

**Manifesto to Europeans (*Aufruf an die Europäer*), Berlin, 1915**

*Only 4 individuals, all on staff at the University of Berlin, signed this document: physiologist Georg Friedrich Nicolai, physicist Albert Einstein, astronomer Wilhelm Förster, head of the Berlin observatory, and philosopher Otto Buek.*

Never before has any war so completely disrupted cultural cooperation. It has done so at the very time when progress in technology and communications clearly suggest that we recognize the need for international relations which will necessarily move in the direction of a universal, world-wide civilization. Perhaps we are all the more keenly and painfully aware of the rupture precisely because so many international bonds existed before.

We can scarcely be surprised. Anyone who cares in the least for a common world culture is now doubly committed to fight for the maintenance of the principles on which it must stand. Yet, those from whom such sentiments might have been expected—primarily scientists and artists—have so far responded, almost to a man, as

though they had relinquished any further desire for the continuance of international relations. They have spoken in a hostile spirit, and they have failed to speak out for peace.

Nationalist passions cannot excuse this attitude which is unworthy of what the world has heretofore called culture. It would be a grave misfortune were this spirit to gain general currency among the intellectuals. It would, we are convinced, not only threaten culture as such; it would endanger the very existence of the nations for the protection of which this barbarous war was unleashed.

Technology has shrunk the world. Indeed, today the nations of the great European peninsula seem to jostle one another much as once did the city-states that were crowded into those smaller peninsulas jutting out into the Mediterranean. Travel is so widespread, international supply and demand are so interwoven, that Europe—one could almost say the whole world—is even now a single unit.

Surely, it is the duty of Europeans of education and good will at least to try to prevent Europe from succumbing, because of lack of international organization, to the fate that once engulfed ancient Greece! Or will Europe also suffer slow exhaustion and death by fratricidal war?

The struggle raging today can scarcely yield a "victor"; all nations that participate in it will, in all likelihood, pay an exceedingly high price. Hence it appears not only wise but imperative for men of education in all countries to exert their influence for the kind of peace treaty that will not carry the seeds of future wars, whatever the outcome of the present conflict may be. The unstable and fluid situation in Europe, created by the war, must be utilized to weld the Continent into an organic whole. Technically and intellectually, conditions are ripe for such a development.

This is not the place to discuss how this new order in Europe may be brought about. Our sole purpose is to affirm our profound conviction that the time has come when Europe must unite to guard its soil, its people, and its culture. We are stating publicly our faith in European unity, a faith which we believe is shared by many; we hope that this public affirmation of our faith may contribute to the growth of a powerful movement toward such unity.

The first step in this direction would be for all those who truly cherish the culture of Europe to join forces—all those whom

Goethe once prophetically called "good Europeans." We must not abandon hope that their voice speaking in unison may even today rise above the clash of arms, particularly if they are joined by those who already enjoy renown and authority.

The first step, we repeat, is for Europeans to join forces. If, as we devoutly hope, enough *Europeans* are to be found in Europe—people to whom Europe is a vital cause rather than a geographical term—we shall endeavor to organize a League of Europeans. This league may then raise its voice and take action.

We ourselves seek but to make the first move, to issue the challenge. If you are of one mind with us, if you too are determined to create a widespread movement for European unity, we bid you pledge yourself by signing your name.