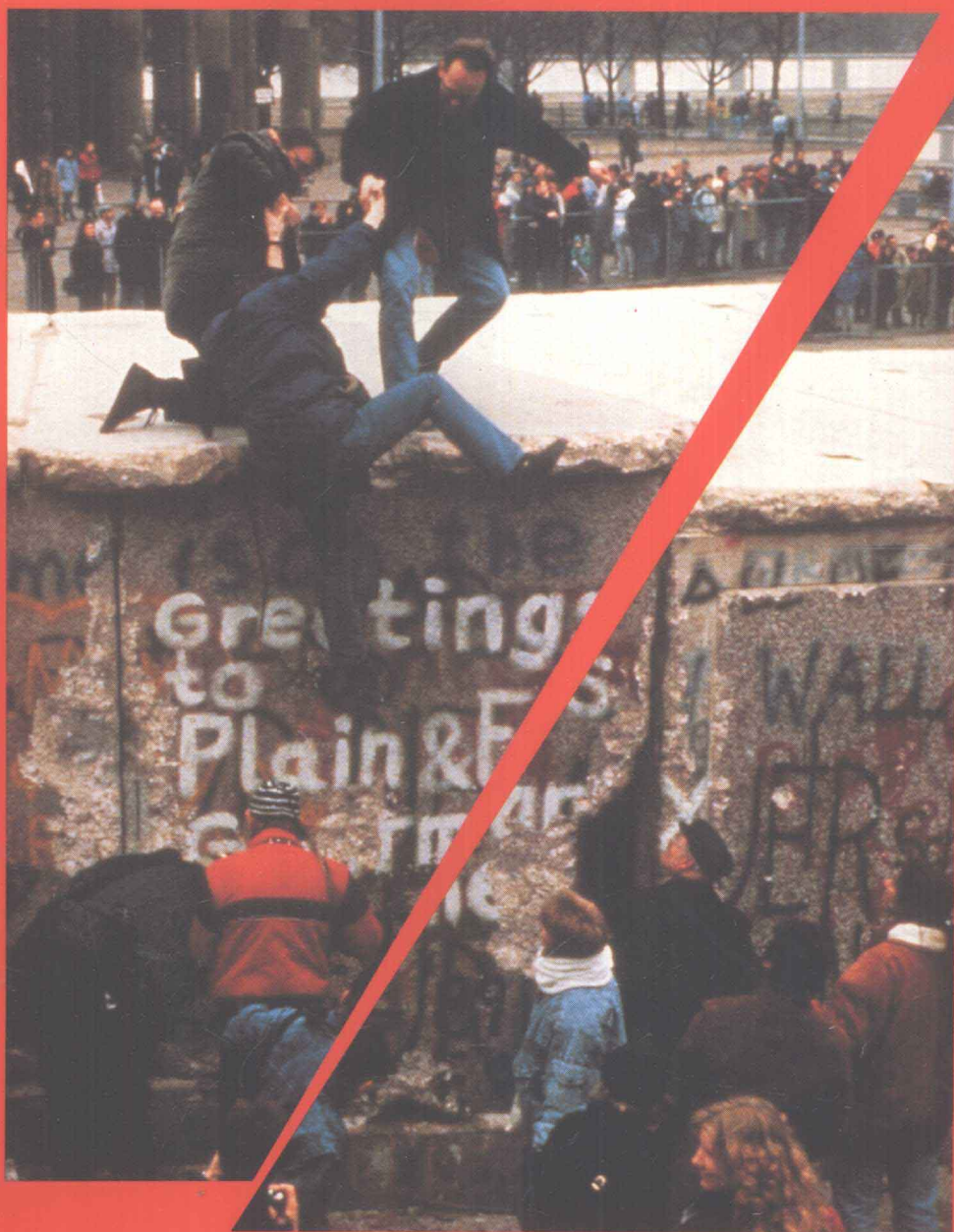


EUROPE



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Foreword

By definition, controversies are “discussions of questions in which opposing opinions clash” (Webster’s Twentieth Century Dictionary Unabridged). Few would deny that controversies are a pervasive part of the human condition and exist on virtually every level of human enterprise. Controversies transpire between individuals and among groups, within nations and between nations. Controversies supply the grist necessary for progress by providing challenges and challengers to the status quo. They also create atmospheres where strife and warfare can flourish. A world without controversies would be a peaceful world; but it also would be, by and large, static and prosaic.

The Series’ Purpose

The purpose of the Current Controversies series is to explore many of the social, political, and economic controversies dominating the national and international scenes today. Titles selected for inclusion in the series are highly focused and specific. For example, from the larger category of criminal justice, Current Controversies deals with specific topics such as police brutality, gun control, white collar crime, and others. The debates in Current Controversies also are presented in a useful, timeless fashion. Articles and book excerpts included in each title are selected if they contribute valuable, long-range ideas to the overall debate. And wherever possible, current information is enhanced with historical documents and other relevant materials. Thus, while individual titles are current in focus, every effort is made to ensure that they will not become quickly outdated. Books in the Current Controversies series will remain important resources for librarians, teachers, and students for many years.

In addition to keeping the titles focused and specific, great care is taken in the editorial format of each book in the series. Book introductions and chapter prefaces are offered to provide background material for readers. Chapters are organized around several key questions that are answered with diverse opinions representing all points on the political spectrum. Materials in each chapter include opinions in which authors clearly disagree as well as alternative opinions in which authors may agree on a broader issue but disagree on the possible solutions. In this way, the content of each volume in Current Controversies mirrors the mosaic of opinions encountered in society. Readers will quickly realize that there are many viable answers to these complex issues. By questioning each author’s conclusions, stu-

Foreword

dents and casual readers can begin to develop the critical thinking skills so important to evaluating opinionated material.

Current Controversies is also ideal for controlled research. Each anthology in the series is composed of primary sources taken from a wide gamut of informational categories including periodicals, newspapers, books, United States and foreign government documents, and the publications of private and public organizations. Readers will find factual support for reports, debates, and research papers covering all areas of important issues. In addition, an annotated table of contents, an index, a book and periodical bibliography, and a list of organizations to contact are included in each book to expedite further research.

Perhaps more than ever before in history, people are confronted with diverse and contradictory information. During the Persian Gulf War, for example, the public was not only treated to minute-to-minute coverage of the war, it was also inundated with critiques of the coverage and countless analyses of the factors motivating U.S. involvement. Being able to sort through the plethora of opinions accompanying today's major issues, and to draw one's own conclusions, can be a complicated and frustrating struggle. It is the editors' hope that *Current Controversies* will help readers with this struggle.

Introduction

For most of the five decades following World War II, Europe was distinctly divided into east and west. Eastern Europe, dominated by the Soviet Union, remained economically depressed, while Western Europe prospered. Although the Soviet Union had been allied with many of the countries of Western Europe as well as the United States during the war, the West remained suspicious of the intentions of the communists. This suspicion, coupled with the Soviet intervention and military takeover in Eastern Europe, encouraged Western Europe to band together to ensure the West's continuing political and economic independence and growth.

At first, several Western European countries formed a military alliance for joint security with the United States. They helped create and participated in such organizations as the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Then some of the Western European nations began to see the advantages of working together economically as well. By pooling industrial resources and instituting mutually advantageous import and export regulations, they found they were better able to compete with larger economic powers such as the United States. To further these ends, six countries—West Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and



Introduction

Luxembourg—formed the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951. In 1958, these same six nations formed the European Economic Community (EEC), also known as the Common Market, to promote the gradual integration and growth of the Western European economies. By the mid-1980s six more nations—the United Kingdom, Ireland, Denmark, Greece, Spain, and Portugal—had joined the EEC.

Pleased for the most part with the success of their economic cooperation, the EEC members began work in the 1980s toward a fuller union of Western Europe. They began forming the European Community (EC), whose eventual goals would include a common language, currency, and economic and political systems. In effect, the planners wished to create a United States of Europe, wherein each presently autonomous nation would become a member state of the larger union, governing itself in much the same way Idaho or California or New York governs itself in relation to the United States federal government. The EC would be different in that, unlike the United States of America, each EC nation would be responsible for its own defense.

At the present time the EC has a government structure in place and has some limited powers. The seat of government is located in Brussels, Belgium. Its organization consists of five institutional systems: An Executive Commission, a Council of Ministers, a European Parliament, a Court of Justice, and a Court of Auditors. The EC is headed by a president who is appointed by the Executive Commission. Proponents of the plan wish to see the gradual enlargement of this body's powers and gradual reduction of individual nations' autonomous powers. Opponents fear the results of such a plan.

Besides language barriers and differences in economic prosperity (which could lead to some members taking on a larger share of the economic burdens of the organization), a major impediment to full implementation of the EC is nationalism. Many opponents to the EC have strong fears that such a union would destroy the rich cultural traditions and individual identities of the member nations. If all converted to the same language, for example, some fear what would happen to the precious literary heritage of the individual nations.

Just as worrisome as the insidious deterioration of national personalities and heritages is the fear that the EC would become an overweening bureaucracy that would impose inappropriate rules on all members regardless of their individual situations. *New York Times* reporter Alan Riding says, "In many countries there remains a strong perception that faceless unelected bureaucrats in Brussels are busily writing rules aimed at making uniform a region that has always prided itself on its diversity."

For example, the EC was concerned that the process involved in making certain European cheeses was unsanitary and a possible health hazard. It passed a health code that would have banned cheeses made with unpasteurized milk. One of the cheeses directly affected by the code would have been the immensely popular French cheese, Camembert. Cheese producers in Camembert, France, were outraged at the thought that this product, which they had been making in a traditional

Europe

way for many decades, would be arbitrarily banned by the EC bureaucracy. They argued that the health code endangered their livelihoods and that changing the cheese would endanger sales.

Advocates of the EC insist that such fears are groundless. Peter Ludlow, director of the Center for European Policy Studies in Brussels, states, "A united Europe will not be based on the American principle of the melting pot." Despite the institution of an official language, for example, individual nations would retain their own language for daily and cultural use and use the EC language (English) for political and economic interactions. The primary legislation of the EC would be directly related to common political and economic goals and would be subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers representing all member nations. There would be no arbitrary rule-making by the EC governing bodies. Instead, EC rules would work toward making Europe a strong, competitive force on the world market. Proponents claim that a federation of European nations would increase the European gross domestic product between 4.5 and 7.0 percent, create 1.8 to 5 million new jobs, and lower consumer prices by 6 percent.

The success or failure of the EC is just one of the issues that faces the continent of Europe today. Others considered in *Europe: Current Controversies* are German unification, Western policies in Eastern Europe, the strengthening of Eastern Europe's economy, and the role of international organizations in Europe's future. The editors have selected the viewpoints with the aim of enlarging the reader's knowledge of today's Europe, America's long-standing neighbor, ally, and trading partner.

Chapter 1

How Will European Unification Affect the World?

