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Discuss the significance and outcomes of the congress of Vienna (1814-1815) in shaping the post-Napoleonic order of Europe.

Answer:

Introduction:

After the defeat of Napoleon in the battle of Leipzig in 1813 and his final abdication in 1814, the Napoleonic wars finally came to an end. However, Europe had been destabilized due to the revolution and the Napoleonic wars for over two decades and there was a need for a peace settlement. The victorious powers sought to restore stability and restore old monarchies. Consequently, the Congress of Vienna took place in Vienna under the leadership of Austrian Chancellor Metternich.

Major Objectives of the Congress:

The congress aimed to restore the old order. It aimed to legitimate monarchies that were deposed by Napoleon.

Similarly, the congress hoped to establish a balance of power in order to prevent any one power like France from dominating Europe again.

Another objective that the Congress aimed to achieve was to contain France. In order

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to implement this the congress planned on surrounding France with strong countries to prevent future aggression.

Lastly, the congress aimed to redraw the map of Europe ~~in order~~ an order based on dynastic claims and balance of power.

Territorial Settlements in Europe :

France was returned to pre-1792 borders.

However, France was allowed to keep some of the overseas colonies and the Bourbon monarchy was restored under king Louis XVIII.

Kingdom of Netherland was created by combining Belgium and Dutch Republic.

The dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire was confirmed in 1806. Consequently, the German Confederation was formed which consisted of thirty-nine states under the Austrian leadership.

In Italy the papal states were restored to Pope and the kingdom of Sardinia was enlarged. Similarly, the Naples and Sicily were reunited under the Bourbon monarchy.

Austria gained control of Lombardy and Venetia. Austria also took over parts of Poland and the Balkans. Similarly, it also ruled the German Confederation.

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The Concert of Europe :

Another major outcome of the Congress of Vienna was the Concert of Europe. This was a system of diplomacy where major powers would meet in order to discuss issues and to preserve peace. The meetings took place in 1816 and in 1822 in Paris. The system was formed by Quadruple alliances which include Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia.

Significance of The Congress :

There was no major European war until the World War One. However, small conflicts took place such as the Crimean war in 1854-1856, The Austro-Prussian war in 1866, and the Franco-Prussian war in 1870.

Moreover, Political stability and conservative order was maintained as a result of the Congress.

France; consequently, was reintegrated peacefully.

Conclusion :

Although Congress of Vienna played a vital role in maintaining stability across Europe. However, it failed to address the nationalistic concerns of the people. ~~The~~ The Congress is generally considered a successful approach in maintaining peace across Europe.