

METTERNICH'S DIPLOMACY AT ITS ZENITH, 1820-1823

By Paul W. Schroeder

What Metternich wanted at the peak of his career, why he wanted it, and the methods by which he achieved his goals are questions brilliantly answered in this analysis of the Austrian Chancellor's diplomacy during the period when he was the pre-eminent figure in European politics.

Metternich's single-minded objective during 1820-1823 was to preserve the Austrian hegemony he had gained in Central Europe after long wars, enormous effort, and great sacrifice. Metternich was thus the relentless foe of any cause, just or unjust, that threatened European repose, and in his campaigns he did not hesitate to use duplicity, secret negotiation, trickery, or deceit against ally and adversary alike.

Paul W. Schroeder, a member of the history faculty at the University of Illinois, Urbana, brings to this book exceptional scholarship and an objectivity hard to attain when dealing with a personality.

The evidence has forced him to the conclusion that Metternich was no real statesman. The very qualities that distinguished Metternich as a brilliant diplomat—keen vision, cogent analysis, fertility of expedients, farsightedness, flexibility, and firmness of purpose—were converted into those of blindness to reality, superficial analysis, sterility of expedients, dogmatism, and failure of will when confronted with fundamental problems of state and society.

The author is the winner of the 1956 Beveridge Prize.

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