

NATIONS AND EMPIRES

Documents on the History of Europe and on
its Relations with the World since 1648

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its Relations with the World since 1648

edited by

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Preface

THIS anthology has grown out of the working experience of a group of university teachers concerned to introduce first-year students to methods of historical study by reference to contemporary documents on some of the problems of European history since 1648. A single volume of texts obviously could not hope to cover the period in a comprehensive manner. This collection therefore attempts to elaborate certain themes, the nature of which is implied in the titles of the chapters and in the introductions to them. Each of the themes is an aspect of the basic process of European history in the modern era, which we take to be the consolidation and expansion of the states comprising the Continent and their readjustment to rising super-powers on the oceanic and continental frontiers and to changing conditions in Africa and Asia. Although we regard Europe as a meaningful entity, we strongly believe that its modern history can be understood only if its relations with the rest of the world are given full consideration. Hence, three chapters (Three, Five and Nine) are devoted to these relations while two more (Six and Eight) consider the world wars and their backgrounds not only as episodes in relations between European governments but also in wider and deeper perspectives. Within European states, some of the varied attempts by governments and statesmen to develop social and political institutions which could guarantee internal order in a period of accelerating change are examined (Chapters One and Four). The great occasions when they most significantly failed to do so and when new ideas and expedients were tested with far-reaching results – the French and Russian Revolutions – are treated in considerable detail (Chapters Two and Seven). The final chapter (Ten) provides a coda to the collection in the form of a *tour d'horizon* of Europe and the world in the mid-1960s by an historically minded European statesman. The chosen documents generally emphasise the socio-political aspects of our themes; while

not ignoring economic and cultural forces, we have given comparatively less attention to them.

Although the editors have differed somewhat in their individual approaches to particular chapters, they have all agreed on making their selections with certain ends in view. Each document is intended to illustrate an important aspect of the evolution of modern Europe or of its relations with the world although in some cases the nature of the illustration may emerge only after careful scrutiny of the text itself or its context. Essentially, therefore, these documents are aids to study; they should prove suitable for use either in critical group discussions or as illustrations to lectures. The editors have in some cases added a few special suggestions for further reading in the notes which introduce each document. Providing general bibliographical guidance for the whole of the period is, however, a formidable problem, beyond the scope of this volume; the least unsatisfactory of the available solutions is that of *A Bibliography of Modern History*, ed. John Roach (Cambridge, 1968).

This collection of documents could not have been completed without the advice and other forms of assistance given to the editors by many friends and colleagues. It is impossible to mention all those who have been so generous with their help but we express particular thanks to Miss Rosemary Tyzack, Mrs Margaret Stone, Miss Ann Williams, Miss Elizabeth Smith, Mrs Ann Gordon, Mrs Jill Bridges and Miss Dorothy Smith, to Mr J. Forsyth, Mr C. Gossip, Mr R. Hallett, Dr J. Houbert, Dr E. Ranson, Dr G. Molland and Mr O. D. Edwards. The editors are also grateful to the authors and publishers of copyright material which we have been allowed to use; a list of acknowledgements is appended below. Translations of documents, unless otherwise indicated in the footnotes, are our own. His fellow editors would like to thank R. C. Bridges for co-ordinating their efforts and assuming the major share of the work involved in bringing the collection of documents together.

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