

Doc. 8

Manifesto to the Europeans

(mid-October 1914)

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While technology and traffic clearly drive us toward a factual recognition of international relations, and thus toward a common world civilization, it is also true that no war has ever so intensively interrupted the cultural communalism of cooperative work as this present war does. Perhaps we have come to such a salient awareness only on account of the numerous erstwhile common bonds, whose interruption we now sense so painfully.

(1) Even if this state of affairs should not surprise us, those whose heart is in the least concerned about common world civilization, would have a doubled obligation to fight for the upholding of those principles. Those, however, of whom one should expect such convictions—that is, principally scientists and artists—have thus far almost exclusively uttered statements which would suggest that their desire for the maintenance of these relations has evaporated concurrently with the interruption of the relations. They have spoken with explainable martial spirit—but spoken least of all of peace.

(2)

Such a mood cannot be excused by any national passion; it is unworthy of all that which the world has to date understood by the name of culture. Should this mood achieve a certain universality among the educated, this would be a disaster.

It would not only be a disaster for civilization, but—and we are firmly convinced of this—a disaster for the national survival of individual states—the very cause for which, ultimately, all this barbarity has been unleashed.

Through technology the world has become *smaller*; the *states* of the large peninsula of Europe appear today as close to each other as the *cities* of each small Mediterranean peninsula appeared in ancient times. In the needs and experiences of every individual, based on his awareness of a manifold of relations, Europe—one could almost say the world—already outlines itself as an element of unity.

It would consequently be a duty of the educated and well-meaning Europeans to at least make the attempt to prevent Europe—on account of its deficient organization as a whole—from suffering the same tragic fate as ancient Greece once did. Should Europe too gradually exhaust itself and thus perish from fratricidal war?

The struggle raging today will likely produce no victor; it will leave probably only the vanquished. Therefore, it seems not only *good*, but rather bitterly *necessary*, that *educated men of all nations* marshal their influence such that—whatever the still uncertain end of the war may be—the *terms of peace shall not become the wellspring of future wars*. The evident fact that through this war all European relational

conditions slipped into an *unstable and plasticized state* should rather be used to create an organic European whole. The technological and intellectual conditions for this are extant.

It need not be deliberated herein by which manner this (new) ordering in Europe is possible. We want merely to emphasize very fundamentally that we are firmly convinced that the time has come where *Europe must act as one in order to protect her soil, her inhabitants, and her culture.*

To this end, it seems first of all to be a necessity that all those who have a place in their hearts for European culture and civilization, in other words, those who can be called in *Goethe's* prescient words "*good Europeans,*" come together. For we must not, after all, give up the hope that their raised and collective voices—even beneath the din of arms—will not resound unheard, especially, if among these "*good Europeans of tomorrow,*" we find all those who enjoy esteem and authority among their educated peers.

But it is necessary that the Europeans first come together, and if—as we hope—enough *Europeans in Europe* can be found, that it is to say, people to whom Europe is not merely a geographical concept, but rather, a dear affair of the heart, then we shall try to call together such a union of Europeans. Thereupon, such a union shall speak and decide.

To this end we only want to urge and appeal; and if you feel as we do, if you are likemindedly determined to *provide the European will the farthest-reaching possible resonance,* then we ask you to please send your (supporting) signature to us.

Additional notes by translator

- {1} One may surmise that in 1914 all European nations understood "world civilization" as "western civilization."
- {2} The German original is here syntactically faulty and not clear.