

THE „THIRD GERMANY“ AND THE SOLUTION OF THE GERMAN QUESTION IN THE 19th CENTURY

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For the European states of today, sovereignty no longer represents a purely internal concern. The division of the world into great power blocs has turned sovereignty into a question of international law. This raises the problem whether a global civilization is actually an end worth aspiring to. The author observes that only what has grown organically is durable. Only if the further development of society and state is characterized by continuity will they over the long run be able to achieve viability.

The author refers to the solution of the German question in the 19th century to show those components that were able to prove durable over a longer-term period. It emerges that only federalism is capable of mobilizing the economic, social and political forces needed for inner balance and stability and creative dynamism. The historical examples show that every state needs for its long-term survival a tradition-rooted inner cohesion of its inhabitants based on regional diversity.

The issue for the future will no longer be that of sovereignty but rather that of modern forms for individual, free development within each state. In the case of Germany, Bavaria offers a good example of the value of a political creed which bears the hallmarks of distinctive individuality.

The old German *Reich* knew only collective sovereignty. Whoever claimed sovereignty had to leave the *Reich*, which was viable only because it represented a balance of forces. To this day, external peace in Europe could only be preserved by the existence of a balance of power. Every internal European disequilibrium disturbed the peace. With its retention of regional individuality, Bismarck's empire had an internal state mechanism that was able to function. But the Weimar Constitution eliminated to a large degree the rights reserved to Bavaria — and the Weimar Republic was a failure. The democratic Bavarian constitutional state which emerged from the war has given the FRG its specific weight.

Peace is not identical with neutrality. Peace is rather a positive endeavour towards an all-European concept. With the national state idea having reached a dead-end, pre-national state ideas are indicated as models: the federative union into a federal European state of area structures which have developed historically.