The Trap Chapter 3
Nations, Artificial States and Populated Spaces

Currently there are about thirty wars being fought throughout the world. Why do you think that following the end of the Cold War, there has been such a proliferation of conflict?

The causes of most of these conflicts fall into a relatively small number of categories. Many are due not to aggression by a foreign power, but to the desire of real nations to be liberated from the artificial states that have been imposed on them.

Most artificial states have come into existence when the ruling elites of the West redrew the map of the world on false premises. The conventional wisdom, on which they based their action, refused to accept the existence of nationhood and therefore was unable to distinguish between nations, artificial states and populated spaces. During the Cold War, unnatural political structures were held in place by the uneasy world order maintained by the superpowers. Nations now wish to recover their freedom and the result, inevitably, is conflict.

How do you define a nation?

It is a land whose citizens, in their overwhelming majority, share a common culture, sense of identity, heritage and traditional roots.

How would you distinguish a nation from what you describe as an artificial state?

Let me give you a few obvious examples.

The Czechs and the Slovaks are two nations which in 1918 were forced into a single state, Czechoslovakia. As soon as they became free after the fall of the Berlin Wale they discarded their artificial union and peacefully divorced.

Yugoslavia was an artificial state, also created in 1918, which grouped together Serbs, Croats, Slovenes and other nations into six 'republics' and two 'autonomous regions', all dominated by the power of the Serbs. The present war reflects the desire of these different nations to establish their independence. It is complicated by the territorial urge to obtain as much space as possible.

The artificial state of Belgium was formed in 1831. It attempted to bring together the Walloon and Flemish peoples. After 162 years of conflict, the constitution was altered in 1993 so as to grant greater autonomy to the constituent nations. Many believe that this was only a first step towards effective separation.

Two of these three examples of nations attempting to free themselves from artificial states are being resolved peacefully, Czechoslovakia by negotiated divorce and Belgium by constitutional evolution. The other, Yugoslavia, is condemned to war and ongoing tragedy.

This is a worldwide phenomenon. In the Americas, the most obvious example of a separatist movement is in Canada. In Europe, we have the emerging separatist political party in Italy known as the Lombardy League; as well as various movements, often violent, which seek national reconstruction: the Basque separatists and, further east, the Kurds whose people are divided among a number of countries and seek a homeland of their own.

In the ex-Soviet Union, where nationhood was suppressed, examples abound, typically in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Tadjikistan.

Africa is worst of all. The colonial powers inflicted profound damage on that continent, driving frontiers straight through the ancestral territories of nations. For example, we drew a line through Somalia, separating off part of the Somali people and placing them within Kenya. We did the same by splitting the great Masai nation between Kenya and Tanzania. Elsewhere, of course, we created

the usual artificial states. Nigeria consists of four principal nations: the Hausa, Igbo, Yoruba and Fulani peoples. It has already suffered a terrible war which killed hundreds of thousands of people and which settled nothing. Sudan, Chad, Djibouti, the Senegal, Mali, Burundi and, of course, Rwanda are among the many other states that are riven by conflict.

Our present policy is no better. Even after the fall of the racist apartheid regime, we are unable to understand that South Africa is an artificial state combining a number of proud and great black nations. They were subjugated and held in check by the white colonialist power, but now they seek their autonomy. As ever, the policy of the West remains colonial in spirit, as we refuse to understand that the problems are no longer principally between black and white but are between nations trapped in a straitjacket created by the West. So our leaders work to maintain the imperial structure, by replacing one imperial power with another. They back the Xhosa nation to dominate all others. We are witnessing an attempt to form another Yugoslavia.

As for Somalia, the stated purpose of the recent intervention was to restore hope by delivering food. Then our colonialist impulse returned. We came to believe that we knew how to solve Somalia's problems and we converted 'Operation Restore Hope' into a military expedition to 'Nation Build'. The result, according to the US Ambassador in Somalia, is that 'There is no more Somalia. Somalia's gone. You can call the place where the Somali people live "Somalia", but Somalia as a state disappeared in 1991'.[1] That, of course, was the date of the US-led military invasion which left Somalia in a state of anarchy. It is almost unbelievable that despite the tragedy and chaos we have inflicted on Africa and despite our inability to solve our own problems, we are still arrogant enough to believe that we have the knowledge, indeed the duty, to subjugate other nations and force our ideas upon them.

You do not mean to imply that a nation cannot integrate foreigners?

Of course not. Indeed, nations need new blood and new ideas. But they can only absorb a limited amount at a time. They cannot allow themselves to be overwhelmed by immigration otherwise they will lose their identity and cease to be nations. Newcomers who are welcomed into a nation should want to honour and respect the customs of their new home. They must not step on shore or over the border and reject the national culture. If they do, the inevitable results are hostility, intolerance and conflict.

How does a nation differ from what you describe as a 'populated space?'

Many modern intellectuals have taught that a geographic space, once populated, ipso facto becomes a nation. In other words, they believe that all sorts of peoples, drawn from completely different cultures and ethnic groups, can be gathered together, mixed up and deposited on a given territory and thereby a nation will be created. In reality, this merely populates a space which over a very long period of time might evolve into a nation.

What about religious wars?

The strengthening of Islam is the main factor in the recent increase in religious wars. But that is itself a natural reaction against the excessive intrusion of western modernism.

In Iran, for example, the Shah attempted to westernize his country in one generation. He collectivized the farms, uprooted the rural populations and chased them into towns whose slums expanded massively, undertook an intensive programme of industrialization and, so as to replace the traditional customs, imported western culture. What is more, he challenged the religion of his people. How could a nation fail to reject such all-embracing aggression? Of course, action creates reaction. And when the action is exaggerated the reaction is all the stronger.

Algeria is another nation in deep trouble. Here again, the West sought to impose its culture and replace ancestral traditions by a kind of western progressive socialism, a blend of the ideas much appreciated by fashionable intellectuals. The results were the same as ever: uprooting of the rural population; relatively unsuccessful industrialization; mass migration to urban areas leading to the

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[1] 'Somalia Slips Back to Bloodshed', *Washington Post,* 4 September 1994

tragic development of slums; an extension of welfare in an attempt to calm a destabilized population, leading to the emergence of a dependent underclass; population explosion; social breakdown; an epidemic of crime; and finally a brutal rejection of the destructive foreign culture that had been forced on the Algerian people.

It is interesting to compare the West's reaction to the expulsion of Jean-Bertrand Aristide following his democratic election in Haiti with western attitudes towards Algeria after the election was halted when the Islamic political parties were on the brink of being democratically elected. Insofar as Haiti is concerned, there has been infinite gesticulation and posturing in front of the TV cameras, military intervention and politicians insisting that the results of democratic elections must be respected universally. Yet virtual silence has greeted the reversal of a democratic election in Algeria. The West cannot understand a democratic rejection of its ideas. For the West such a rejection is a sign of either dementia or evil.

How do you explain this?

The West believes that its destiny is to guide or coerce diverse human cultures into a single global civilization. It cannot tolerate the coexistence in the world of different cultures. The principal reason for this is that the West really is convinced that it has discovered the only model of society which benefits humanity, and therefore that it has a moral duty to ensure that the whole world adopts that model. The debate concerning Haiti is a good illustration. The key advisers to the Clinton administration propose that the right to democracy be universal and that the global community should guarantee this as a legal entitlement. Consequently the US Administration mounted a military intervention in Haiti. As Jeane Kirkpatrick writes: 'If we act against Haiti, we should do so understanding that there are fifty-five countries judged by the Freedom House analysis to be "not free" '.[2]

This acute form of cultural imperialism is reinforced by international business, which considers that it would benefit from the destruction of social diversity and its replacement by a global mono culture hungry for western-type products.

What is your view of the United States itself? In your view is it a nation, an artificial state or a populated space?

America has changed paths several times during its history. From the early eighteenth century, the immigrant population was principally of European cultural traditions. Then occurred the terrible tragedy of the mass importation of slaves.

James Madison, after his retirement from the Presidency, foresaw the social consequences of this change. Even though he himself was a slave owner, he believed in emancipation. But he understood that the slaves had been stripped of their cultures and identities and that they would be excluded from, or would reject, the prevalent white culture. He concluded that it would be almost impossible to heal the social wounds and that many of the black peoples, therefore, would remain separate and alienated, while the white population would retain a sense of guilt. Both ethnic groups would suffer as, of course, would the nation. It is well known that Madison believed that following emancipation liberated slaves should return to Africa and that America should act with maximum generosity in facilitating such a mass movement of peoples. He was a founder-member of the American Colonization Society, which was formed for this purpose.

How was his advice received?

The US obtained, in 1822, the territory of Liberia as a West African haven for returning ex-slaves. The name Liberia was a symbol of their emancipation, and the country's motto became 'We came here for freedom's sake'. Unfortunately (as in each case where this has been done), the need of the immigrants for a homeland took precedence over the rights of those people already there, who had no say in how their territory was disposed of. Alas, the experiment had unexpectedly perverse results. The freed slaves rapidly enslaved the local population. In 1930, Liberia was censured by the League of Nations for condoning 'conditions hardly distinguishable from slave-raiding and

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2 'Imposing Democracy: Could the US Stop with Haiti?', *International Herald Tribune,* Paris, 10 September 1994

slave-trading'.[3] The civil wars that have raged in Liberia during the past decades have one root cause: the original inhabitants decided to regain control over their country.

What impact do you think the forced immigration of Africans has had on the character of America?

I agree with James Madison's conclusions. You cannot tear away from people their culture, heritage and identity without provoking a terrible reaction. Prior to the arrival of African Americans, America's immigrant population seemed likely to develop into a nation. They had come to America of their own free will and they were inspired by the ideal of a free and classless society, the shining city on the hill. They had freely decided to discard much of their original heritage and to sever their ancestral roots. They commingled with ease. Of course, there were exceptions. Some communities tended to marry among themselves. But the typical southern white American shares German, AngloSaxon, Scottish and Irish ancestors. Between 1820 and 1860 nine out of ten European immigrants came from England, Ireland or Germany.[4] Obviously, for all the reasons foreseen by Madison, the relationship between African and European Americans was very much more difficult.

The year 1965 was another turning point. It was then that the Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments were passed. They abolished the policy which, previously, had organized immigration in a manner that reflected the pattern of cultural origin already established in America. The law was symbolic because, instead of continuing to favour European immigration, America had decided to become its own free world. During the 1950s there were nine times as many European immigrants as there were Asians.[5] Following the passage of the new Immigration Act, the proportions were sharply reversed. By 1990 the absolute number of immigrants from Europe had halved, whereas immigration from other continents and cultures had soared.[6] By opening itself to all those seeking freedom whatever their origins, America had decided to initiate a vast and welcoming new form of society. President Reagan, in his famous New Year's speech of 1982, described America in these terms: 'We're a nation composed of people who have come here from every corner of the world, people of all races and creeds .. '.[7]

Great enthusiasm was expressed for such a grand vision. Not only was it immensely generous in spirit, but it seemed to promise a vigorous, innovative and industrious new generation which would bring tremendous vitality to America. And so it has turned out. These immigrants now often lead the pack in school results, in research, in science and in mathematics. But, inevitably, there have been other consequences. As Time magazine wrote: 'by 2020 ... the number of US residents who are Hispanic or non-white will have more than doubled to nearly 115 million'. Only a short time later, the population of European descent will be a minority; 'the average US resident, as defined by census statistics, will trace his or her descent to Africa, Asia, the Hispanic world, the Pacific islands, Arabia - almost anywhere but white Europe'.[8]

What will be the consequences of these changes?

This radical transformation of the population of America has taken place with incredible speed. There has been large-scale legal as well as illegal immigration (the latter estimated at between 2 and 3 million each year).[9] What is more, the immigrant peoples, once installed, have a higher birth-

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[3] The League of Nations took this action following the work of the INternational Commission of INquiry to Investigate Slavery and Forced Labour in Liberia, chaired by Dr Cuthbert Christy

[4] *Encyclopedia Britannica,* Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol 12, 1994

[5] US Department of Justice, *Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and Naturalization Service,* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1992, p 29.

[6] *Ibid.,* pp. 16, 30

[7] Reagan, R., in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Washington: Government Printing Office, 1982.* (The text is taken from the President's 'Remarks to the People of Foreign Nations on New Year's Day', 1 January 1982

[8] 'Beyond the Melting Pot', *Time*, 9 April 1990

[9] US Department of Justice, *op. cit.,* pp 27, 115

rate. The twentieth-century writers Oakeshott[10] and Santayana[11] believed that one of the disasters which can befall any community is that its shared understandings, in other words its common culture, be dissipated in too rapid or too sweeping change.

Whatever the outcome of this extraordinary and grand experiment, it will be impossible to avoid social torment. The destabilization and in some cases social breakdown of the cities, the multi-ethnic, multitongued population, the rapid geographic mobility which has resulted in uprooted nuclear or broken families, have all contributed to widespread disorientation. As must be expected, reactions to these fast-changing conditions have been diverse. Some have sought their historic roots in Africa, Ireland, Israel, Italy, China or wherever, forming somewhat separate communities and choosing to live among themselves. They strive to preserve or to recover their cultures, religions and language. In other words, their reaction has been to respect and to protect their differences. Others have gone in an entirely opposite direction. They have sought to eliminate diversity and to build a homogenized society by denying the existence of cultural, ethnic and even gender differences. Homogenization has brought into question the differences between men and women. It is the fact that men and women are different, that the weaknesses of one are compensated by the strengths of the other, that allows a family to live in harmony. Replacing the natural complementarity of men and women by competition between them will change society-particularly in a culture in which it is fashionable to emphasize the individual. Modern individualism regards all social structures and obligations, even those created by the family, as impediments to self-realization, and therefore as forms of oppression.

These social phenomena, homogenization of the genders and modern individualism, will further threaten the stability of the family.

What do you conclude from all this?

From a geopolitical point of view, America will find it more difficult to achieve internal agreement on its policies. Asian, Hispanic and African Americans will not respond to the special relationship with Europe as do European Americans. Similarly, European Americans will have a different attitude towards problems in other parts of the world. So American governments may attempt to create a consensus by justifying their foreign policy on humanitarian grounds, sometimes known as 'gunboat compassion', and that can rapidly degenerate into a form of neo-colonialism.

Let's now turn to the construction of Europe. You believe in a European Community, but you reject the Europe that would result from the Treaty of Maastricht. Why?

Maastricht seeks to create a supranational, centralized, bureaucratic state-a homogenized union. It would destroy the pillars on which Europe was built-its nations. It would convert Europe into one multicultural space, in which national identities would be fused and sovereignty abandoned. It would coerce ancient European nations to merge into the ultimate artificial state. As George Orwell remarked, it is characteristic of intellectuals to pass over in incomprehension the dominant political passion of the age.[12] Today, that passion is the search for national identity. And this is the moment when European ruling elites are seeking to destroy the identity of every European nation.

How is it that the peoples of twelve European nations have agreed to this?

The European Union was built in secret: not through carelessness or casualness, but in a deliberately planned and skilfully executed manner. Claude Cheysson, the former French Minister of Foreign Affairs and a member of the European Commission from 1985 to 1989, described the

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[10] Oakeshott, M., *Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays,* Minneapolis: LIberty Press, 1991.

[11] Santayana, G., *Dominations and Powers: Reflections on Liberty, Society and Government,* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951

[12] Orwell, G., *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters, Vol. 2: My Country Right or Left, 1940-1943,* London: Penguin, 1970, p 168. Orwell writes: ' The energy that actually shapes the world springs from emotions - racial pride, leader-worship, religios belief, love of war - which liberal intellectuals mechanically write off as anachronisms, and which they have usually destroyed so completely in themselves as to have lost all power of action'.

mechanism in an interview in Le Figaro on 7 May 1994.[13] He explained proudly that the European Union could only have been constructed in the absence of democracy, and he went on to suggest that the present problems were the result of having mistakenly allowed a public debate on the merits of the Treaty of Maastricht.

The British newspaper the Guardian lodged a case before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg complaining of the secrecy in which European decisions are taken. Lawyers for the European Council of Ministers responded by stating to the judges that 'there is no principle of community law which gives citizens the right to EU documents'. They went on to make the astounding claim that although heads of government had repeatedly called for more openness in EU affairs, their declarations 'were of an eminently political nature and not binding on the community institutions'.[14] So they asked the judges to ignore the repeated declarations at EU summit meetings in the past two years in favour of greater openness. Statements by the twelve heads of government were no more than 'policy orientations' and had no binding effect.

This belief that the nomenklatura knows best and that the public is no more than a hindrance explains why there now exists a profound and dangerous divorce between European societies and their governing elites.

What was done in secret?

Quietly and progressively, power was transferred to the seventeen un elected technocrats who were the members of the European Commission. Originally, power had been entrusted to the Council of Ministers, which consists of the elected national heads of state or their representatives. As they were more interested in national policies than in the creation of Europe, bit by bit the technocrats of the Commission were allowed to take over executive power. They have been granted the monopoly right to propose new initiatives for the development of the European Union. Their ambition is not modest. Jacques Delors, the outgoing president of the Commission, declared that in future 80 per cent of all laws governing economic, social and fiscal affairs of each European nation would originate in Brussels and therefore from proposals initiated by
the Commission. [15]

As was certain to be the case, this rush towards technocratic hyper-centralization has created a Europe which is hopelessly weak externally and unable to influence the course of world events. Internally, the power of the technocracy is employed to destroy sovereignty, freedom and self-reliance.

How do you define a technocrat?

Usually a technocrat is an ex-politician or a civil servant. He is unelected, virtually impossible to dislodge during his term of employment, and has been granted extensive executive and even legislative power without popular mandate and without being directly answerable to the people whose interests, theoretically, he is supposed to represent.

What kind of Europe do you believe in?

It would be built on the strengths, cultures and heritage of its constituent nations. The fundamental principle which would guide its institutions would be that everything that can be done at family level would be entrusted to the family, everything that can be done at the local or regional or national level would be decentralized accordingly.

I believe that democracy functions properly when it is local and participatory. In a healthy democracy it is the people who decide which powers should be entrusted to their leaders. In a false democracy, it is the leaders who decide which freedoms are to be lent to the people.

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[13] 'Europe: le requisitoire de Claude Cheysson', *Le FIgaro*, Paris, 7 May 1994

[14] 'EU Ministers tell court to uphold council screcy', *Guardian*, London 31 August 1994.

[15] Speech by Jacques Delors to the European Parliament, 6 July 1988.

When constituencies are small, their elected representatives must concern themselves with the local interests of their constituents. When political representatives are distant and faceless and represent vast numbers of unknown constituents, they represent not their constituents, but special-interest groups whose lobbyists are numerous and ever-present.

What is more, democracy should be participatory and not just representative. By that I mean that citizens should retain the final decision on matters which will significantly affect their society. In a functioning democracy such as Switzerland, 100,000 people are entitled to call a national referendum on any issue concerning changes in the constitution. A petition signed by 50,000 people can insist that proposals presented to Parliament be submitted to a public referendum. But in Great Britain, for example, the government has systematically refused to allow a referendum on the Treaty of Maastricht, a treaty that radically diminishes national sovereignty. The government's excuse is that referenda are not part of the British political system. And yet when Britain originally joined the European Community, the British people were given the opportunity to express their opinion in a national referendum. No, the real reason is that opinion polls show that Maastricht would be resoundingly rejected by the British people. By refusing to allow a free vote on so vital an issue, the present government is demonstrating its contempt for the people who elected it.

Participatory democracy is a way of controlling the power of politicians once they have been elected; it also ensures that ultimate responsibility remains with the electorate. The right to call a referendum should be available both at the local and at the national level.

But European leaders have always accepted the principle of subsidiarity and stated that they would seek optimum decentralization.

Subsidiarity has been used by the Eurocrats to mask their lust for centralization. It is supposed to mean optimum decentralization of power, but the word itself is now hopelessly discredited. What a farce it has been to witness the Commission claiming that they are acting according to the spirit of subsidiarity while at the same time predicting that 80 per cent of all national laws will originate in Brussels!

What areas of responsibility should concern Brussels?

Principally defence, diplomacy, protection of the environment and maintaining a free internal market within Europe.

What institutions would be necessary for this purpose?

The principal executive institution should be the European Council of Ministers which, as I have said, consists of the elected national heads of state and their representatives. Because under the present system the representative of each European country in turn becomes president of the Council for a few months, a vice-president of the Council should be appointed and would be responsible to the members. This would ensure executive continuity. Otherwise, as we have seen, the unelected technocrats of the Commission fill the void.

What about the European Commission?

It should be the administrative secretariat of the Council. It should be stripped of executive and legislative power and expected to work in the efficient and disciplined manner which a democracy expects from its functionaries.

What structures would be needed for defence and diplomacy?

They should be entrusted to a European Security Council not too dissimilar to the UN Security Council. The large European nations, which would provide the bulk of military capacity, would be the principal members of the Security Council. All European nations would be free to opt out of military initiatives decided on by the European Security Council. The Council would be able to draw on the armed forces of those nations which agree to participate, without seeking to create a

homogenized Euro-corps. The development and production of military equipment could be carried out in a coordinated manner through joint ventures between European corporations.

The principal purpose of Europe's defence must be to protect Europe's vital interests and, more particularly, to defend its territory against military or uncontrolled invasion. It should not pursue neo-colonial expeditions under the guise of humanitarian aid, when its real purpose is often to help some western politician's career at home.

What do you mean by uncontrolled invasion?

I mean immigration on a scale which cannot be integrated.

And what should be the relationship between the European Security Council, the USA and NATO?

Now that the Cold War is over, Europe must grow up. It is absurd that 250 million Americans should be asked to defend 350 million Europeans against an unknown enemy. Europe and the USA should work as independent allies and NATO could be the structure used for ad hoc cooperation.

And the environment?

Environmental problems do not respect frontiers, therefore standards should be established at the European level and applied throughout Europe. European diplomacy should seek to obtain international acceptance of these standards. And, of course, environmental disasters must be prevented where possible or tackled by prompt and effective international action.

What role do you see for the European Parliament?

Before discussing the Parliament, I would like to describe one final European institution which I believe to be vitally important. All organizations, as they degenerate, become centralized and bureaucratic. The Founding Fathers, in Philadelphia, originally conceived the United States as a true federation of free peoples. James Buchanan, the American Nobel Prize-winning economist, suggested recently that America has evolved into a state not much different from other centralized states, and that James Madison could never have believed that his concept of federalism would degenerate into a centralized leviathan.[16]

The supreme duty of the new institution would be to prohibit the accumulation of power by the centre. Decentralization must be the fundamental principle on which Europe is built.

As for the European Parliament, it is a pseudodemocratic institution. It is totally dominated by the two major parties, the Socialists and the Christian Democrats, both of which share with the European Commission the vision of a supranational, centralized European state dominating a homogenized union. Its only real function is to provide cover for the Commission.

When the European Council of Ministers and the Commission are in disagreement, the confrontation is clearly and embarrassingly defined: it is the technocrats of Brussels versus the elected representatives of the nations. In such a contest, the European Parliament is the natural ally of the technocrats. As I have said, they share the same objectives. What is more, they can only achieve those objectives by subjugating the national parliaments. The strength of the European Parliament and the Commission is in inverse proportion to that of the national democratic institutions. The weaker the national institutions, the stronger are those of Brussels. So the European Commission and the European Parliament share both the same objectives and the same enemy.

Under your plan, what powers should be granted to the European Parliament?

Its authority should be limited to overseeing those few matters that need to be centralized.

The European Parliament already has the right to ratify treaties between the European Union and third parties, as well as the right to ratify the acceptance of new nations into the Union. Those

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[16] James Buchanan speaking in Paris, at a conference on constitutional issues, 1989

powers seem acceptable. In addition, it should have the right to approve senior appointments to European institutions. It has been granted the right to approve the membership of the Commission, but at the moment it exercises that right irresponsibly. It votes without appropriate knowledge. There are no public confirmation hearings and, as a result, neither Members of Parliament nor the public are given the opportunity to learn about the candidates.

What about control of the European budget?

The Parliament already has the duty to approve the European central budget as well as to vote a discharge for the year-end accounts. This is equivalent to approving the annual accounts of a corporation during the annual meeting of shareholders. But here is another example of the Parliament's impotence. The European accounts for the years 1982 and 1992 were rejected for gross irregularities. You would have thought that such a condemnation would be a major event with major consequences. Not at all. The accounts have remained unapproved and the Commission continues to distribute funds at an accelerating pace.

What other powers should the European Parliament be granted?

I realize that I have supplied examples rather than an exhaustive list, but at the moment the work of the European Parliament is overwhelmingly either a waste of time or downright destructive. In this latter category I include all the legislation and discussion papers concerning matters which are none of the European Parliament's business because they should be the responsibility of national parliaments. We should be extremely circumspect in granting powers to this Parliament. When you pay nearly 600 people to pass laws, they pass laws, and most of them are, at best, useless.

You are an opponent of the project for a single currency. Why?

The effects of a single currency go far beyond the economy. They would transform the political structure of Europe as well as the stability of its societies.

A currency is both an economic tool and a reflection of the economic and social condition of a society. The quantity of available money must be determined in a way which does not lead to unacceptable levels of inflation, deflation or other disruptions. Obviously, a single currency would have to be managed centrally, and that necessarily would mean that the principal economic strategy of each European nation would also need to be determined centrally. It would be impossible to have a single currency while at the same time maintaining different economic programmes in each of twelve nations.

The true purpose of proposing a single currency is to force through the creation of a unitary European state while pretending to promote a purely economic idea. It is yet another example of the Eurocrats acting by stealth so as to achieve their aim of a homogenized European union.

Furthermore, a single currency would disrupt European societies. To understand the effects of a single currency imposed uniformly on both rich and poor regions, look at Italy.

The economy of northern Italy is highly competitive compared to the remainder of Europe, whereas that of the south is not. Obviously, the currency used in the south cannot be adjusted relative to that of the north in order to reflect the differences in their economies because the south and the north maintain the same currency. The economy in the south stagnated and unemployment increased. Unemployed southerners moved north to seek work and to stem this migration Italy subsidized investment in the south to create jobs. To do this, special institutions were formed such as the Cassa del Mezzogiorno and its successors, through which were channelled massive transfers of funds to the south. The policy failed. Much of the investment went into useless bureaucratic mega-projects and much was stolen or diverted for political purposes. Instead of generating employment, the subsidies generated corruption. They also failed to stop migration, which continued to uproot southern communities and to overpopulate and destabilize those in the north. This is a typical case of mutual poisoning. Families and communities in the south are destroyed and urban slums and social crisis develop in the north.

This fiasco caused great resentment in northern Italy, resulting in the formation of the Lombardy League, whose platform is to re-establish autonomy for the north. The League has become an important political movement and is part of the present governing coalition.

These subsidies and migrations took place within the same nation, yet they aroused strong separatist passions. Imagine how much greater would be the resentment if they took place between different nations, such as Greece and the Netherlands or Spain and Germany. Undoubtedly, there would be great tensions if at some time in the future Greece and Spain-or indeed any other nation-were unable to maintain the standards of economic stability prevalent in the Netherlands or Germany. With a .single currency, no individual nation would be able to adjust the value of its currency to reflect its own economic realities. The results would be the same as in Italy, but on a much larger and more devastating scale: uprooting of the peoples of unsuccessful nations; mass migration; destabilization of the towns in successful nations; emergence of centrifugal forces which could create possibly violent separatist movements and pull Europe apart.

The Eurocrats understand this, and included in the Treaty of Maastricht two articles, Articles 123 and 130C, along with a special protocol on 'Economic and Social Cohesion'. The purpose of these measures is to reproduce, on a Europe-wide scale, a complex of institutions like the Cassa del Mezzogiorno. There is no reason to suppose that the results would not be the same.

Even so, and despite all the instability in the world, the Eurocrats still believe that people must move to jobs, and not jobs to people. This confirms their deep ignorance of how societies function. In a stable society, all members of a family together with their friends and neighbours create the public opinion which guides the behaviour of children as they grow up to take their place in society. But if, to find work, the mother, father and children are forced to move, the influences that help to educate the children are transformed. The elders who have been left behind regroup into special retirement cities. Often the responsibility for shaping a child's values is transferred to schools which themselves are in deep moral crisis. The children become anonymous members of impersonal communities, with no relatives to take the place of parents who are out at work. In particularly severe cases, when families break down the children seek surrogate families in urban gangs.

A true city is not an encampment for transient visitors, nor a complex of motorways, nor an ephemeral agglomeration of living quarters. It is a long-standing human settlement, a community spanning generations, a complex social organization inspiring commitment and pride. Every architectural blight, every symptom of social breakdown, should pierce deep into the heart of its citizens and provoke a salutary reaction. Siena, in Italy, is perhaps the best example of a healthy city. That is why it has maintained social stability and a negligible incidence of crime.

What are your proposals for a European currency?

I believe that each nation should maintain its own currency which would be convertible at a fixed rate into the Ecu. The Ecu would be run by the European Central Bank whose task would be to maintain its value and to ensure that devaluations or revaluations of national currencies would not be predatory in nature, but as far as possible reflections of economic reality. The Ecu would be managed as a pure reserve currency rather than as a domestic currency, which by nature responds to local economic and political expediency.

The difference between a single and a common currency is that a single currency is fixed, inflexible and incapable of adjusting to the economic realities of each nation. A common currency is supple, and can respond to the changes that will inevitably affect national economies.

Your idea seems very similar to the British proposal for the hard Ecu.

It is, in many regards. In fact, I first proposed this common currency on 12 June 1990, when I was invited to deliver the Institute of Directors' Annual Lecture in London. The British government's plan was published in October 1990. This is not to say that I am claiming paternity. Very often an idea is in the air and several people are convinced by it more or less simultaneously.

What sort of Europe does Germany want?

The governing party, the Christian Democrats, published in September 1994 what it calls its 'Reflections on European Policy'[17]

The objective is unequivocal: to create an integrated state; to convert the European Parliament into a typical national law-making institution appropriate for a unitary state; to transform the Council of Ministers into a second parliamentary chamber; and to allow the Commission to become the executive European government. The new European supra-state would be built on the doctrine of global free trade. It would expand to include the nations of Central and Eastern Europe and would develop a Wide-ranging partnership with Russia. Of course, at the centre of Europe would be Germany, the colossus in the landscape.

Is it still possible to change the course of the European Union or are we committed to a supranational union?

In 1996, there will be an inter-governmental conference to reconsider the structures of Europe. That will be the time to mount an all-out effort to change course. The battle will take place at the national level. In every European nation, political coalitions will be formed to fight for a new Treaty based on a Europe of nations. And they will have to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the final decision is taken democratically. That means a national referendum in each European nation.

Are small nations still viable?

Of course they are. Local democracy, which is naturally inherent in a small democratic nation, is far superior to the distant democracy of mega-states. The societies of small democratic nations have the opportunity to be infinitely more stable than those of the mega-states, in which much of the population is rootless and anonymous.

Small nations have obvious disadvantages in terms of defence and diplomacy. Also, they may need access to a large homogeneous free market which can provide the competitive conditions that modern economies seem to demand. But, as we have seen, a decentralized European Community consisting of a family of nations can supply the requisite defence and diplomatic strength as well as a large free market without destroying the identity and autonomy of small constituent nations.

Modern thinkers have forgotten that cultural affinity is a necessary precondition of political allegiance.

In any case the vast, centralized, multicultural nations have not demonstrated that their structures are viable. The Soviet Union has collapsed. And the United States has become a leviathan, partially paralyzed by its centralization.

What about the new world order?

We've certainly heard a lot about it. In my view, it should ensure that each nation is entitled to pursue peacefully its own way of life with its own culture and traditions, even if they seem exotic or inconceivable to us. The bedrock of social diversity is mutual respect. As we look around within our own western communities and see our own disarray, we should be willing to behave towards others with humility.

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[17] CDU/CSU, *Reflections on European Policy,* published by the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the German Bundestag, September 1994.