



AP[®] European History 2003 Sample Student Responses Form B

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6

The main condition for a lasting peace is the presence of a balance of power in which none of the major states can be able to attack another one. During the time between the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 and Peace of Paris in 1763, Europe never had such a balance of power that would result with a lasting peace.

At the end of the Thirty Years War in 1648, there were four nations that were dominating their own region. France was the superpower of Western Europe, while Sweden was the most powerful in Northern Europe. Spain had the greatest colonial empire, and Austria was strong versus the weakening states of Bavaria, Poland and Ottomans. France was the first nation to start a major military campaign against other nation. During the reign of Louis XIV, France launched many attacks on German states and Spain, to invade all of the lands west of Rhine. However, a coalition of many nations was founded, and prevented France from capturing the area he wanted. However this defeat was not big enough to end French supremacy in Western Europe. A few years after the campaign of Rhine, Louis XIV wanted to ^{unite} ~~join~~ the dynasties of Spain and France, which caused the War of Spanish Succession. In this war many powers of Europe were allied against France. Austria was newly strengthened by the acquisition of Hungary, and it was allied with some of the emerging states of Europe, like

Prussia and England, both of which were not a very strong power in continental Europe. At the end of this war, in 1713, in the Peace of Utrecht, England acquired many lands ~~in Europe~~, such as Gibraltar, Minorca, Newfoundland etc and rights over the slave trade in Atlantic. Austria got the Italian and Netherlands provinces of Spain, while Prussia was accepted as a major power after this war. Spain was very weakened after this war, and ~~was~~ never able to recover again. However, the balance of power was not maintained.

While these were occurring in Western Europe, there was another major war going on Northern Europe, the Great Northern War. The northern power, Sweden was fighting against Denmark, Russia and Poland. Although Karl XII was able to score some victories against Poland, Russia destroyed the army of Swedes in Poltava. After the end of this war, Russia emerged as a powerful nation under the leadership Peter the Great. After this war a balance of power was established in the Northern Europe with the emerging Russians against Sweden.

The final very important war occurred between 1668-1763 is the Seven Years War. In this war Prussia and England fought against France and Austria mainly. The theatres of this war ranged from Canada to Silesia. As a result of this war a balance of power was finally achieved. England became a totally colonial and naval power, while it had the power to interfere with continental struggles whenever it wanted to.

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6

In Eastern Europe Austria and Russia were opponents while Germany was the area ~~occupied~~ by mostly the Prussians. France remained as a very ^{controlled} powerful continental power, which prevented other nations from being aggressive.

In conclusion, the ~~situation~~ terms of the peace agreements during this period was unable to fulfill the wishes of nations nor create a balance of power. However, when ^{super powers} ~~strong nations~~ became more dominant, the number of wars decreased, and lasting peaces occurred.

Europe saw no lasting peace between 1648 and 1763. because of nations territorial expansion, need of monarchs to assert authority, religion, strife and ~~econ~~ trade interests.

The peace of Westphalia in 1648 after the thirty years saw many German princes break up with the Holy Roman Emperor ~~at the same time~~ and saw the princes recognised as ~~one~~ independent. After 1648 the German princes that had just broken up from the Habsburg sought to establish themselves. In the case of Frederick William's Prussia he started to build armies which he was ready to use to support bigger nations to help it.

During this period between 1648 and 1763 most monarchs were called the new monarchs and in later years ~~also~~ absolutist. The new monarchs such as Louis XIV of France sought to lower the power of the nobles in order to increase their authority. They became satisfied with wars as a means by which nobles could be kept busy - to also gain more control of their empire the monarchs began to expand their territories for instance Frederick II of Prussia took Silesia away from Austria-Hungary for no just reasons. The need to conquer other nations and expand their territory drove European nations into war with each other.

At the same time Great Britain was growing economically and the Dutch Netherlands were declining. In order to maintain

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6

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Their status they sought to ~~the~~ stop any other nation from becoming as strong as them on the sea, since sea trade was their major source of income and wealth.

Internal strife in European nations was another major reason why there was no peace. The upper middle class called Gentry in Britain and Bourgeoisie in France sought to gain favour from the King and in the case of England to become more powerful. This they accomplished in parliament where the gentry consisting of Protestants later killed Charles I the King.

Exploration's which had started in the fifteenth century allowed for the creation of colonies by ~~and~~ European countries, in order for trade purposes or for raw materials. In Canada, the battle of who should dominate between the French and the English caused a major battle which the English eventually won.

Religion although ~~is~~ no longer a major cause of war still caused a few upheavals in Europe. For example in Great Britain after James II took over the throne and was about to establish Catholicism as a devout Catholic the parliament made up of the gentry invited William from the Netherlands to a Protestant to take over the throne. Although it was a bloodless revolution called the "glorious revolution" it still showed that religion was still in effect a concern.

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The problems in European Nations caused by a reduced population due to wars, famines, low birth rates and high mortality rates, and in some ~~cases~~ periods the overpopulation usually led to revolts or discontent amongst peasants and working class. They attacked the government who would sue for peace and meet some of their needs and then turn against them. The rising cost of war, ^{foreign rulers} the increments in the taxes imposed upon the people especially the poor sparked still more revolts.

For all the reasons mentioned above Europe saw no lasting peace. The nations of Europe and their leaders were not at rest, they either had to quell internal struggles, regain, lost territories or protect their trading interest, foreign rulers in a nation also sparked internal struggle.