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## Is the European Family Breaking Apart?

With the euro crisis, the Russian threat, the refugee crisis and Brexit, many leading European politicians are expressing doubt in the continuity of the EU. Did the dream of the United States of Europe fail?

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A United States of Europe has been the dream of many political greats of the post-World War II period. Men and women throughout the centuries have desired lasting peace on the European Continent plagued by wars. Popes, emperors and kings have tried to unite the divided nations. Success has been so close, yet never reached. Politicians of the last century have seized that same dream and tried to forge together the union. But a series of crises has caused politicians all across Europe to doubt the reality of that vision. Although we have never been closer, the dream still appears to be a fantasy. Are we, in fact, further away from a United States of Europe than ever before?

## European Leaders Had a Dream

A united Europe was not the original idea of postwar politicians, but the shock of World War II gave Europe the incentive to unite. It was a dream of peace, safety, freedom, unity and prosperity.

In his famous speech to the academic youth at the University of Zurich in 1946, Winston Churchill said:

There is a remedy which ... would in a few years make all Europe ... free and ... happy. It is to re-create the European family, or as much of it as we can, and to provide it with a structure under which it can dwell in peace, in safety and in freedom. We must build a kind of United States of Europe.

Konrad Adenauer, the first chancellor of postwar Germany, had a very similar dream: "It is my deepest belief that the United States of Europe can finally bring peace to this Continent which has been ravaged by war so often."

A dream was born in the midst of the ashes of World War II. European politicians have diligently tried to weld the cracks dividing Europe.

Yet as great as the dream was, it has been equally difficult to fulfill.

We have never been closer to a United States of Europe, as Churchill described it: "The structure of the United States of Europe will be such as to make the material strength of a single state less important. Small nations will count as much as large ones and gain their honor by a contribution to the common cause. The ancient states and principalities of Germany, freely joined for mutual convenience in a federal system, might take their individual places among the United States of Europe."

But that dream seems set to rip Europe apart once more. Many nations sacrificed their national interest for that common cause. But now they feel betrayed, insecure in the face of Russia in aggression, helplessly caught in a financial crisis, and overwhelmed by refugees.

German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier said (*Trompet* translation throughout):

Europe is undoubtedly moving toward troubled water and needs to reestablish itself quickly. Brexit has thrown us into turmoil; doubts about Europe's performance and its ability to act are getting louder. What counts now is giving Europe a common perspective for the future once more, as well as advancing forward on issues such as European security, migration and economic growth. And that certainly doesn't work with those who see a return to nationalism as a solution to everything.

## The Euro Crisis

One of the dreams of the founding fathers of modern Europe was that of financial prosperity. One of the earliest hopes was that Europe could unite and, in mutual cooperation, benefit from one another. The eurozone was formed to advance these aspirations. Yet only a few members really benefited from this creation. Southern Europe, in particular, suffered major setbacks. Since 1999, Italy has not witnessed [any economic growth](#), despite becoming a member of the eurozone.

The 2008 global financial crisis was one of the strongest earthquakes that hit the EU, and its ruins are still evident today. Unemployment in the southern states of Europe surged to unprecedented heights, billions in debt were accumulated, and bailout after bailout was given. The Greek crisis left scars on the eurozone. And another euro crisis threatens to emerge in 2017, as Greece, Italy and Portugal face an unsurmountable financial crisis.

## The Russian Threat

Another dream that drove European unity was security. Not only did Europe hope to be resilient against internal war, but it also hoped to be guarded against external threats, such as Russia. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the formation of the EU gave Europeans reason to hope.

But the Ukraine crisis shattered that dream.

The EU was thrilled to expand and negotiations with Ukraine moved toward it joining the Union. But Russia blocked those advances, invaded Ukraine, and left Eastern Europe in fear. The EU, formed to be a unified defender against aggression, was frightened by the aggressor. Eastern European countries working to join the EU had anticipated protection but were left with only the vapor of a vanishing dream.

Just as Southern Europe's hope for financial prosperity has been disappointed, so has the east's expectation of security.

## The Refugee Crisis

The dream of unity and togetherness also turned out to be a mere illusion. As millions of refugees streamed over the coastlines, nations across Europe quickly started to think nationalistically again. Instead of working out a common European response as Germany and other nations proposed, individual nations acted on their own—rejecting EU guidelines.

Terrorist attacks by refugees are driving Europe together and apart at the same time. As some nations look for a common response, others seek isolationism.

## Divided at All Corners

Europe is divided—divided between north and south, prosperity and poverty; divided between east and west, fear and tranquility; divided between nation and union, nationalism and internationalism.

The abysses seem too great to be overcome. Europe seems on the verge of breaking apart and shattering into individual pieces. Brexit has been a sign for many that the dream of a united Europe as it was envisioned has vanished. Britain was the first to declare the dream an illusion.

The bandages that seemed to keep the union together are expanding and tearing with each financial crisis and bailout, with each Russian move that frightens another eastern nation, with each storm of refugees.

What will happen if Greece no longer submits to EU regulations? If Russia expands its borders? If the refugee deal with Turkey fails? European leaders ask themselves these questions and conclude that the Union is on the verge of collapse.

Yet a few nations haven't given up the dream of unity.

## The German Solution

Few have realized that ever since the dream of a United States of Europe started to form in the minds of postwar politicians there have been two entirely different visions: one formulated by Britain and the U.S. to ensure peace on the Continent and serve as a bulwark against Russia, and the other a malicious plan to reestablish German hegemony on the Continent. These two visions, as opposite as they are, are both part of the foundation of the European Union today.

Yes, the dream of a United States of Europe the way Churchill imagined it has failed, not least because Britain left the Union. But that failure allows another dream of a different United States of Europe to take its place. Britain hoped to

suppress German hegemony in a European Union in which no single country has total dominion over other nations. Obviously, this has never been Germany's dream.

"The fate of Europe depends on the solution of the German question," Konrad Adenauer said. "The fate of Germany is also the [destiny of Europe](#)."

His statement has never been more true. Europe's leadership depends on Germany; Berlin's approach to Moscow determines Brussels's course; and Frankfurt's solution to the financial crisis is the solution everyone has to accept. If Germany leads, Europe has to follow.

Yet Germany's different dream of a United States of Europe has not been able to emerge until now, with the lifting of the restraints of Great Britain and the U.S.

## Schäuble's Aspiration

Do not be misled by the current German leadership. Germany has its goals, and chancellors are only temporary. Despite Chancellor Angela Merkel's efforts to keep the current union together, ministers both inside and outside her cabinet have a vision of a different United States of Europe.

German Minister of Finance Wolfgang Schäuble who is seen as the second-most powerful politician in Germany, views the crises very differently from Merkel.

For years, he has called for the establishment of a core Europe. "In order to make progress in all of these areas, we should keep using the approach that proved its mettle back in 1994: to establish cores of cooperation within the EU that enable smaller, willing groups of member states to forge ahead," Schäuble wrote in an article coauthored by Karl Lamers (also a member of the Christian Democratic Union).

The call in 1994 was rejected by France, but today, we live in a different Europe—a Europe that is desperate for solutions. But Schäuble did not give up on this ambition. In "Seeing in Crises the Last Best Chance to Unite Europe," the *New York Times* wrote in 2011:

Where the world finds only chaos and impending disaster in the European debt crisis, Wolfgang Schäuble sees the long-awaited urgency to finish the half-complete job of unifying Europe. As Germany's finance minister and a close confidant of Chancellor Angela Merkel, he is in a uniquely powerful position to shape the outcome. ...

The ultimate goal, Mr. Schäuble says, is a political union with a European president directly elected by the people.

"What we're now doing with the fiscal union, what I'm describing here, is a short-term step for the currency," Mr. Schäuble said. "In a larger context, naturally we need a political union." ...

He sees the turmoil as not an obstacle but a necessity. "We can only achieve a political union if we have a crisis," Mr. Schäuble said.

In 2014, Schäuble called for an [inner-core parliament for the eurozone](#). This January, he called for a new coalition that would be willing to act in the refugee crisis. In October, he called for a joint EU defense budget.

Today's crises are separating Churchill's utopian vision from Germany's real ambitions.

And Schäuble is not the only one calling for a stronger, more unified and more powerful political union. Others desire it with even greater aspiration, such as the extremely popular former German Defense Minister Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg.

Guttenberg sees Brexit as an opportunity for a fundamental debate on the future of the Union. In an interview with Michael Krons, Guttenberg said that Europe has always been a union of different speeds and everything else has been an illusion. He called it a mistake to try to create a monetary union and now a military union without *first* creating a political union. "I think we need a few individual heads that are willing to take the risk of complete failure. It needs to be connected with the willingness to fail, and they will probably be set on fire for what they are doing. But that discussion needs to come beyond one's borders with France, Italy and probably even Britain" (*Phoenix*, October 17).

A united political union under German leadership is the subject of many prophecies, and Guttenberg is a man to watch.

## A Dream of a Church-State Unity

"Take Guttenberg's impeccable Frankish-Bavarian Roman Catholic connections into mind and add them to the thread of political thought that has pervaded Bavarian politics for decades under [Franz Joseph] Strauss and [Edmund] Stoiber—the dream of a united Catholic Europe under German leadership. Then add to it something that neither Strauss nor Stoiber ever possessed—a striking family title that cements all of these connections together—and we have a [man to watch](#) in the shaky coalition of Chancellor Merkel's government," late *Trumpet* columnist Ron Fraser wrote in 2009.

The way has been paved for such a man to enter the scene and give Europe the passionate leadership that it needs and wants.

In 1952, Herbert W. Armstrong wrote, based upon a prophecy in Revelation 17 and current events of the time: "The United States is determined, now, to let nothing stand in the way of building up a rearmed, independent Germany. This will be the heart and core of the united Europe that will revive the Roman Empire."

Germany has been allowed to unite. And U.S. President-elect Donald Trump will probably open the door for a European core to unite politically and militarily around it.

In his Jan. 23, 1980, co-worker letter, Mr. Armstrong warned that the fear of Russia "will be the spark to bring the heads of nations in Europe together with the Vatican to form a 'United Nations of Europe.'" He wrote on July 22, 1984, that a massive banking crisis in America "could suddenly result in triggering European nations to unite as a new world power larger than ... the U.S."

How is it that we are seeing a united Europe form exactly as it was foretold in various prophecies?

In "A Monumental Moment in European History!" *Trumpet* editor in chief [Gerald Flurry](#) wrote:

But here's the most astounding and inspiring part of Revelation 17: God put it in the minds of Europe's leaders to do what they're doing! Verse 17 reads, "For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." The church leading the Holy Roman Empire is not God's true Church. But God does allow this church to gain control of this German-led European beast power. Expect the Catholic Church to become more vocal and for this church-state axis to become more evident.

Contrary to what many EU skeptics say, we are living in a time when we have never been closer to the formation of a United States of Europe! The crises are perfectly laid out for Europe to become a superpower like the world has never seen. A United States of Europe is about to emerge, but it will not be like the one Churchill imagined.

The Bible foretells of 10 European nations that will unite with the backing of the Catholic Church to form a financial superpower more powerful than the U.S., a military union that will be able to stand in the face of Russia and solve the refugee crisis and terrorism in the Middle East. This Union will rule the world—until it is crushed at the return of Jesus Christ.

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