of 20,000,000 of francs every year from the date of the signature of this treaty to the end of the war.

ART. 5. In order to establish in the Peninsula the order of things which existed before the revolution of Cadiz, and to insure the entire execution of the articles of the present treaty, the high contracting parties give to each other the reciprocal assurance that as long as their views are not fulfilled, rejecting all other ideas of utility or other measure to be taken, they will address themselves with the shortest possible delay to all the authorities existing in their States and to all their agents in foreign countries, with the view to establish connections tending toward the accomplishment of the objects proposed by this treaty.

ART. 6. This treaty shall be renewed with such changes as new circumstances may give occasion for, either at a new congress or at the court of one of the contracting parties, as soon as the war with Spain shall be terminated.

ART. 7. The present treaty shall be ratified and the ratifications exchanged at Paris within the space of six months. Made at Verona the 22d November, 1822.

For Austria :-----METTERNICH.

For France :-----CHATEAUBRIAND.

For Prussia :-----BERNSTET.

For Russia :-----NESSELRODE.

I ask to have printed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD this secret treaty, because I think it ought to be called now to the attention of the people of the United States and of the world. This evidence of the conflict between the rule of the few verses popular government should be emphasized on the minds of the people of the United States, that the conflict now waging throughout the world may be more clearly understood, for after all said the great pending war springs from the weakness and frailty of government by the few, where human error is far more probable than the error of the many where aggressive war is only permitted upon the authorizing vote of those whose lives are jeopardized in the trenches of modern war.

Mr. SHAFROTH. Mr. President, I should like to have the senator state whether in that treaty there was not a coalition formed between the powerful countries of Europe to reestablish the sovereignty of Spain in the Republics of South and Central America?

Mr. OWEN. I was just going to comment upon that, and I am going to take but a few moments to do so because I realize the pressure of other matters. This Holy Alliance, having put a Bourbon prince upon the throne of France by force, then used France to suppress the constitution of Spain immediately afterwards, and by this very treaty gave her a subsidy of 20,000,000 francs annually to enable her to wage war upon the people of Spain and to prevent their exercise of any measure of the right of self-government. The Holy Alliance immediately did the same thing in Italy, by sending Austrian troops to Italy, where the people there attempted to exercise a like measure of liberal constitutional self-government ; and it was not until the printing press, which the Holy Alliance so stoutly opposed, taught the people of Europe the value of liberty that finally one country after another seized a greater and greater right of self government, until now it may be fairly said that nearly all the nations of Europe have a very large measure of self government. However, I wish to call the attention of the Senate and the country to this important history in the growth of constitutional popular self-government. The Holy Alliance made its powers felt by the wholesale drastic suppression of the press in Europe, by universal censorship, by killing free speech and all ideas of popular rights, and by the complete suppression of popular government. The Holy Alliance having destroyed popular government in Spain and in Italy, had well-laid plans also to destroy popular government in the American colonies which had revolted from Spain and Portugal in Central and South America under the influence of the successful example of the United States. It was because of this conspiracy against the American Republics by the European monarchies that the great English statesman, Canning, called the attention of our government to it, and our statesmen then, including Thomas Jefferson, took an active part to bring about the declaration by President Monroe in his next annual message to the Congress of the United States that the United States should regard it as an act of hostility to the government of the United States and an unfriendly act if this coalition or if any power of Europe ever undertook to establish upon the American Continent any control of any American Republic or to acquire any territorial rights. This is the so-called Monroe doctrine. The threat under the secret treaty of Verona to suppress popular governments in the American Republics is the basis of the Monroe doctrine. This secret treaty sets forth clearly the conflict between monarchical government and popular government and the government of the few as against the government of the many. It is a part, in reality, of developing popular sovereignty when we demand for women equal rights to life, to liberty, to the possession of property, to an equal voice in the making of the laws and the administration of the laws. This demand on the part of the women is made by men, and it ought to be made by men as well as by thinking, progressive women, as it will promote human liberty and human happiness. I sympathize with it, and I hope that all parties will in the national conventions give their approval to this larger measure of liberty to the better half of the human race. Official Records of the Union Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion

References

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- I. C. Nichols, *European Pentarchy and the Congress of Verona, 1822*
- Jarrett, Mark (2013). *The Congress of Vienna and its Legacy: War and Great Power Diplomacy after Napoleon*. London: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited.ISBN 978-1780761169.

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- "The Treaty of Verona": The US CONGRESSIONAL RECORD - SENATE. 64th CONGRESS, 1st SESSION VOLUME 53, PART 7 Page 6781

External links

- The Chateaubriand medal illustrated (<http://www.christophereimer.co.uk/single/8781.html>)
- The Francis I medal illustrated (<http://www.christophereimer.co.uk/single/8780.html>)

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