

**Volume 9**

**Number 053**

**Entente Cordiale - II**

**Lead: With their dominance of world affairs under challenge, long-term antagonists France and Britain in the 1850s gingerly began to explore the possibilities of alliance. This process was confirmed in 1904 in the Entente Cordiale.**

**Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.**

**Content: Henry John Temple Palmerston was British Foreign Secretary for most of the period 1830-1851. He also served as Prime Minister in the 1850s. He was the first**

**prominent politician to describe post-1830 Anglo-French relations as *entente cordiale*, as a warm understanding. In that year France had abandoned forever the old Bourbon monarchy and embarked on a stumbling course towards liberal democracy. Once that happened, Britain, with varying degrees of enthusiasm and not a little skepticism at times, moved toward a closer relationship France. This would not yield an official coalition until early in the next century but with the help of prominent leaders such as Palmerston and, ironically, French President and then Emperor Louis-Napoleon III, France and Britain moved slowly but surely in the direction of alliance.**

**The British interpreted this more often than not as its ability to maneuver internationally without French interference, but loss such deference to Britain might bring was out-weighed as it perceived the growing power of Germany as Prussian Chancellor Otto von Bismarck orchestrated German unity in the 1860s. By 1904, the two powers were ready to make it official. Long after Palmerston and Louis-Napoleon had passed from the scene Britain and France roused themselves from their isolation, France as a result of its defeat by Germany in 1870 and Britain through complacency, signed a series of compacts, called Entente Cordiale giving each power freedom of action in different sections of the**

**colonial world and committing themselves to mutual support in future European conflict. Germany was reduced to virtual isolation in Europe and this isolation may have contributed to its aggressive behavior in years leading up to World War I.**

**At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.**

## Resources

**Golicz, Roman. "Napoleon III, Lord Palmerston and the Entente Cordiale," *History Today* (December 2000): 10-17.**

**Jennings, Lawrence. *France and Europe in 1848: A Study of French Foreign Affairs in time of Crisis*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973.**

**Zeldin, Theodore. *Emile Ollivier and the Liberal Empire of Napoleon III*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.**

**<http://www.firstworldwar.com/source/ententecordiale1904.htm>**

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