

CHAPTER 30

GLOBAL CHALLENGES: “FORTRESS EUROPE,” EUROPEAN COOPERATION, AND THE UNCERTAINTIES OF A NEW AGE



The remarkable increase in the movement of peoples from one part of the world to another has been a dramatic dimension of globalization. After centuries of sending millions of European emigrants to other continents, the trend was reversed. Beginning in the 1960s, Asians and Africans seeking a better life began to arrive in unprecedented numbers in Western Europe. Moreover, with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, tens of thousands of immigrants began arriving in Western Europe. Yet while immigrants have contributed enormously to the economies of many European states, their presence and the cultural differences they bring with them have generated xenophobia in many states and an increase in the political influence of nationalist parties of the extreme right. Immigration thus poses a challenge to the new Europe, raising difficult issues of identity and the very question of what it means to be European.

Globalization has brought other difficult challenges as well. For example, the financial crisis—indeed the near collapse of the financial sector—that began in 2008, the worst international economic crisis since the Great Depression, itself reflected dimensions of globalization. First, the rapid

rise in the price of oil had immediate worldwide consequences. Then the subprime lending crisis, the result of irresponsible mortgage lending, was followed by the bankruptcy of several major financial giants and the propping up of others by national governments. In the United States, hundreds of thousands of houses were foreclosed upon when purchasers could not make payments. Overall, the prices of housing plunged. This had an immediate catastrophic impact on the world economy, and thus on ordinary people who have reason to fear for the safety of their money. Investments and retirement funds went up in smoke. The financial meltdown revealed the scale of global interconnectedness. As the world economy went into recession and economic growth slowed down in the United States and Europe, China and India—the world's two new booming economies—faced lower demand for their goods. In Europe, despite considerable economic integration provided by the European Union, the absence of comparable political integration made it difficult for the leading states to come up with effective comprehensive policies that cut across national boundaries.

The world economic crisis strained relations between member states. Some governments retreated from free trade policies in the context of a single European Union market by providing subsidies with the goal of protecting certain industries (for example, France aiding its automobile companies), raising the specter of protectionism. Tensions emerged between the states whose economies were doing relatively well and those like Spain, Ireland, and Greece who were suffering the most; and between the older member states, who feared an increased economic burden being placed on them, and those poorer Eastern European nations recently admitted to the European Union.

Europe has ceased to be the center of global political concern and conflict, a title that has arguably passed to the Middle East. Globalization has made Europe, like other parts of the world, vulnerable to the tensions linked to conflicts in the Middle East. Terrorist attacks have carried the struggles in that part of the world to Europe itself. Moreover, following the collapse of the Soviet Union, European unity and the traditional Western alliance have been challenged by the domination of the United States. Yet the European Union (EU) in the 1990s carried cooperation between European states to a level barely imaginable a decade or two before. Within the European Union, a single market led to the inauguration of a single currency—the “euro”—in 2002.

IMMIGRATION TO EUROPE

More than ever before, the world's population has been on the move. Millions of people have emigrated to Western Europe. Africans, Asians, Turks, and people from the Middle East have arrived, legally or illegally, in Western European countries. To be sure, immigration within Europe, particu-

larly from the poorer countries of southern and eastern Europe, has also continued to be significant. The mass movement of people from the Third World, particularly from Africa and Asia, must be seen in the context of the rapid growth of the world's population. The population of Africa in 1950 was half that of Europe; by 1985, the two populations stood about even, and within several decades the population of Africa will probably be three times that of Europe. In some cases, it was newly independent colonies that sent immigrants to their former colonizers, as in the case of Indians and Pakistanis moving to Britain and of North Africans to France. Europe now has an estimated 18 million foreign workers.

Beginning in the late 1960s, foreign-born "guest workers" (as they are called in Germany) made up an increasing proportion of the workforce in every Western European state. Encouraged by European governments concerned about a labor shortage, they took up a variety of skilled but mostly unskilled work. The government of the German Federal Republic established recruiting offices in southern Europe and North Africa, hoping to encourage immigration. The number of foreigners living in Western Europe tripled in thirty years. In Switzerland, foreign workers make up about a quarter of the workforce. The ethnic composition varies from country to country. Turks have settled in Germany in great numbers because of the relative proximity and historically close ties between Turkey and Germany. Portuguese make up the largest non-French ethnic community in the Paris

North African immigrants captured by a patrol boat after trying to enter Spain illegally.



region, followed closely by Algerians, Moroccans, and Tunisians, and an increasing number of West Africans. In France, where the number of Muslim residents reached 5 million people, the number of mosques rose from 130 in 1976 to more than 1,000 twenty years later. The percentage of ethnic minorities living in Britain rose from 6 percent to 9 percent in the decade between 1991 and 2001. In the latter year, 1.5 million Muslims lived in England and Wales, representing more than 3 percent of the population. In 2007, 2 million of London's 7 million residents had been born outside of Britain.

Following the collapse of communism, the opening of Eastern European borders and the elimination of border controls between many Western European states increased the number of people trying to reach Western Europe. Kurds fled Iraq and Turkey for Europe, as North Africans left Algeria (ravaged by a bloody civil war following the army's seizure of power in 1992 and the rise of militant Islamic fundamentalist groups), Tunisia, and Morocco, trying to reach France via Spain, if they did not drown first. Between 1990 and 1993, 200,000 Albanians crossed the mountains to reach Greece. Thousands of others, desperately attempting to flee violence and economic ruin in their country, made the dangerous trip across the Adriatic Sea to Italy. Between 1980 and 1992, 15 million immigrants arrived in Western Europe. The number of people seeking asylum rose from about 65,000 in 1983 to over 500,000 in 1991—many from the ethnic conflict following the break-up of Yugoslavia, as well as from Romania and Turkey (see Table 30.1). By the early 1990s, at least 3 million clandestine immigrants were living in Western Europe, and probably many more.

In response, Western European governments have turned increasingly to new strategies and laws to try to reduce the number of immigrants, establishing tougher tests for claims of political asylum and sending illegal immigrants back to their countries. The percentage of asylum seekers whose cases are judged favorably by government authorities has been decreasing. With 7 percent of its population now made up of foreigners (60 percent of them non-European), France has turned away from its long-held belief that being born in that country was enough to become a French citizen; it now requires that children born in France to non-French parents must apply for citizenship between ages sixteen and twenty-one. The government has also made it more difficult for foreigners to acquire French citizenship through marriage. Yet massive migration to Europe will certainly continue. Referring to the smuggling of migrants into his country, the Austrian director of immigration put it memorably, "There are no distances any longer in this world. There are no islands."

Immigration became a politically explosive issue. When economic recession sharply reduced the number of available jobs, the political tide began to turn even more against foreign workers. The British government put laws restricting immigration (targeting nonwhite arrivals) in place in 1968 and 1971. In the former year, Enoch Powell, a Conservative MP, caused a

TABLE 30.1. FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION AND PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL POPULATION, 1995

Country	Foreign-Born Population	Percentage
Austria	724,000	9
Belgium	910,000	9
Denmark	223,000	4.2
Finland	69,000	1.3
France	3.5 million	6.3
Germany	7.1 million	8.8
Ireland	96,000	2.7
Italy	991,000	1.7
Luxembourg	138,000	33.4
Spain	500,000	1.2
Switzerland	1.3 million	18.9
United Kingdom	2 million	3.4
United States	24.6 million	10

Source: *World Book*, 1998 (Chicago: World Book, 1999), p. 245.

storm when he warned that unchecked immigration would swamp Britain. When the economic recession began in the mid-1970s, other European states began to enact more restrictive immigration policies. While many foreign-born workers, recruited as single young men before the economic recession, became permanent residents of the countries where they worked (and became citizens), they were joined by hundreds of thousands of undocumented clandestine workers.

Nations put into effect stricter border controls in an attempt to reduce illegal immigration. EU nations have continued to build on the Schengen Agreement (1985), which initiated the exchange of information about immigration, moving toward common policies of border policing to crack down on illegal immigration.

At the same time, the birthrates of many countries continued to decline. Early in the twenty-first century, fourteen countries are no longer reproducing their populations (with Italy and Spain leading the way, followed by Germany and Sweden); in other countries, population growth is zero, or not far above that. At the end of the twentieth century, economic uncertainty was closely related to the continued fall in the number of births. The birthrate now shows few signs of reversing the trend of decline. Many Western European countries will lose population without significant immigration, and their economies will continue to require the labor of immigrants, legal and otherwise.

Many Europeans felt themselves overwhelmed by immigrants. In 1987, foreign and minority prisoners accounted for one-third of those locked up in France, Belgium, and Switzerland. In the 1990s, riots by—but also against—immigrants (principally Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, and

West Indians) rocked several northern industrial cities and London. As in the inter-war years, economic weakness has encouraged hostility to those some consider to be outsiders, and a perceived lack of security against crime became a central focus of electoral campaigns. The severe recession of the early 1990s contributed to this dangerous situation, bringing high unemployment rates (in 1993 over 10 percent in the European Union). Polls have reflected popular fears (without any foundation) that the quality of education declines when too many immigrants and asylum seekers are present in the classroom. Many Europeans believe that immigrants abuse existing social welfare programs (indeed, they are more apt to draw disproportionately upon them), and that most of those asking for political asylum were fleeing economic hardship, not the political persecution that would make them eligible for refugee status. At the same time, the emigration of many educated people with special training deprives poor countries of much-needed talent.

Rising intolerance, racism, and xenophobia—hallmarks of the rise of fascism during the inter-war years—have become apparent in Europe, orchestrated by extreme right-wing nationalist parties and directed against foreign workers and their families. Brutal and even murderous attacks against foreigners proliferated in Germany, France, Britain, Belgium, and Russia, among other countries. Right-wing political parties, such as the National Front in Britain (founded in 1967) and the party of the same name in France (founded in 1972) adopted aggressive anti-immigrant stances. In Germany, the German People's Union denounced legal changes in 1999 that made it somewhat easier for longtime foreign-born residents to become citizens. Xenophobia has also been seen in such traditionally liberal, open-minded countries as Sweden and Denmark. In Belgium, the right-wing *Vlams Belang* (Flemish Interest) has made anti-immigration a central part of its appeal, while challenging Belgian unity. Russia has seen a spate of murderous attacks on foreigners, particularly those from Central Asia and Africa.

In France, Jean-Marie Le Pen (1982–) emerged as the leader of the far-right National Front. Le Pen, who had been accused of torture after a stint in the army in Algeria and who described the death camps as “a minor detail” of World War II, won as much as 17 percent of the vote as a candidate in three presidential elections. In 2007, Nicolas Sarkozy (1955–) was elected president of France by borrowing the anti-immigrant language of the National Front and appearing to make it respectable. In Austria, Jörg Haider (1950–2008), head of the Austrian Freedom Party, became prime minister after making immigration a central issue and allying with the conservative People's Party. In the Netherlands, long a haven of toleration for immigrants, Pim Fortuyn, a candidate for the post of prime minister, caused an uproar by stating that his country had been saturated by immigration and that there was no room left (he was assassinated in 2002). In



A prayer demonstration by Muslims to protest opposition to the construction of a mosque in Nice, France—an example of cultural tensions across a multicultural Europe.

Switzerland, too, a party of the extreme right made its mark, as the Swiss People's Party gained almost 25 percent of the votes in 1999. The Danish People's Party, the Norwegian Progress Party, and the Flemish Bloc in Belgium reflect the close association of extreme right-wing parties and anti-immigrant sentiments.

Indeed, acceptance of multiculturalism has been slow in coming. (In the United States, the very term "multiculturalism" in general has a positive sense, but in Germany it means "a disarray of cultures, in which each individual culture is stripped of its richness and uniqueness.") While some foreign workers have been assimilated in their countries of residence, many have not and have maintained the customs of their homelands while living in ethnic enclaves in their new countries. In the first years of the twenty-first century, more than 12 million Muslims lived in Western Europe. In Britain, France, and Germany, Muslims have been viewed with suspicion. Difficulties in learning the language of the new country of residence—as well as outright discrimination—have made it harder to find work. This has often put the younger generation of foreign workers, born in their countries of residence, in the uncomfortable position of being excluded from mainstream life where they reside and not wishing to return to their parents' country of origin, to which many feel no real connection. In France, when Muslim schoolgirls went to school wearing the traditional headscarf, they were expelled. A lengthy court process ensued until a new law reaffirmed the ban. In 2008, French authorities refused citizenship to a Muslim

woman who made clear her strong religious beliefs. Riots in October and November 2005 in French suburbs reflected the isolation and alienation of North and West African Muslim minorities, particularly young people.

EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, EUROPEAN UNION

In the hope of enhancing economic cooperation and coordination, the European Community (EC) was created in 1967, when the European Atomic Energy Community, the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), and the European Economic Community (the EEC, or European Common Market) merged. The original members were Belgium, France, West Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands (see Map 30.1). The government of Great Britain had first been disinclined to join the EC, fearing the flooding of its internal market by less expensive agricultural produce. Moreover, French president Charles de Gaulle had forcefully opposed Britain's membership. There were other reasons, as well, arguing against Britain seeking to join. The British government considered itself a great power, and this status seemed incompatible with membership in the EC. Moreover, Britain feared that the pound, once considered "as good as gold," might suffer. The government did not want to be necessarily constrained by policies favored by other European states. Many British subjects agreed with a Labour Party leader who warned that a "thousand years" of British history would be lost if the country joined the EC. However, British public opinion changed. Voters overwhelmingly approved their country's application for membership and Britain joined the EC in 1973. Edward Heath, a Conservative who believed that his nation's future lay with Europe, took Britain into the EC. However, Harold Wilson, Heath's Labour successor as prime minister, sought to renegotiate the terms of Britain's membership. Britain remained a hesitant, even skeptical member. The advent of staunchly Conservative and vigorously anti-European Margaret Thatcher as British prime minister in 1979 put her country's membership at risk, until an urgent EC meeting agreed to reduce British financial contributions.

In the meantime, the close relationship between France's president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and West Germany's premier Helmut Schmidt lent stability to the EC. Denmark and Ireland had also joined the EC in 1973, followed by Greece in 1981, and Spain and Portugal in 1986.

The EC eliminated troublesome tariffs, aiding the most efficient producers, who were able to sell their products abroad easily. But it put smaller producers at a disadvantage. The Danish dairy industry profited greatly from sales of milk and cheese to other member countries, as did their French counterparts; but dairy farmers elsewhere often found that they could not compete with larger competitors. The problem of wine revealed the challenges posed by EC agricultural policy. New members Spain and Portugal produce great amounts of wine, threatening vintners producing inexpensive

wine in southern France. Wine producers protested the arrival of Italian wine by blocking roads at the frontier.

Jacques Delors (1925–), a former minister of finance, became president of the European Commission in 1985. Delors led the campaign for a unified Europe that could compete with Japanese and U.S. economic strength. In 1986, member states signed the Single Europe Act. Calling for the termination of all obstacles to the free movement of capital, goods, workers, and services, it pointed toward the anticipated establishment of a single market within member states. Moreover, Delors believed that the EC should include a “social dimension” that would protect the rights of ordinary people.

Delors had in 1988 indicated his hope that in the future a single currency could be used by member states, further accentuating trade within the EC while eliminating fluctuations in the value of individual currencies. From the outset, Thatcher and British Conservative “Euro-skeptics” opposed the plan, partially out of fear that Germany’s then-booming economy and currency would dominate the other EC members. Thatcher’s departure from office in 1990 did not end vehement opposition from British Conservatives to any thought of abandoning sterling.

The Treaty of Maastricht, signed in that southern Dutch city in 1992 by the twelve members of the European Community, transformed the EC into the European Union. The new name took effect in 1993 when the single market began operation. France barely approved the treaty in a referendum called by President Mitterrand in late 1992, and it took a second vote to obtain the same result in Denmark. The European Union opened all borders within the European Community and committed the European Community to “economic and monetary union” by 1999. In 1995, Austria, Norway, Sweden, and Finland joined, while Norway turned down membership.

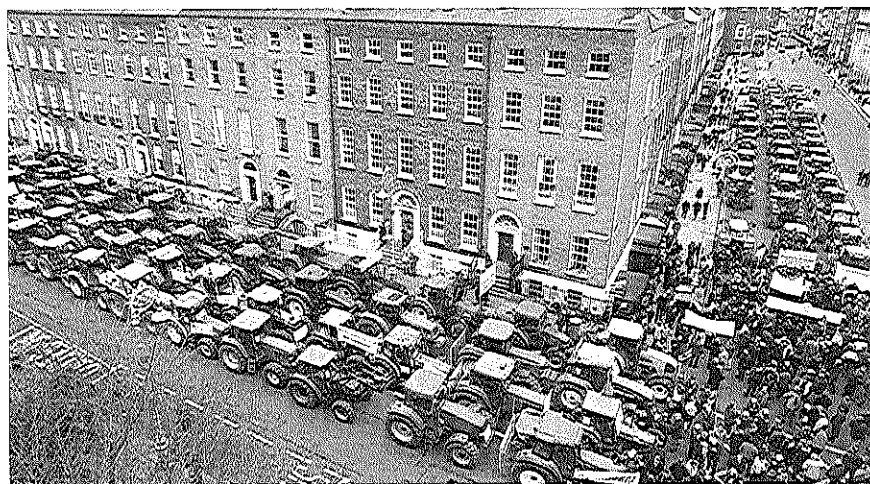
The European Commission became the executive institution of the European Union. Headquartered in Brussels, it consists of members appointed by each member state. It is headed by a rotating president and proposes legislation to the Council of Ministers, whose members are also delegated by each member state and which also has a rotating presidency. Each participating state elects representatives to the European Parliament, which has its headquarters in Strasbourg and can reject a proposed budget. The European Court of Justice rules on disputes between member states and between individual plaintiffs and the European Union. The European Council consists of the heads of each member state and meets twice a year (or more), along with the president of the European Commission. The European Union even has a small army, established by virtue of the Amsterdam Treaty of 1999.

The European Union, comprising 370 million people in fifteen member states, now accounts for about 20 percent of the world’s exports, more than that of the United States. One of the most daunting challenges of creating a single market has been to establish an effective agricultural policy that takes into consideration the tremendous variety of agricultural

production within the member states. As part of the common agricultural policy, EU subsidies to farmers accounted for nearly half of the annual budget in 1995. Subsidies have protected member states by limiting the importation of products from outside the EU, but they also have generated overproduction, such that many farmers are paid not to produce, or for the surpluses they produce. Besides this, considerable European Union funds are diverted in the attempt to aid the continual development of the poorer member states, including Greece and Portugal, and disadvantaged regions within other countries, such as southern Italy and Sicily. For example, the admission of Poland requires sizeable subsidies for Polish agriculture, which in terms of efficiency lags considerably behind its Western counterparts, despite a booming economy in the first decade of the new century. In the meantime, the European Union maintains strict guidelines for agricultural producers (for example, on how cheese can be produced). An infusion of funds from the European Union has brought new roads and other benefits to new members. Beginning in December 2007 when borders were opened between nine new member states, one could travel from Estonia to Portugal without being stopped at any border, leaving some national authorities to worry whether such openness might aid illegal immigration and organized crime.

The problem of how the European Union can create a sense of legitimacy within the member states remains daunting. The institutions of the EU have to wrestle with the enormous challenge of creating a cultural

Irish farmers clog the streets of Dublin with their tractors to protest the reforms proposed by the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union that would reduce their income.



"European" identity and "European" vision. This project is made even more difficult by over-bureaucratization, inefficiency, and corruption. Elections for the European Parliament cannot create European identity. Moreover, definitions of what it means to be European vary. People on the left who describe themselves as "European" tend to stress civic reasons for this identity, such as support for democratic political systems and the affirmation of social and human rights. Those on the political right are more apt to emphasize a common European cultural heritage.

Member states of the European Union are required to keep their budget deficits down to no more than 3 percent of gross domestic product. In 1998, the European Central Bank began operation, charged with managing the European Union currency, setting interest rates for the euro zone of eleven nations, and working to keep down inflation. The euro was launched as an accounting currency in 1999, but without the participation of Britain, Sweden, and Denmark, or of Greece, which failed to meet the financial criteria for monetary union that the EU had set for member states. The euro became the official currency in participating member states on January 1, 2002. A relatively smooth transition was made possible by considerable preparations, including effective publicity campaigns by governments, banks, and shopping centers, the conversion of machines accepting bills and coins, and assistance to the elderly, immigrants, and other groups. The euro soared in value, rapidly surpassing the U.S. dollar, weakened by the soaring U.S. trade deficit.

The European Union includes 27 member states and thus close to 500 million people. It has engendered not only feelings of ambivalence toward supranational economic and political organizations but also a nationalist response. Many ordinary people believe themselves disconnected from the workings of Brussels. Even some farmers who receive subsidies from the EU are unaware that they come from Brussels and not their own ministries of agriculture. In 2005, the European Union suffered a blow when votes in France and the Netherlands rejected approval of the proposed constitution, which had been promulgated the previous year. This led to the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2007. Its goal was to reform the original treaty that created the European Union by streamlining its administration by, for example, creating the position of president of the European Council. However, the rejection of the new treaty in a referendum in Ireland in June 2008 cast a new shadow over the functioning of the European Union.

Despite continuing operational challenges, however, new members can indeed look to the example of Ireland, whose economy has received a major boost from its EU membership, largely through the biotech revolution. High unemployment, low agricultural productivity, the necessity of institutional reform, and the great cost of becoming a member of the European Union, as well as the extremely limited democratic experience of some of the new members, poses challenges to new members and to the European Union

itself. The economic gap between the wealthiest countries—Britain, France, and Germany—and the states of Central and Eastern Europe seeking the advantage of greater access to markets remains considerable. The possible admission of Turkey has generated great debate, in part because of some doubts that the country, which still bridges Europe and Asia, is really European. Successes of fundamentalist Islamic groups in elections in a country that is overwhelmingly Muslim but not militantly Islamic challenged the stridently secular basis of Turkey. In 2008, the country's highest court turned aside legislation inspired by the prime minister that would have allowed female students in state universities to wear head scarves, conforming to their Muslim religion.

Yet the number of citizens of countries within the European Union who describe themselves as feeling "European" has increased, despite continuing loyalty to nation-states based on ethnic identity and long-standing traditions of citizenship and a sense of shared values. However, the European Union has encouraged regionalism, assisting the revival of such languages as Catalan and Welsh in Spain and Britain, respectively. Such a process in the long run may help reduce ethnic tension and conflicts. Moreover, many Europeans hope that the European Union will guarantee the rights of individuals through its Charter of Fundamental Social Rights of Workers. Indeed, the EU allocates considerable funds to worldwide humanitarian causes.

The European Union has worked to protect member states by maintaining standards for the importation of agricultural and food products. For example, "mad cow" disease, which struck cattle in Britain in the 1990s and infected a few human beings with a degenerative disease of the brain, led not only to the slaughter of millions of animals in Britain but also to the European Union's ban on the import of British beef on the continent for thirty-two months. In 1997, the EU began labeling products made from genetically modified soybeans and corn. Such imports, principally from the United States, are more resistant to damage by insects, but the long-range effect of their consumption is still unknown. Environmental groups, as well as many scientists, strongly oppose their use.

OPPOSITION TO GLOBALIZATION

Globalization itself became the target of protests and demonstrations in the 1990s, for example at the gathering of leaders of the eight leading industrial powers—the G8 (the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Canada, and Japan). Giant companies and banks, multinational in their structure and interests, have enormous economic power. Huge sums can be sent, traded, or invested with the push of a button. Global finance has brought volatility to the world economy, accentuated by the enormous U.S. trade deficit. The sharp decline in the U.S. stock market that began in 2000 followed wild speculation on dot.com companies. International

dependence on oil, too, has increased, with prices rising and falling, often in tune with international events. The dizzying rise in the price of oil in 2008 jolted world economies, contributing to rapid inflation.

To its critics, globalization could be identified with corporate greed and indifference to the fate of the poor of the Third World. A French farmer (who had spent part of his childhood in California), José Bové (1953–), became a symbol of protest when in 1999 he led an attack on a McDonald's in a southern French town, damaging the fast-food restaurant as a means of calling attention to globalization. Cases of corporate greed and deception—such as that of the giant Enron corporation in the United States, whose corporate officers had lied and deceived, then unloaded their shares before the fall, leaving employees with virtually nothing—cast a shadow over big multinational corporations. Demonstrations became riots during the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle in 1999, and in Nice in 2000 during the European Union summit meetings. During the summer of 2001, protesters demonstrated and some battled police at the summit in Gothenburg (Sweden) and then in Genoa (Italy), the site of the G7 meeting, an informal association of the world's leading industrial nations.

Damage to the environment is itself linked to global interconnectedness. The oceans have become veritable highways for the shipment of oil in huge tankers, a good many of which are old and badly maintained. Periodic oil

The 1999 meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle, Washington, was greeted with protests against the negative effects of globalization.



spills have damaged coasts catastrophically, such as that off the Atlantic coast of Spain in 2003. The diffusion of nuclear power (to say nothing of the threat of nuclear weapons) presents great risks, for all the advantage in generating electricity. By the end of the twentieth century, nuclear reactors, many of them old, generated about one-third of Europe's electricity. France led the way in adopting nuclear technology to produce electricity and by the end of the twentieth century nuclear reactors produced 75 percent of it. Nuclear power generated 60 percent of Belgium's electricity and 45 percent of Sweden's. The horrendous explosion at Chernobyl in Ukraine in 1986 further mobilized opposition to nuclear power. And as the threat from international terrorism becomes more real, nuclear reactors stand as potentially inviting targets for terrorists intent on taking as many lives and causing as much damage as possible. The international organization Greenpeace has actively opposed potential threats to the environment by nuclear power.

Opposition to globalization has also centered on the profits Western-based companies earn by selling products produced at low wages in, for example, Southeast Asia. Caps or jerseys with logos from NBA basketball teams, brand-name tennis shoes, and T-shirts with the names of U.S. universities became part of popular culture around the globe. Some of the products that are sold for high prices in the West are produced by destitute people in Asia (or elsewhere) for pitiful wages.

Globalization has helped the spread of AIDS. The disease has ravaged Europe (although not nearly to the same extent as Africa, where it is now the number one killer) and increased the cost of health care. As of 2003, more than 60 million people worldwide have been infected by the HIV virus, at least a third of whom have died. Although many AIDS victims live longer than before, no cure has yet been found.

THE THREAT OF TERRORISM

During the 1970s and 1980s, small groups on the extreme left and right turned to political terrorism. Violence seemed to them the only means of destabilizing political elites in the hope of taking power. Some terrorist groups were militant nationalists seeking independence from what they considered foreign occupying powers. Such groups included factions within the Irish Republican Army committed to ending British rule in Northern Ireland, militant Basque separatists (the ETA) in Spain, and Kurdish rebels in Turkey.

Between 1969 and 1982, political terrorists killed more than 1,100 people, including the bombing by fascists of the railroad station of Bologna in 1980 in which 85 people died. In the early 1970s, left-wing extremists (organized into perhaps as many as 100 separate groups) launched deadly attacks. The Red Brigades, founded in 1970, kidnapped and killed former Italian Premier Aldo Moro in 1978. But by the early 1980s, Italian terrorism had ebbed, the campaigns at political destabilization having failed.

Italian politicians put aside their usual differences long enough to back a vigorous campaign that led to the arrest of militants. In the German Federal Republic, small groups of left-wing terrorists lashed out with bombings, bank robberies, kidnappings, assassinations, and even a plane hijacking. The most notorious of these groups, the Baader-Meinhof gang, had links to terrorist groups in France and other Western countries.

Indeed, terrorism has posed an increasing threat in Western Europe, as extremist political groups and Islamic fundamentalist groups launched attacks. Notorious attacks included the massacre of Israelis by Palestinian militants at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich and the seizure of a cruise ship in 1985. A terrorist bomb in 1989, probably planned in Libya, blew up a U.S. passenger jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, killing all 259 people aboard. In 1995, an Algerian Islamic fundamentalist group claimed responsibility for placing deadly bombs on subways and underground trains in Paris.

On a day of horror, September 11, 2001, hijackers commandeered four U.S. jetliners shortly after they took off from several airports early that morning. Two were crashed into the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan in New York City and a third into the Pentagon outside Washington, D.C. The fourth airliner plunged to earth in eastern Pennsylvania. Nearly 3,000 people were killed, the vast majority perishing in the World Trade Center, both towers of which collapsed in a heap of rubble. A massive manhunt began for the Saudi Arabian-born Osama bin Laden (1957–), leader of the Al Qaeda (“The Base”) movement, which claimed responsibility for the attacks. Many of its members had trained in Afghanistan, which was ruled by an Islamic fundamentalist militia called the Taliban. Late that fall, the United States launched massive air strikes against Taliban installations in Afghanistan, and troops on the ground searched the rugged mountains near the border with Pakistan. An interim government took power in Afghanistan, backed by U.S. forces, facing the chronic problems of tribalism and poverty. The Al Qaeda organization had spread almost worldwide, with cells in Germany, Italy, France, and Britain, as well as in Malaysia and the Philippines. European states supported and assisted the U.S. campaign to uproot the structure of the Al Qaeda network in their countries. International police cooperation led to the arrests of Al Qaeda members in Germany, France, Spain, Britain, and Italy, but the search for others continued.

Islamic fundamentalist groups based in the Middle East have been actively recruiting adherents in European states that have large concentrations of Muslims. In March 2004, terrorist bombs detonated on several commuter trains in Madrid, killing almost 200 people and injuring 1,800 others. In July 2005, suicide bombers who had grown up in Britain detonated explosives in subway cars and on a bus in London, killing 50 people and wounding many more.

One of the consequences of globalization has been the increased vulnerability of Europe, as well as the United States, to political struggles and



A security alert in London, July 2005, not long after the explosion of terrorist bombs in three subway trains and on a bus.

events occurring far away, and to the terrorism these events have generated. Terrorists detonated cars packed with bombs in front of U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya, in the summer of 1998, killing 213 people and wounding more than 5,000 in the latter attack. Islamic fundamentalists were also responsible for terrorist attacks in Arab states where fundamentalists wanted to impose strict religious rule.

Islam is not the only religion in which aggressive fundamentalism has emerged. In Israel, Jewish extreme nationalist groups, in coalition with the Likud party, have helped shape Israeli hard-line policies toward Palestinian demands for an independent state. The Palestinian question divides public opinion in Europe. The Palestinian minority in Israel demands an independent Palestinian state. Groups of Palestinian militants have undertaken murderous attacks on Israelis. In a cycle of violence that has become tragically common, the Israeli government often responds by razing villages or by further restricting the rights of Palestinians. The assassination of Yitzhak Rabin by a right-wing Israeli in 1995 was a blow to peace in the Middle East, which in some ways hinges on the Palestinian situation. In 1996, the Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat struck from the Palestine Liberation Organization's charter the call for the destruction of Israel. However, the "peace process"—as U.S. officials refer to it optimistically—began to break down in 2000.

The collapse of the Soviet empire left the United States as the world's single superpower. The U.S. maintains what constitutes an informal empire, influenced by financial might and vast if over-extended armed forces, including more than 700 military bases abroad. Conservative, or "Neo-Con," exponents of exerting forceful U.S. domination operate under the principle that what seems good for the United States is good for the world. In the late 1990s, a more aggressive U.S. foreign policy increased fears in Europe about U.S. foreign unilateralism and a rush to use force. On a continent ravaged by two devastating world wars, this has not gone down well. The U.S. refused in 2001 to sign the Kyoto Protocol, an agreement that requires countries to reduce the harmful greenhouse gas emissions that have caused global warming. In 2002, the U.S. government announced that it would not accept the jurisdiction of a proposed new international court, which was being set up to try those accused of crimes against humanity. Five years later, the U.S. government announced its intention of placing a missile defense system in Poland and the Czech Republic intended, in principle, to defend against any attacks launched by Iran, which the U.S. accused of working to build nuclear weapons. Such a plan outraged Russia, which fears the presence of such a system in neighboring states.

European Responses to U.S. Policy

In the wake of the attacks of September 11, 2001, the administration of U.S. President George W. Bush turned its attention to Saddam Hussein (1937–2006), Iraq's dictator, arguing that he was continuing to produce and hide "weapons of mass destruction" and that he had links to Al Qaeda. Neither assertion was correct. While British Prime Minister Tony Blair (despite popular opposition to the war) and a number of other states actively supported the U.S. position, Germany, France, and Russia opposed the Bush administration's position. In the meantime, UN weapons inspectors found no "weapons of mass destruction." Moreover, the Iraqis began to destroy missiles whose range exceeded that permitted by the United Nations following the Gulf War of 1991, when U.S. troops drove Iraqi forces from Kuwait, which Saddam Hussein had invaded.

The United States and Britain launched an invasion of Iraq in March 2003, quickly defeating the Iraqi army. The United States set up military authority in Iraq, along with a British zone in the south, anticipating that it would eventually give way to some sort of democratic Iraqi government (assuming religious, ethnic, and other tensions could be overcome). However, no weapons of mass destruction were ever found. This left the impression in much of Europe that some of the U.S. and British intelligence documents used to reach the conclusion that the regime of Saddam Hussein posed an immediate threat to the region or to U.S. interests—thus

justifying the invasion—had been exaggerated, misrepresented, or even simply fabricated. (Moreover, President Bush's rhetorical evocation of a "crusade" against terrorism called to mind the bloody campaigns by European Christians against Islam during the Middle Ages.)

The Iraq crisis threatened the prestige and effectiveness of the United Nations, because of the determination of the U.S. government to go it alone. The outpouring of European sympathy and goodwill toward the United States following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C., dissipated. Iraq descended into chaos. Insurgents rose up (aided by arms shipped from Iran) against the occupying forces. Terrorist attacks—the war brought Al Qaeda into Iraq—became a daily occurrence and Iraq plunged into civil war. Probably about half a million Iraqis have perished since the U.S. invasion and more than 2 million are refugees.

The C.I.A. operated secret prisons and undertook illegal kidnappings in Europe, sending several suspects off to probable torture in their countries of origin. Images of prisoners mistreated by their U.S. captors in Abu Ghraib prison flashed across televisions and computer screens across the globe, along with reports of the C.I.A. torturing prisoners and Iraqi civilians being gunned down by private U.S. security contractors. At the U.S. prison at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, prisoners were held year after year without knowing the charges against them and denied access to any kind of legal representation. The president's acceptance of interrogation techniques considered to be torture further sullied the United States's reputation. Even as the security situation improved in Iraq in late 2007 and in 2008, President George W. Bush no longer seemed to represent the high moral standard long projected by the United States. When asked in 2008 whether

British Royal Marine Commandos guarding Iraqi prisoners of war, 2003.



a new president could restore American credibility, the foreign minister of France spoke for many, if not most, Europeans when he said, "It will never be as it was before. . . . The magic is gone." However, the election of Barack Obama in 2008 was overwhelmingly greeted with a sense of optimism by most Europeans.

CONCLUSION

As Europe moves through the first decade of the twenty-first century, its influence over the rest of the world has been reduced. Yet Europeans now for the most part live in peace, a situation that seems likely to remain for the foreseeable future. Their quality of life has continued to improve, thanks to ongoing advances in medicine and the production of food. Europe still confronts the challenges of finding enough safe energy while protecting the environment. In 2007, leaders of the EU agreed to try to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide by 20 percent by 2020, by which date renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power are to make up one-fifth of energy consumed.

As in other regions, European economies must continually adapt to the challenges of globalization. Following the failure of Communist states in Europe, even China has embraced some aspects of a market economy, and China and India have become economic giants. High unemployment rates in Europe still suggest the vulnerability of many people to the vicissitudes of the market. Young people in particular are affected by unemployment. Confrontations between young people and the police in Athens, as well as in other cities, in December 2008 followed the shooting death of an adolescent by a policeman. Many students and other young men and women are disaffected, fearing they will not find jobs and that they will be the first generation in the post-war period to do worse economically than their parents. Finding an appropriate balance between the free market and state intervention remains essential. Determined protests against globalization reflect the fact that global interconnectedness has not benefited everyone; millions of desperately poor people in Asia and Africa, and on other continents as well, have been left behind.

Human rights around the world remains a European concern more than sixty years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations. Amnesty International has been a force for identifying countries in which human rights are not respected, as has Human Rights Watch. European states were among those that put enormous pressure on South Africa in the 1970s and early 1980s, as it defied the world by maintaining its now dismantled official system of racial apartheid. Genocide in the African nation of Rwanda in the 1990s, ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, starvation in Ethiopia, massacres in the Darfur region of Sudan, and the explosive situation in the Middle East have also been the focus of human-rights

groups, as well as of European states. The European Union has made support of human rights one of its priorities.

Europeans have many reasons to be optimistic about the future. German unification was achieved peacefully. Two old enemies, Germany and France, stand as a stable center for the continent's future. Despite divisions over policy toward Iraq, NATO adapted to the fall of communism and expanded toward the east, as has the European Union. Signs of greater toleration can be found in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, as well. In 1997, for the first time, ethnic Hungarians living in Romania could use their own language in their dealings with government officials and in education. And in 2000 the Bulgarian government finally allowed the state television network to broadcast a weekly news program in Turkish. While in most of Europe, nationalist irredentist claims have largely subsided, ethnic and religious rivalries have by no means been eliminated.

The Cold War is no more, and in Europe there is seemingly little risk of a hot one, at least of European-wide dimensions. The European Union has brought a single market to much of Europe and will continue to expand, with the help of its single currency, the euro. This in itself has made the continent smaller, making it even easier for people to travel and giving them increasingly more in common. Moreover, arguably the most important success of the European Union has been to make war between member states unlikely. All this should carry Europe into an even more prosperous future, one that can be built on lasting peace.



Protest outside Parliament in London against alleged torture by U.S. forces in Iraq.

