



Written by [Bruce Walker](#) on February 9, 2011

Merkel and Sarkozy Cannot Save European Union

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicolas Sarkozy both believe in global “solutions” to problems. How well does this play in Lisbon, Athens, Dublin, or Madrid? Portugal, Greece, Ireland, and Spain have had more than enough external pressures on their peoples in the last century.



Portugal, because of its relative insulation on the western part of the Iberian Peninsula, has not been occupied, but Greece has — by Turks, by Fascists, by Nazis, and almost by Stalin, although the brutal, Soviet-inspired civil war was bloody enough. The Irish fought for centuries for the right to live in the Irish Free State and not the United Kingdom (or European Union). Spain was fought over in a bloody civil war, and under the much-maligned Franco Spain lived in independence and peace, staying blessedly out of World War II and remaining an anti-Communist, but sovereign, ally of the United States during the Cold War.

The modern history of Germany and France, by contrast, has been the story of powerful nations trying to impose their will on peaceful neighbors. Germany invaded neutral Belgium in one war and invaded Belgium, Holland, Denmark, and Norway in the second great war of the last century. France does not have clean hands. Belgium was considered a legitimate objective by the French Bourbons and it was effectively annexed by Napoleon. The Swiss, who seek only to be left alone, were last defeated and conquered by Napoleon.

So it should not surprise us too much if the smaller nations in Europe, the ones who have their own language and identify themselves as a country, begin to fidget when Berlin or Paris seems to be pining for the good old days in which Europeans were one (or almost so). A quick perusal of the maps of Europe over time provides a visual reference of why Irish, Walloons, or Greeks may be touchy. Great powers once met in Vienna or Versailles and decided the fate of these peoples. The ignorance of these great powers was sometimes breathtaking. Woodrow Wilson scarcely knew where Slovenia was or how exactly it differed from Slovakia.

The economic problems of rampant government spending, the printing by the Bank of Ireland of its own euros (which threatens to reduce the euro to the status of Monopoly money), and the bailouts (which inevitably involves the compromising into irrelevance of sovereign rights of these smaller nations) are very serious problems which threaten the cohesion of society. The threat of panic is real. Those societies are equally threatened by an influx of poor and angry Muslims who will soon be a very large



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part of the electorate supporting an increasingly geriatric population of pseudo-Christian pensioners. Already militantly secular welfare states such as Sweden are finding it tough to rhetorically resist the whole ugly procession of Islamic misogyny and intolerance upon their society.

The consequence is civil discord unprecedented for many years. No supranational solution can solve the problems that nations such as Greece and Portugal have created. Only the Greeks, a people who are hardworking and independent, can solve the problems of Greece. Only the tough and brave Portuguese can solve the problems of Portugal. The shadow behind these nations for the last several decades, the European Union, has created an illusion that some big brother can come in and through mere size solve the problems of smaller nations. (Rather like the idea that the trillions of dollars spent by Obama could somehow “solve” the profound problems of dysfunctional state governments.)

The clock is ticking on such ephemeral solutions. By March, perhaps a few months later, the European Union, through its insulated bureaucrats, will have to mandate control over national economies if it is to end the crises percolating through Europe. What makes Merkel or Sarkozy believe that orders which are written more by the Germans and the French will be more happily received by the pensioners in Athens than any plan the Greek government proposes? Indeed, what makes Merkel or Sarkozy believe that their own people, the Germans and the French, will be happy to dip into their pockets to help smaller nations who have huge public debts?

Just what this may entail is beginning to seep out. The online *Daily Mail* writes that “Merkel and Sarkozy [are proposing] their ‘grand bargain’ right now ... all about how the Euro zone is going to make itself competitive by means of a centralized European economic government. Pause for a moment and think about how ludicrous that idea is ... It is from these same economically-idiotic countries that the new centralized economic government will be drawn: somehow the ‘magic’ of ‘more Europe’ is meant to turn the politicians and bureaucrats of these nations, all of them proven incompetents, into round-eyed versions of Hong Kong dynamos. Charles Dumas of Lombard Street Research says: “The widely-held belief in the strength of the German economy is a delusion.” But since Merkel has taken control of the formation of a Euro zone economic government — Sarkozy is very much the junior partner, whose role is mostly to act as cover for the fact that Germany is the driver of this policy — she will get what she wants. Which is: the Germanification of the EU.” Is it worth noting, aside from economics, like Hong Kong is no longer part of the British Empire and instead part of the Sinic Empire?

The increasing collaboration of Germany and France also is sure to stir up the resentment of the British. The European Union has long been the butt of jokes in British politics. The independence of the United Kingdom has been a special pride of the British people, long a deliberate counter-weight to the enormity and conflicts of Europe. “Splendid Isolation” produced great prosperity and “Balance of Powers” was intended to preserve people. Both were British concepts. The dystopian masterpieces *1984* and *Brave New World* were also written by Britons who viewed statism and forced homogeneity as a grave threat to the human spirit.

Has passing on the problems of local governments to higher, more remote agencies ever worked? The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Nations show ghastly failure as the end result of this sort of approach. The predominance of great powers within these artificial unions only makes things worse, as Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy may soon discover.

Photo: French President Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel share a light moment after they arrived at the Wilanow Castle for talks, in Warsaw, Poland, Feb. 7, 2011.: AP Images



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