

# VIENNA CONFERENCE

**Introduction** - "Immediately after Napoleon's fall in 1814 and his "retirement" to Elba, a Congress of European diplomats was summoned to meet at Vienna to give peace to "a tired and timid generation" and to deal with a number of political problems consequent upon the upheavals caused by the Wars of Revolutionary France and those of the Napoleonic period.

**Mind map: -**

- ✘ **THE PROBLEMS BEFORE THE CONGRESS**
- ✘ **THE LEADING PERSONALITIES AT THE CONGRESS [*Tsar Alexander I, Francis I, Frederick William III, Metternich, Lord Castlereagh, Talleyrand*]**
- ✘ **THE AIMS OF THE CONGRESS.**
- ✘ **THE TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT.**

## THE PROBLEMS BEFORE THE CONGRESS

- 1) **Problem of France.** - What should be the future government and boundaries of France and what punishment should be meted out to her for causing so much bloodshed during the last 25 years?
- 2) **Reconstruction of the Political Map of Europe.** - The wars waged by Revolutionary France and Napoleon had completely changed the political map of Europe. Over 200 petty states in Germany had been abolished and the Holy Roman Empire had ceased to exist.

## THE LEADING PERSONALITIES AT THE CONGRESS

"The Congress was a pageant," and was associated with much gaiety, feasting and merry-making. The representatives of various countries indulged in an eating and drinking orgy to celebrate their deliverance from the tyranny of Napoleon.

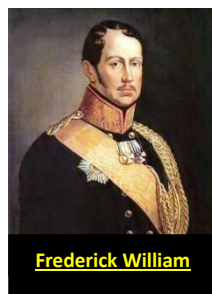
- (1) Foremost among them was **Tsar Alexander I**, was a curious combination of "shrewdness with mysticism, ambition with compassion."
- (2) Emperor **Francis I** of Austria was obstinate and narrow minded and reactionary in his outlook.
- (3) King **Frederick William III** of Prussia was slow, timid and weak and a great traditionalist.
- (4) **Metternich** was the most commanding personality from 1815 to 1848. This period in European History is called the "Era of Metternich." He was the central figure in European diplomacy and was "without a peer in his age or in his style."
- (5) **Lord Castlereagh**, the representative of Great Britain, was essentially liberal in his outlook, and was an astute statesman.
- (6) **Talleyrand**, who represented France, was cunning, shrewd and quick to take advantage of the differences among the allies. He had a very keen sense of observation and could exploit the weaknesses of others to his own advantage.



**Alexander I**



**Francis I**



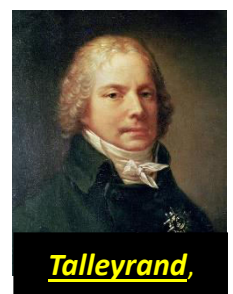
**Frederick William**



**Metternich**



**Castlereagh**



**Talleyrand,**

## THE AIMS OF THE CONGRESS

The deliberations of the Congress had been temporarily suspended by Napoleon's escape from Elba. After his final defeat at Waterloo, it once again continued with its meetings. Its aims were as follows:

- 1) **To Redraw the Political Map of Europe.** The wars of the last 23 years had so changed the political boundaries that it was impossible to restore all the European states which existed in 1789. It was not easy to restore the Holy Roman Empire, as the boundaries of some states had been altered several times. The 200 and odd German princes who had

been dethroned by Napoleon could not be restored. Notwithstanding this difficulty the Congress still aimed as far as possible to restore the old rulers to their original boundaries.

**(2) To secure permanent Peace in Europe.** Revolutionary ideas should be nipped in the bud: never again should France be allowed to spread the principles of Revolution. All germs of liberal opinion must be promptly destroyed.

**(3) To surround France by a Ring of strong States.** France should not be allowed to disturb the peace of Europe in future, and hence she should be surrounded by strong and powerful states on her frontiers. To achieve this end, Prussia, Netherlands and Sardinia were made strong by the addition of large territories so that they might form a bulwark against any further French aggression.

**(4) To distribute the Spoils of War among the Allies.** All those countries which had fought against France were to be rewarded at the cost of France and those who had helped her. Therefore, territories snatched away from France or her allies were distributed among those who had fought against.

### **The Congress mainly worked on the following threefold principles:**

**(1) The principle of "Legitimacy".** Metternich's aim was "to restore as far as possible the "rightful" rulers to their old states. This idea was in agreement with the principle of "legitimacy" which was ably propounded by Talleyrand who cleverly won over Tsar Alexander I to accept this principle and thus saved France for the Bourbons.

**(2) The principle of "Balance of Power" or "Compensation".** But the principle of legitimacy could not be applied to all the States, because during the course of the long wars Great Britain had conquered and annexed a number of colonies belonging to France or to her allies. All of them could not be restored. The British navy had played a very significant role in defeating Napoleon and her services could not be ignored by the Congress. Therefore, she was allowed to appropriate most of the conquered colonies like Mauritius, Tobago, Malta, etc. But those countries besides France which had lost their territories, were compensated in order to maintain the balance of power. Holland got Belgium; Sweden which had lost Finland to Russia was compensated with Norway, and Austria which has renounced her claim to the Austrian Netherlands was rewarded with territories in Italy.

**(3) To Suppress the Republics.** The Congress which was dominated by absolute monarchs and reactionary diplomats was hostile to republics and so the Republics of Genoa and Venice were not restored.

## **THE TERRITORIAL SETTLEMENT**

Having ironed out the differences, the following territorial readjustments were agreed to by the Congress:

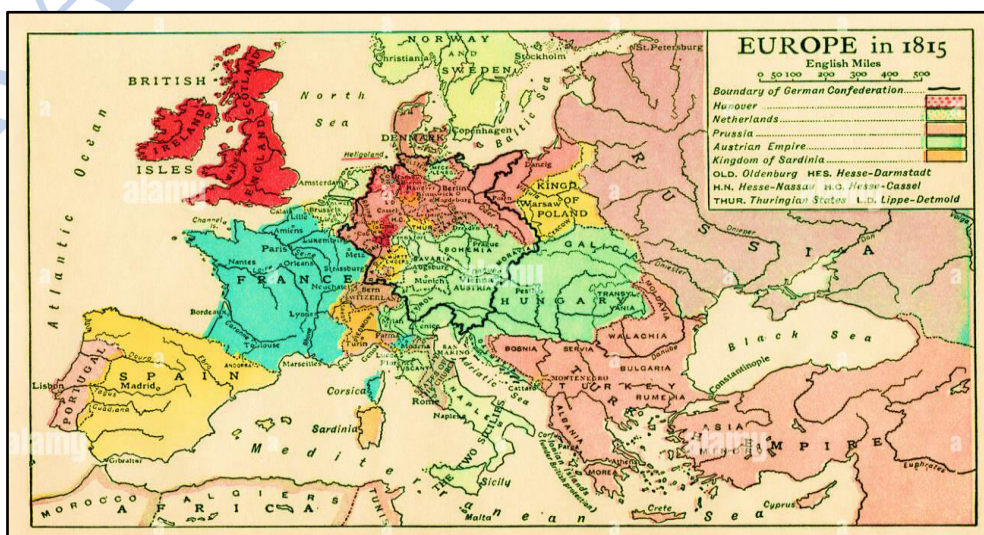
**(1) France was limited to her boundaries of 1792 (these had been reduced to those of 1790, after the battle of Waterloo, by the Second Treaty of Paris).**

**(2) The Bourbons were restored and Louis XVIII returned to his ancestral throne.**

**(3) Holland received Belgium, and the House of Orange was restored to the United Kingdom of Netherlands. Thus, a strong barrier State in the north-east of France was established.**

**(4) Prussia was considerably enlarged by the addition of the following territories: (a) She retained Posen and the Corridor in Poland. (b) (c) (d) Sweden gave her Pomerania. Two-fifths of Saxony was annexed by her. She also recovered her Rhinish provinces and Cologne and Treves. Thus, a formidable state was created in the east of France as a barrier against French aggression.**

**(5) Austria. (a) She was compensated for the loss of Austrian Netherlands by the cession of Lombardy and Venetia in Italy. (b) She recovered Tyrol, Illyrian provinces, and Salzburg. (c) She also got Galicia from Poland.**



# Unification of Italy

**INTRODUCTION:** - From the year 568 AD all the way until the late 19th century, Italy was divided. Measured on this time scale, the movement to unify Italy - dating from about 1815 to 1870 - happened at light speed. The story, told in this really neat animated map, is fascinating.

The fact that Italian unity ended up sticking that Italy is still a unified country today - is instructive. In 1815, Austrian statesman ***Klemens von Metternich*** dismissed the idea of Italy as "***a geographical expression***" - basically calling Italy a place riven by regional divides and Italian identity a lie.

## Mind map: -

- Lombardy- War of Liberation, 1859.
- The Three Duchies and Romagna- Diplomacy, 1860
- Sicily and Naples- Garibaldi, 1860
- Marches and Umbria- Cavour, 1860
- Venetia- Austro- Prussian War, 1866
- Rome- Franco- Prussian War, 1870

Though the diplomats at Vienna divided Italy, they did not succeed in quenching the national spirit Napoleon had roused. On the surface the Austrians continued to exercise their dominion, while underground systematic preparations were being made for the ***risorgimento*** (resurrection). An important factor in the agitation was the secret societies, the largest of which was the ***Carbonari***, or ***Charcoal Burners***. Under the watchwords "***freedom and independence***" the ***Carbonari*** were ceaselessly active in exciting opposition and revolution against foreign rule.

The three men to whom above all others the attainment of Italian unity was due are ***Cavour***, ***Mazzini*** and ***Garibaldi***.

## MAZZINI (1805-1872)

Having lost faith in ***Carbonarism***, whose leaders were largely men of advanced years, he decided to entrust the cause of Italy to youthful minds and hands. He organised among the Italian exiles in Marseilles a society called Young Italy (1832). The banner of the organisation bore on one side the words "Unity and Independence" and on the other "Liberty, Equality, Humanity". Within two years the membership grew to more than fifty thousand. Besides founding and directing ***Young Italy*** Mazzini wrote many fervent articles and pamphlets which were smuggled into Italy.





RAHUL SIR HILL

# **Q. What led the scramble for colonies in the second half of the 19th century**

## **Phases of Colonisation:**

It is broadly divided into two phases –

- ◆ Mercantile
- ◆ Industrial phases.

## **Mercantile Phase:**

This is called as Mercantilism because the major motto of colonial powers was to establish supremacy in trading relationships. They sought to source merchandise cheaply and sell it at a premium in European markets. They controlled high seas and used this as a means for 'Gunboat diplomacy' and later establishing extensive empires in the Americas, East Indies (present-day Indonesia) etc.

The technological superiority of Colonialists wasn't as much as in the later industrial phase. So they were able to subjugate only relatively primitive peoples. Countries with well-established state systems and cultures were able to repel colonialists.

## **Industrial Phase:**

This coincided with the Industrial Revolution in Western Europe and the United States of America. The relative technological supremacy and decadence in the Eastern states meant that Europe could interfere in the internal affairs of these states.

European states used gunboat diplomacy (Opium Wars in China) as well as vile political machinations (Bengal in India, leading to the Battle of Plassey, 1757) to secure their aims. Apart from trade, they sought to secure vast markets for the new industrial goods produced through the Industrial revolution in these countries. Political influence gained in these countries were used to destroy traditional industries and promoted cheap, mass-produced European goods. Eg:

Colonies were used to source cheap raw materials and value-added manufactured goods were dumped in the colonies under the banner of "Free trade". The colonial powers controlled foreign, monetary and trade policies. This meant an advantage to the industrialists at home. This led to the famous drain of wealth from the colonies.

Colonialism reached its logical conclusion with the rise of new industrial powers in Europe – Germany and Italy. This led to a competition for accruing larger and larger empires that meant more power and prestige to these countries. This was most pronounced in the tragic event of Scramble for Africa.

## **Scramble for Africa: [Africa in 1912 What happened?]**

This happened during the period of New Imperialism (1881-1914). Increasing rivalry between European powers – Britain, France, Germany etc – meant that they needed more and more markets and sources for cheap raw material.

Technological progress – mapping of inland Africa in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, advances in treating deadly diseases like malaria etc – meant that the European powers could finally move inland from the well-established coastal colonies.

But this would require costly wars against the native population. So they reached a political settlement where they divided the territory of Africa within themselves with no regard for the wishes of the indigenous people of these lands! The settlement was reached in the Berlin conference of 1884.

## **Decolonization of Africa**

It was the cultural, economic and political process through which colonies broke free from the colonial empires and integrated themselves to the new 'world order'.

### **Cultural:**

Colonial empires were generally founded on principles of Racism and 'right to rule' over 'inferior races'. These narratives had to be challenged. An image of benevolent and modernising influence was used as a pretext for colonial exploitation. However, this was later broken. (Eg: Indian National Congress popularised the theory of drain of wealth to demolish the claim of the civilising influence of British Raj) The self-confidence of people had to be boosted. Exercises of cultural integration and the creation of national identities and a shared past were emphasised. Eg: Ancient Greek (Hellenistic) culture was emphasised in the Greek War of Independence, 1829 against the Ottoman Empire.

### **Political:**

Newly freed states had to be allowed to follow an independent foreign policy. They had to raise resources and build stable institutions (Eg: An Army subject to strict civilian control). Representative and democratic institutions needed to be built. This needed an enlightened citizenry and an empowered leadership.

### **Economic:**

The old European powers sought to exert influence in newly independent states through biased trade policies. This came to be known as Neo-Colonialism. Most of the investment in these countries came from the erstwhile colonizers. So they were able to control new governments through lobbying and other informal (often corrupt) means. Colonial powers were technologically advanced. So they used it as a leverage in directing foreign investment and hence controlling the new states.

## What forced European powers to abandon their empires?

**Nationalist movements** – Through the effects of westernisation and opening up, colonies acquired enlightened leadership and many developed strong nationalist movements. Most colonies were extensive police states. Massive unrest made them simply unviable.

**Second World War:** It weakened most European powers and they couldn't keep up with the maintenance of their empires. The most powerful among victorious powers – The USA and the USSR took a firm anti-colonial stance. This further weakened the Europeans.

**Pan-Africanism:** A feeling of brotherhood was growing within the indigenous people of Africa. This meant a pooling of resources and external support in the struggle for independence. As more and more countries attained freedom, the entire process was hastened.

**Outside Pressures:** The USA and USSR actively pressurised colonial powers. Eg: President Truman of the US pressurised British government to make India independent. Newly formed United Nations and other powerful international associations like the Non-Alignment Movement built up firm international opinions against colonialism.

### **Challenges to Africa:**

Africa faced many unique challenges which made Decolonisation a very difficult process. These were common to most of the new states in Africa.

**Tribal differences:** Many countries were brought together by the sheer military forces of the colonizers. Lack of a common cultural past and tribal belligerence meant that they slaughtered each other inside these artificial boundaries imposed upon them. This led to worst genocides in Nigeria, Congo (Zaire), Burundi and Rwanda.

**Cold war rivalry:** Since most of them were resource-rich, the two major blocs didn't want more states slipping into the orbit of its rival power. This led to prolonged civil wars. Eg: Angola, Uganda, Burundi etc.

**Economic underdevelopment:** Colonisers used them as sources of raw materials. So lack of industries and primitive agriculture made them susceptible to Neo-Colonialism. Also, most of their economies were entirely dependent upon the export of one or two commodities.

**Political and Social problems:** Most colonial powers refused education to Africans. This led to the deficiency in enlightened leadership and a general faith in democratic means. This meant that most countries plunged into corruption and civil war soon after independence.

**Economic and Natural Disasters:** Devastating famines of the 1980s and ongoing famines due to climate change are spelling disaster to these countries. These events end up ruining economies and destabilising governments. Through the 90s, the spread of the HIV/AIDS epidemic also posed a grave threat to these countries.

**Ethnic conflict:** In some countries with an influential white settler population, Decolonisation was a more complex affair. They offered firm resistance because they were privileged under the old system. Eg: Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and the erstwhile Apartheid regime of South Africa.

**Religious Extremism:** This is a fairly recent phenomenon in which Islamist ideologies taking over Muslim populations of these countries. Eg: Boko Haram in Nigeria, Al-Shabab in Somalia.