

AUSTRIA AND CENTRAL EUROPE

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The events of the year 1848 raised the question of a reconstitution of Germany. In the Frankfurt Parliament, the conservative supranational Austrian imperial idea clashed with the liberal idea of the national state. Although no reorganization could be achieved in Frankfurt, the Prussian *kleindeutsch* concept was eventually realized, and Schwarzenberg's project, which made allowances for the national problems of the Austrian monarchy, was repudiated. The differences in the interests of Austria and the German Confederation were already apparent in the Crimean War and the war with Piedmont-Sardinia.

After the Battle of Königgrätz, Prussian opposition thwarted Austrian participation in a Central European economic system, by eliminating Austria from the German Confederation. Austria's membership and pre-eminence in the German Confederation had been an expression of continuity with the old

imperial idea, and its now being forced to desist from exerting any influence on the shaping of Central Europe meant the advance of the national-state idea, which was in contradiction to the structure of the monarchy. To an ever increasing degree, the national idea took hold of the non-German peoples of the monarchy and, after the establishment of Dualism, compelled the re-examination of the national-political power relationships which had prevailed up to then.

The pressure which the Russian power bloc exercised on Austria with the growth of Pan-Slavic tendencies led Germany to the view that the preservation of the monarchy was necessary for the security of the German Empire. Thus Bismarck again enlisted the help of Austria, in the Dual Alliance of 1879, in the formation of a Central European center. However, the opposing interests of the two partners continued to burden both and remained an obstacle to a constructive Central European policy.

During the First World War, Friedrich Naumann's „Mitteleuropa“ idea also aroused considerable attention in Austria, and won many adherents among the ranks of the German National Association (*Deutscher Nationalverband*), as well as in Hungary. Conservative circles, however, doubted that this concept was in harmony with the independent development of the multinational state, viewing Seipel's federative program and supranational idea as more suitable and as also pointing the future road for Europe. But both Naumann's and Seipel's ideas came too late for any concrete attempts at a solution. The League of Nations idea then followed a different course, taking, as it did, not the supranational, multinational state, but the national state as its basis.