Which events led Metternich to use the Concert of Europe to suppress nationalist and liberal revolutions?

(Contextualization) In 1815, Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte fell, and peace was restored in Europe by an alliance of Great Britain, Prussia, Austria, and Russia. In the post-Napoleonic period, these powers, especially Austria, would seek to conserve the traditional political and economic institutions. (Thesis) The conservative reaction of the Austrian Prince, Klemens von Metternich, and the Congress of Europe was a result of the potential harm of nationalism and liberalism which arose during the rule of Napoleon. The liberal uprisings in Germany and the Spanish Revolution of 1820 accompanied by the revolution in Italy gave Metternich fear of the spread of these ideas into the ethnically diverse Austrian empire. (Argument) Throughout the early 19th century, Metternich would use the Concert of Europe to prevent liberalism and nationalism from potentially harming Austria.

**Body 1:** Liberal uprisings in Germany made Metternich uneasy of the unification of Germany and the loss of Austrian dominance in international affairs.

- **Evidence:** Burschenschaften were liberal student clubs in universities which sought to unify the German Confederation into a state.
- **Analysis:** If this were to happen, Austria would lose control over much of its land and a strong unified state would rise up right next to it. Metternich confronted these fears with nationalism and liberalism, causing him to oppose the two ideas in domestic and foreign politics.
- **Evidence:** A Burschenschaft member assassinated the conservative dramatist, August von Kotzebue. He was executed, but he became a martyr to other nationalists.
- **Analysis:** Although the assassin had acted alone, Metternich was afraid that other radical nationalists would follow his example and turn to radical ways to create reform and unify the German states. Metternich and other monarchs were still wary from the horrors of the French Revolution and wanted to prevent it and preserve the monarchy.

**Body 2:** The Spanish and Italian Revolutions of 1820 led Metternich to use the Concert of Europe to suppress nationalist and liberal revolutions

- **Evidence:** In 1820, the Italians forced the King of Two Sicilies to create a constitution.
- **Analysis:** Metternich had hoped to dominate the Mediterranean to buffer liberal and nationalistic ideas from spreading northward. Using the Concert of Europe, he achieved the right to invade Italy through the Congresses of Trapani, which declared that stable governments could intervene in countries experiencing revolution, and Laibach. By restoring the Italian monarchy, Metternich prevented the spread of the harmful ideas of nationalism and liberalism.
- **Evidence:** Liberal officers in Spain had forced Ferdinand VII to sign a constitution.
- **Analysis:** Prussia, Austria, and Russia agreed once again to suppress revolution in Spain. They acted on the goal to maintain the international order established by the Congress of Vienna and preserve their own political and economic institutions. They realized that the events in Spain or any other country could easily influence liberals and radicals in their countries to revolt as well. Thus, Metternich used these common interests between other European countries to suppress revolution all around Europe to prevent the loss of his country.

(Conclusion) Metternich was a prominent figure in the conservative reaction to the disorder during the French Revolution and the age of Napoleon. He used the common interests between Austria, Prussia, and Russia as well as Britain and France to suppress revolt and liberal or national ideas which could lead to the dismantling of the Austrian dominance in Germany, Italy, and other Habsburg holdings. He epitomized conservatism, seeming to be the chief controller of the European reaction to nationalism and liberalism.

(Synthesis) In addition to Metternich, Nicholas I of Russia also led the repression of liberalism and nationalism, and he symbolized the most extreme European autocracy of the 19th century. He was extremely conservative in domestic affairs, introducing a program of Official Nationality to urge citizens to use their nationality to separate them from the turmoil in the West, and also in foreign affairs. After a nationalist revolt in Poland, Nicholas’ fears about liberalism and nationalism were confirmed, and henceforth, he became ever ready to lend troops to suppress revolution to prevent their spread to his country just like Metternich.