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THE POLITICAL CAREER OF JOSEPH

MARIA VON RADOWITZ

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## PREFACE

In the fall of 1967, I attended Schiller College in Kleiningersheim, Germany. The school was located high above the Neckar in a castle which had once been owned by the Radowitz family. Several years later, while studying the early life of Otto von Bismarck, I once again encountered the name Radowitz in the person of his contemporary, Joseph Maria von Radowitz. I became interested in his identity and role in German history and soon discovered that very little work had been done on him by American scholars. This led to further research and eventually to a Master's thesis. After receiving a Fulbright-Hays Grant to study at Johann von Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, I continued my research on Radowitz in the Goethe University Library, the German Federal Archive in Frankfurt and the private holdings of the Radowitz family. The result of this work is this dissertation.

Despite his relative obscurity, the importance of Radowitz in German history is great. His career stretched from the Napoleonic era to the Revolution of 1848. Through a study of his political career, one covers such significant issues as the organization of the German Confederation, the Frankfurt National Assembly and, most important, the Prussia Plan of Union and the conference at Olmütz.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the help and patience of Dr. Douglas D. Hale, who was always willing to give of his time in order to help me complete my graduate work and this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr. George F. Jewsbury for his encouragement

and understanding. Further credit is due to Dr. W. A. Owings, Dr. James G. Caster, Dr. Lloyd K. Mussleman, Dr. Virgil D. Medlin, and Professor Willis O. Sadler for urging me to enter graduate studies. I would also like to thank Dr. Homer L. Knight, Dr. Odie B. Faulk, Dr. John A. Sylvester, Dr. Norbert R. Mahnken, Dr. Alexander M. Ospovat, and Dr. LeRoy H. Fischer for their advice during my period of study at Oklahoma State University. I am also grateful to Dr. F. H. Schubert, Dr. Wilfred Forstmann, and the German Federal Archive in Frankfurt for their assistance with my research in Germany. I owe appreciation to the Fulbright-Hays Commission for making my work in Germany possible. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the help of the members of my committee, Dr. Bernard W. Eissenstat, Dr. Bogumil W. Frenk, Dr. H. James Henderson, and Dr. Edward Walters.

I also wish to express my gratitude to my mother and stepfather, Mr. and Mrs. Nelson N. Newman, Jr., for their constant help and support and to my father and stepmother for helping me begin my education. I would also like to thank my grandmother, Mrs. Ernest M. Black, for her great assistance and encouragement. I would like to express the debt owed to the Baroness Freia von Radowitz for her interest and support for my study. Finally, I wish to express the great amount of gratitude owed to my wife, Cheryl Haun Morris, for her dedicated proofreading, translation of French language documents, typing and patience.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In November, 1850, as Prussian troops stood face to face with a south German army in the small central German state of Hesse-Kassel, it appeared to many that the two leading German powers were on the verge of war. At stake was the leadership of Germany, Prussia or Austria, and the fate of the Prussian Plan of Union. But before the end of the month, both sides had backed down, a compromise was reached and the final confrontation over which power would dominate Germany was postponed until the defeat of the Habsburg Empire by Hohenzollern troops at Königgrätz on July 3, 1866. Although the Hesse-Kassel crisis of 1850 did not lead to open war, it was still a major turning point in German history, for it marked the final defeat of the Revolution of 1848 and the efforts of Prussia to unite Germany under its leadership. The chief architect of these efforts was a tall, dark, mustachioed army officer named Joseph Maria von Radowitz. In 1850, Radowitz was at the highpoint of a career which had spanned one of the most important eras of German history, the Vormärz and the Revolution of 1848. During this period, he stood at the very center of German politics and was deeply influenced by the most important issues of German history during the first half of the nineteenth century. Some consideration must be given, therefore, to the condition of Germany in the Vormärz, that period between the establishment of the German Confederation in 1815 and the Revolution of 1848, and to the



central problems with which Radowitz would come to be concerned.

The single most important underlying factor in German history during the first half of the nineteenth century was the rising impulse toward the national unification of the German people. Since the Middle Ages, during a period when other kingdoms were developing into modern nation-states, the old Holy Roman Empire had been in the process of disintegration. After the conclusion of the wars of religion in the seventeenth century, the territory of the Empire was divided into more than 300 semi-independent states. This process of decentralization of authority was accompanied by the rise of a new power, Prussia, to challenge the traditional hegemony held by the Habsburg dynasty. Under the leadership of such men as Frederick William the Great Elector, Frederick William I, the Soldier King, and Frederick the Great, Prussia rose from an insignificant electorate to become one of the most important kingdoms in Europe and a potent rival to the Habsburg ruler in Vienna.

The outbreak of the French Revolution in 1789 was a major turning point in German history. In 1792, war broke out between the revolutionary government in Paris and the German states, led by Austria. By 1799, Napoleon Bonaparte came to power as the leader of the French cause and was able to inflict a series of major defeats on his German enemies. After he had conquered the German states, he reorganized them into the Confederation of the Rhine, thereby dealing a death blow to the Holy Roman Empire. In the French-dominated Confederation, many of the smaller principalities and ecclesiastical states were eliminated, thus reducing substantially the number of independent states. Simultaneously Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony were elevated to the level of kingdoms. In 1806, Napoleon completed his subjection of Germany through his defeat of

Prussia at the Battle of Jena.

The defeat of Germany by the French contributed to the awakening of German nationalism. Such men as Heinrich von Kleist, in his plays and his "Catechism of the Germans," and Johann Gottlieb Fichte, in his Fourteen Addresses to the German Nation, helped spread the new gospel of German patriotism to all elements of society. The reforms in Prussia undertaken by Karl Heinrich vom und zum Stein furthered this movement. Finally, the process of driving the French out of Germany and Napoleon's defeat at Leipzig in 1813 added to the development of a national sentiment among the German people.

At the end of the War of Liberation, the powers of Europe assembled at Vienna and dealt the advocates of German unification a major disappointment when they gave them not the nation-state for which they had fought but a loose confederation of semi-independent sovereign states. The German Confederation was formalized in the Federal Act signed on June 8, 1815. It consisted of one empire, Austria, and five kingdoms: Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg and Hanover. One electorate, Hesse-Kassel, was created, as well as seven grand duchies: Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Luxembourg, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach and Oldenburg. Ten duchies--Holstein, Brunswick, Nassau, Saxe-Gotha, Saxe-Coburg, Saxe-Meiningen, Saxe-Hildburghausen, Anhalt-Dessau, Anhalt-Köthen and Anhalt-Bernberg--and ten principalities--Schwarzburg-Sondershausen, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, Hohenzollern-Hechingen, Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, Liechtenstein, Waldeck, Reuss (Older Line), Reuss (Younger Line), Lippe-Detmold and Schaumburg-Lippe--were included. Four imperial free cities--Frankfurt am Main, Lübeck, Bremen and Hamburg--completed the list. By 1848 one county, Hesse-Homburg, had

joined the Confederation, and four of the Saxon duchies had been absorbed into the new states of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and Saxe-Altenburg. Anhalt-Köthen and Anhalt-Dessau had also been joined to form a single state. Thus, by 1848 there were thirty-six member states.<sup>1</sup>

The major policy-making body of the German Confederation was the Diet, which met in Frankfurt am Main. In this body the Empire and the Kingdoms each had four votes. Hesse-Kassel, Hesse-Darmstadt, Holstein and Luxembourg had three. Brunswick, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Nassau each cast two votes, while the other German states had but one vote each. The King of England was a member of the Diet for Hanover, the King of the Netherlands for Luxembourg and the King of Denmark for Holstein. Austria presided over meetings of this body, which had the right to pass laws concerning the Confederation but only with a two-thirds majority. Any change in the Federal Act required unanimous consent of the member states. However, the Confederation had little real power, since the sovereign rights of the German states were so strong as to prevent any effective central government. The member states had almost complete control of their own affairs and could form any alliances they wished which did not endanger the security of the other member states.<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, the Federal Diet failed to meet on a regular basis. Instead, the Select Council, under the presidency of the delegate from Austria, carried on the day-to-day business of the Confederation. All action required the consent of a simple majority of the membership.

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<sup>1</sup>"Deutsche Bundesakte," in Ernst Rudolf Huber, ed., Dokumente zur Deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte (Stuttgart, 1961), I, pp. 75-81; Max Wilberg, Regenten-Tabellen (Graz, 1963), pp. 174-177, 200-202.

<sup>2</sup>Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 75-81.

Each of the larger states had one vote, but the smaller states were divided up into curias, each of which possessed one vote. In 1821, the powers of the Council were completed by the formation of a Federal Military Commission.<sup>3</sup>

This loose Confederation was a far cry from the united nation hoped for by so many during the War of Liberation. Actually, it was but a league of states. Although the number of German states had been decreased from more than 300 to but thirty-nine, real German unity had not been achieved, and this posed a major problem throughout the era of Radowitz's activity. The unfilled desires of many Germans was a major source of the agitation which dominated this period of German history.

Through the 1830s and 1840s, the rivalry among these thirty-nine states prevented any meaningful cooperation. Even when the French nationalists threatened an invasion in 1840 the jealous states could agree on a common defense policy only with great difficulty. In 1848, the winds of revolution swept across this Confederation and led many Germans to demand the erection of a united nation-state to replace it. The Revolution forced the German governments to allow the meeting of a German National Assembly in Frankfurt. This body attempted to create a united German Empire based firmly on a constitution. However, Frederick William IV, King of Prussia, did not want to become German Emperor under its terms and undertook to unite Germany on the basis of a revision of the Frankfurt Constitution. Austria refused to permit this, and finally, with Russian support, forced the Hohenzollern Monarch to abandon his version of unification.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid.; Hajo Holborn, A History of Modern Germany, 1648-1840 (New York, 1968), p. 446.

Throughout these important years, Joseph Maria von Radowitz stood at the very center of German affairs. As the Prussian delegate to the Military Commission of the German Confederation, he observed firsthand the ineffectiveness, impotence and disunity of the organization. During the war scare of 1840, he realized the need for a common defense policy and fought hard to overcome the petty particularism of the German states. Even before 1848, he made a concerted attempt to persuade Frederick William IV and Prince Clemens von Metternich of Austria to agree on measures to reform the structure of the Confederation. When this first effort toward German unification was overtaken by the outbreak of the Revolution, he continued his work through the Frankfurt National Assembly. After this too ended in failure, Radowitz refused to give up his fight and sought to unify Germany on the basis of a league of states headed by Prussia.

Despite the important role played by Radowitz in German history, he has never been the subject of a biography in the English language. Even the two-volume study of Radowitz by Paul Hassel and Friedrich Meinecke neglected many valuable sources and is now quite out of date.<sup>4</sup> Thus there remains a need for a reexamination of all the material available on the activities of Radowitz and a biography in English.

Unfortunately, historians have neglected the whole era of Radowitz's life. From the average survey of nineteenth-century German history, the student is led to believe that from 1819 to 1848 very little happened. Such is not the case. One is also led to the conclusion that

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<sup>4</sup>Paul Hassel, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, 1797-1848 (Berlin, 1905); Friedrich Meinecke, Radowitz und die deutsche Revolution (Berlin, 1913).

after the refusal of the Imperial Crown by Frederick William IV in 1849, the forces of darkest reaction took over the direction of German affairs, and the Revolution sputtered to a halt. This is manifestly untrue. Influenced by Radowitz, the Prussian King continued to fight for German unification under a revised form of the Frankfurt Constitution. Had this effort been successful, the major goals of the Frankfurt National Assembly would have become realities and unification might well have arrived a generation earlier and under quite different conditions than those in 1871. But a combination of reactionary pressure and Austrian and Prussian protests in the fall of 1850 forced him to abandon this effort. On November 29, 1850, the two German powers signed the Treaty of Olmütz, which marked the end of the Prussian efforts to unite Germany. Historians have labeled this agreement a "Punctuation," or a "Humiliation."<sup>5</sup> Here again a study of the facts does not support this interpretation.

Historians have often unjustly pictured Radowitz as a reactionary or an unrealistic romantic.<sup>6</sup> Radowitz was indeed conservative in his politics but at the same time realistic enough to perceive the faults of the old order and to work to correct them. He knew that the demands of the German people for unification and constitutional government had to be met, or the radicals would gain their support. He attempted to find a middle-of-the-road solution to the German problem that would satisfy the more moderate liberals while preserving the position of the monarchs

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<sup>5</sup>Typical statements of the "humiliation" thesis can be found in William Carr, A History of Germany 1815-1945 (New York, 1969), p. 73, and Gordon A. Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army (New York, 1968), p. 132.

<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Veit Valentin, Geschichte der deutschen Revolution von 1848-1849 (Aalen, 1968), I, pp. 320-321.

and the old German states.

This involved Radowitz in the constitutional question, second only to that of unification as a major issue during the Pre-March period. Although Article Thirteen of the Federal Act had implied that every German state would receive a constitution, only a minority of the rulers had honored this commitment. The first state to do so was the Duchy of Nassau in 1814, followed by Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach in 1816. These first two documents formed governments based on the medieval system of hierarchical states and did not really meet the hopes of the German liberals. However, several south German states adopted constitutions which allowed the people greater participation in their government.<sup>7</sup>

The first southern state to adopt a constitution was Bavaria. In 1818, Crown Prince Louis and a group of noblemen combined to force the end of the ministry of Count Maximilian Montgelas and provide the kingdom with a constitution. That same year, Karl Nebenius persuaded Grand Duke Louis II of Baden to grant his people a constitution as well. Württemberg followed in 1819. Subsequently, new constitutions were promulgated for Hesse-Kassel, Hesse-Darmstadt and Nassau. The south German constitutions were based on the French Charter of 1814. In all of them except that of Württemberg, the ruler gave the constitution to the people without consulting their representatives. Sovereignty still remained in the hands of the ruler, and any rights granted to the legislature were but gifts from the monarch. The state diets typically consisted of two houses: an upper house appointed by the ruler and a lower

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<sup>7</sup>Huber, Dokumente, I, p. 78; Carr, Germany, p. 15; Koppel S. Pinson, Modern Germany, Its History and Civilization (2nd Ed., New York, 1968), p. 446.

house elected by corporate bodies. The only exception to this was the Grand Duchy of Baden, in which the lower house was selected by electoral districts, thus making it the first modern representative body in Germany.<sup>8</sup>

The continued debate on constitutionalism and unification caused the development of political factions which would later evolve into political parties. During the 1840s, five such groups evolved: the Conservatives, the Roman Catholics, the Liberals, the Radicals and the Socialists. Conservatism was most highly developed in Prussia, where the movement can be further subdivided into four groups: Ultraconservatives, Social Conservatives, National Conservatives and State Conservatives. The major tenet of the Ultraconservatives was the principle of legitimacy. They believed in preserving the forms of the past and in certain unbreakable laws. Led by Friedrich Julius Stahl, the Ultraconservatives believed that the foundation of the state must be an "alliance between throne and altar." They tended towards a rather "High Church" form of Lutheranism and had great regard for the Roman Catholic Church. They also believed that the government of the state must include the historic mediæval estates rather than elected representatives as the legislative body. The power of the king should not rest on a freely chosen parliament, but rather on the grace of God. To the Ultraconservatives, the power of the ruler must not be compromised in any form. Influenced by Karl Ludwig Haller, they believed that the state was much like a family, with the monarch as the father. In Haller's system, the king had no

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<sup>8</sup>Pinson, Germany, p. 63; Holborn, Germany, 1648-1840, p. 469.



superior but God. They also believed that the rights of citizens did not rest on natural law but came from ancient traditions and an unbreakable law sanctioned by history. The Ultraconservatives did not support German unification. They championed instead the rights of the old German states, supported the German Confederation, upheld the dualism between Austria and Prussia, and accorded the Habsburg Empire the first position. In international affairs, they followed the principle of the balance of power and the concert of Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Other schools of Conservatism developed simultaneously. The Social Conservatives believed that the property owner had certain social responsibilities. They viewed property as a trust and held the owner accountable for its usage. The most important plank in their platform was the obligation of the factory owner to guard the welfare of his workers. Radowitz himself belonged to another group, the National Conservatives. They advocated a moderate course of evolution toward a constitutional federal state. Before 1848, they supported the reform of the German Confederation and after the outbreak of the Revolution, participated in the Frankfurt National Assembly. Following the failure of the Assembly, the National Conservatives attempted to unite Germany on the basis of a revision of the Frankfurt Constitution. Another faction, the State Conservatives, had less concern for doctrine. Pragmatic and opportunistic, they sought political power through a monarchial-autocratic state led by the military and bureaucracy. During Radowitz's time, the various groups never formed a united political party, but

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<sup>9</sup>Ernst Rudolf Huber, Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte seit 1789 (Stuttgart, 1957), II, pp. 331-339; Pinson, Germany, p. 58.

organized several groups which often fought among themselves.<sup>10</sup>

The second important political faction to emerge during the Vormärz was primarily composed of the followers of the Roman Catholic religion. This movement developed originally in opposition to the policy of secularization begun by the French Revolution of 1789. The theories of Romanticism and French Roman Catholicism greatly influenced the growth of this group, which fought for the freedom of the Roman Catholic Church to practice its religion and educate its youth. They stood for independence of the Church from state control. A very important part of their program concerned marriage. Following the teachings of their religion, they opposed any action by the state to compromise the control of the Church over matrimony, especially the legalization of divorce.<sup>11</sup>

Although the members of the Catholic faction based their ideas on the same foundation, they differed on certain specific issues. One group favored a conservative approach to politics and advocated a government based on the collaboration of the monarch and the medieval estates. Other Catholic conservatives advocated German unification through a restoration of the old Holy Roman Empire. One of the most persistent problems faced by those who foresaw and favored a united Germany was the question concerning the future boundaries. On this issue, most of the Catholic group championed the inclusion of Austria in the future German nation, although Radowitz himself belonged to that group which would exclude the polyglot Empire from a united Germany.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, pp. 337-363.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 347-357.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 357-363.

As a conservative Catholic position emerged in the Vormärz, a parallel development in the direction of liberalism occurred. Centered in the Rhineland, this movement championed the creation of a constitutional state with representative institutions and guarantees of civil liberties. They favored the unification of Germany and the retention of the monarchy. Farther to the left, a social Catholic movement also began to develop in the middle 1830s. They favored the creation of a socialist state with democratic institutions and demanded social and political equality for all men.<sup>13</sup>

The most active political element in Germany during the Vormärz was that of the liberals. German liberalism was rooted in the rationalism of the eighteenth century and the concepts embodied in the French Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789. Although German liberals condemned the excesses of the French Revolution, they looked to it for inspiration. To the liberals, the foundation of the state was the consent of the governed. They saw the state as a community rather than a creation of the monarch. They believed that the state was an organism unto itself with certain rights and obligations. Liberals stated that it was not the prince but the state itself, as a creation of the governed, which carried the rights of sovereignty. The state had the obligation to protect the liberties of the individual, who had both rights and obligations. According to liberal theory, a person had three basic obligations: to receive an education, to pay taxes and to serve in the military. A person had the right to participate in government at all

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 363-371.

levels.<sup>14</sup>

The liberals, as strong supporters of German unification, believed that the citizen owed loyalty to the German nation rather than to the various dynasties. The liberals favored the creation of a German federal state that would achieve unity without completely dissolving the old states. They prescribed a constitutional monarchy with a democratic legislature. In the beginning, most liberals favored a "greater Germany," which would include the Austrian lands, but as time passed, more and more came to advocate the exclusion of the Habsburg Empire. They also believed that Germany had not developed liberal institutions because its weakness and division had allowed foreign powers to influence German politics.<sup>15</sup>

Like the other political groups in Germany, the German liberals did not agree on the application of their theories. The more conservative liberals formed the Constitutional Liberal or Right Center faction. They favored an evolutionary solution to the German problems rather than a revolutionary one. They supported a constitutional monarchy with the power to govern placed in the hands of a ministry appointed by the ruler and answerable to, but not dependent upon, a parliament. They were very heavily influenced by Montesquieu's concept of a separation of governmental powers into independent legislative, executive and judicial branches.<sup>16</sup>

The Constitutional Liberals consisted of four factions. The "Professor's group," which centered in academic circles, was one of the most

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 371-380.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 371-390.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 390-392.

important of these. In the Prussian Rhineland, a group of industrialists and merchants joined the Constitutional Liberals. They began their activity in the provincial diet, rose to national prominence in the Prussian United Diet of 1847 and participated in the Frankfurt National Assembly in 1848. Another body of Constitutional Liberals centered in Hesse-Darmstadt, Baden and Württemberg, the so-called "Southwestern Group." The final faction of the Right Center was the North German Liberals or Liberal Hegelians. They were chiefly philosophers and theologians who applied the philosophy of Georg Friedrich Hegel to liberalism. They published a journal, the Hallischen Jahrbücher, to express their ideas. After the Revolution of 1848, they split into left and right wings. Other members of this faction went over to socialism.<sup>17</sup>

Another element of liberalism centered in Baden, the Palatinate, the Rhine-Main Region, in Nassau and in Hesse-Kassel. These were the members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party, or Left Center. They favored a parliament, but believed that a king should rule but never govern. The theories of Montesquieu and the French Liberals very heavily influenced the thinking of this group. At the Frankfurt National Assembly, they supported a united Germany with an elective Emperor. However, some Parliamentary Liberals supported the King of Prussia as hereditary German Emperor, while others sided with the Radicals. Their chief doctrine was the superiority of the legislative branch of the government.<sup>18</sup>

The fourth political group in Germany was the Democratic Liberals or Radicals. The basis for German Radicalism was the doctrine of

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pp. 392-397.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 398-401.

absolute sovereignty of the people. To the Radicals, all executive, legislative and judicial authority emanated solely from the consent of the population. They opposed any compromise with monarchy, advocating instead the creation of a republic. They were dedicated believers in German unification, opposing any efforts to compromise through the creation of a federal state. They favored the creation of a unicameral parliament which represented the people alone. Radicals opposed the concept of an upper house as incompatible with the principle of popular sovereignty. They also believed that all citizens should have equal political and social standing. Like the other political groups, the Radicals divided into several factions. The first was the Radical Poets, who came to prominence in the 1840s. The other group of Radicals formed the Radical Democratic Party which split into two factions, the Moderate Left and the Radical Left.<sup>19</sup>

Although German Socialism became an important movement after mid-century, this group played but an insignificant role in Germany during Radowitz's lifetime. Socialism, with its concern for the welfare of the workingman, developed a so-called utopian orientation during the 1830s and 1840s. By 1848, a so-called "Scientific Socialist" school had developed under the influence of Karl Marx, but this movement was not to play an important role in politics during the Revolution of 1848.<sup>20</sup>

The political factions of the Vormärz would form organizations at the Frankfurt National Assembly and greatly affect Radowitz's work. They developed in the frustration felt by many Germans over the failure

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., pp. 402-413.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 414-434.

of the Confederation to provide real unity and the desire of many to achieve constitutional forms of government. As one political faction would expound its theories, others would challenge them and spawn new factions. This conflict forms one of the major themes of German history during the first half of the nineteenth century. Therefore, with an understanding of the political background of this period of German development, it is possible to turn to the subject of this work, the career of Joseph Maria von Radowitz.

## CHAPTER II

### THE FORMATIVE YEARS, 1797-1836

Although Joseph Maria von Radowitz stood at the very center of German politics for much of his life, comparatively little is known about the man and his origins. Much that was written about him during his lifetime is pure fiction. For example, in 1850, readers of the Illustrated London News were told that this champion of German unification had attended a Jesuit seminary for several years and that he might have taken minor orders in the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>1</sup> Even today historians sometimes report erroneous information about him. A recent work falsely informs its readers that he was a Silesian nobleman, while another current study confuses him with Field Marshal Joseph Radetzky, the victor of the Battle Custoza.<sup>2</sup> The distinguished historian Veit Valentin, wrote that no one knew for sure who he really was or from where he had come.<sup>3</sup> Yet his origins are not difficult to discover, and a knowledge of his background and early life is essential to an understanding of his role in German history.

To be sure, little is known about Radowitz's forebears. The family

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<sup>1</sup>"Lieutenant-General Joseph von Radowitz," The Illustrated London News, November 16, 1850, p. 377.

<sup>2</sup>Edna Sagarra, Tradition and Revolution: German Literature and Society 1830-1890 (New York, 1971), p. 189; Peter N. Stearns, 1848: The Revolutionary Tide in Europe (New York, 1974), p. 162.

<sup>3</sup>Valentin, Deutsche Revolution, I, p. 320.



was of Hungarian ancestry; a Libaf de Radovvicz participated in the Congress of Brunn in 1460. The earliest known direct ancestor of our subject was Demetrius von Radowitz, his grandfather. Even the Radowitz family, which has for several generations provided Germany with political, diplomatic and military leaders even to the present day, cannot trace its origins beyond this man. In the castle at Kleiningersheim, near Stuttgart, once the possession of Radowitz's great-great grandson, the traditional family tree is displayed as is the custom in most noble German families. But this elaborate piece of work stops at dead end with Demetrius von Radowitz.

The homeland of Demetrius was not the Germany which his grandson fought so hard to unify but the plains of Hungary. This patriarch was of minor nobility, and as an officer of the Habsburg army fought against Prussia during the Seven Years' War. After his capture at the Battle of Lowosits in 1757, the elder Radowitz decided to remain in Germany and settle in Saxony, where he became a wine merchant. The father of the subject of this study, Joseph Maria von Radowitz, was born in Hungary and came with his father to Germany. (It is the custom even today for the Radowitz family to name the first-born male Joseph Maria.) After completing his law studies at the University of Göttingen, Radowitz was granted a license to practice law in Blankenburg by the Duke of Brunswick. He married Frederike Theresia von Könitz, the daughter of the Baron von Könitz, and on February 6, 1797, Joseph Maria Ernst Christian Wilhelm von Radowitz, their only son, was born in that town.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Rochus von Liliencron, et al., eds., Allgemeine deutsche Biographie (Leipzig, 1875-1912), XXVII, p. 141; Friedrich von Holstein, The Holstein Papers, ed. by Norman Rich and M. H. Fisher (Cambridge, 1955), I, p. 98;

As a boy, Joseph attended school at Albenburg. During the early years of his life, one of the most important influences on Radowitz was his loneliness. He was without brothers or sisters and had no relatives near his home. As an escape from his boredom, he began to read at an early age. Reading, contemplation and learning became the major pastime for the boy, and he subordinated all the usual childish activities to this quest for knowledge. However, some of his teachers misinterpreted this intense interest in study and disinterest in the usual play activities and considered him stupid and maladjusted. Thus from his youth, Radowitz began to display the traits that would mark him throughout his adulthood. He was never able to master the social graces so important for a young nobleman. Instead he was content to read and study and develop his mind.<sup>5</sup>

The first years of Radowitz's life coincided with the rise and fall of Napoleon Bonaparte. The French had been fighting in the Germanies off and on since 1792. Austria, as the leader of the German states, had served as the primary barrier to French expansion, but was defeated by the French leader and forced to sign the Treaty of Luneville on February 9, 1801. This document gave Napoleon a free hand to deal with the small German states as he wished, and he undertook a major reorganization of the Holy Roman Empire. In 1803, through the Reichsdeputations-hauptschluss, most of the smaller German states were merged with larger territories. In 1805, Great Britain, Austria, Russia and Sweden formed the Third Coalition to drive the French from Germany and end the power of

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Joseph Maria von Radowitz, Zur Geschichte meines Lebens, in Paul Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 4-6.

<sup>5</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 4.

Napoleon over Europe. After defeating this alliance at the Battle of Austerlitz on December 2, 1805, Napoleon was free to complete the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. The next year he organized the Confederation of the Rhine, which placed a large part of Germany under French hegemony. Radowitz's home in Brunswick was united with Hanover, while Hesse-Kassel and the Prussian lands west of the Elbe were absorbed by the French Emperor to form the Kingdom of Westphalia, which he gave to his brother Jerome. The subjugation of Germany was completed with the defeat of Prussia at the Battle of Jena in 1806 and the humiliating Peace of Tilsit the next year.

Since Radowitz was growing up during a time of great military activity, his father desired a military career for his son. Through the influence of a relative of his mother, the Hessian Adjutant General von Bastineller, the fourteen year-old Joseph entered the service of the newly formed Kingdom of Westphalia in 1808, and began his training at the military school at Mainz. From Mainz, he went to a center for the newly developed art of artillery, the Polytechnic at Paris. Although too young to be admitted as a full student, he was allowed to attend classes. His papers and textbooks from this period show the intensity of his study. He filled many pages with complex mathematical formulas, often writing in the margins.<sup>6</sup> At this point he developed the mathematical approach to problems which would be so important in his later activities. He also cultivated an expertise in the use of artillery, thereby laying the foundation for his military career.

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-5; The Radowitz Family Collection owned by Baroness Freia von Radowitz contains several of his notebooks from his days in France.

On January 1, 1812, the young cadet became a second lieutenant and continued his military training at the Artillery and Engineering School at Kassel, the capital of the Napoleonic Kingdom of Westphalia. On December 23 of that year, the army commissioned him lieutenant in the Second Infantry Regiment of Hesse-Kassel. The young officer was assigned to the Headquarters of the Second Army Corps under Marshal MacDonald.<sup>7</sup> It is remarkable that as a mere youth of fifteen Radowitz should have been promoted so fast. It is also somewhat ironic that Radowitz began his career in the service of an army fighting for the French against Prussia, the state which he would serve with such dedication later in his life.

The War of Liberation began in 1813 after the disastrous attempt by Napoleon to defeat the Russians the previous year. As the French troops retreated from Moscow after the unsuccessful invasion of the Slavic empire, many Germans rose up to overthrow their French overlords. Led by Prussia, the German states deserted Napoleon one by one and aided in the fight. After reorganizing his forces, the French ruler reinvaded Germany and took his stand at Leipzig. Here, between October 16 and 19, 1813, the French and their remaining allies were defeated and once again Germany was free of foreign domination.

As an officer in the army of one of the states supporting Napoleon, Radowitz fought against Prussia and its allies. Barely old enough to shave, the new officer first saw combat at the Battle of Gross-Görschen and received a minor wound in the chest. However, when the young Radowitz returned to his duties, he was named acting commander of a unit of

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<sup>7</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 5.

the Westphalian infantry and led his men into battle at Löwenberg on August 21 and Katzbach on August 26, 1813. Finally, at an age when most youths today are still in school, the adolescent commander and his men fought at the Battle of Leipzig, which saw the defeat of Napoleon and the beginning of his ultimate downfall. After three days of hard fighting, Radowitz was wounded in his thigh by a fragment from a grenade. He was taken to Leipzig and became a prisoner of the anti-Napoleonic coalition. His worried father rushed to the side of his fallen son. When young Radowitz was well enough to travel, he returned to Kassel, where the pro-French party had been disposed and Elector William I had returned to the throne.<sup>8</sup>

After Leipzig, like so many of his contemporaries, Radowitz turned against Napoleon. He joined the newly organized Hessian Army as a first lieutenant under Colonel Koehler, commander of the artillery. In February, 1814, he joined the Hessian contingent in the invasion of France and participated in the blockade of Metz, Thionville, and Luxembourg. In July, he returned to his homeland. The rest between campaigns was short, however, for Napoleon attempted to come to power again in 1815, and Radowitz joined his fellow Hessian soldiers in the final campaign which led to Waterloo. Assigned to guard the fortresses on the Dutch border, he saw little action and was not present at the climatic battle. After Napoleon's final defeat, Radowitz and his comrades returned to Germany.<sup>9</sup>

With peace restored, Radowitz found a position in the service of the Elector of Hesse-Kassel, who had decided to establish a military

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 7.

academy. According to the plan, a boy would enter at thirteen and become an officer at seventeen or eighteen. After William I named Colonel von Cochenhausen commander of the school and Chief of the General Staff in 1814, the Colonel asked Radowitz to assume a post as chief instructor of mathematics and military science. At the age of seventeen, Radowitz began to teach in the same building in which he had been a student only three years earlier.<sup>10</sup> It must have seemed strange to the students to have an instructor who was so young. Radowitz's rapid advance in the ranks of the military is an early indication of his ability and a foreshadowing of the important role he would play in German history.

From 1815 to 1821, Radowitz taught at the Hessian Military Academy and was very pleased with his work and the success he had with his students. After his stormy youth during the Napoleonic wars, he welcomed these quiet years as a chance to take time and develop his ideas. Since his schooling had been mainly in military and mathematical fields, Radowitz felt that he had neglected the fine arts; he now spent much of his time studying this side of life. He read the works of Shakespeare, Dante, Schiller and other major authors and began to appreciate the music of Bach and Mozart. Living in the age of the Romantic movement, he, like so many men of his time, saw great beauty in the gothic architecture of his native land as well as the German painters of the sixteenth century. Most important, the young instructor began to ponder religious matters and turned to the Roman Catholic faith of his father.<sup>11</sup>

His new-found religious belief soon became the most important thing

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 8-10.

in his life. Developing an interest in religious mysticism, Radowitz believed that the only valid source of truth was through reaching an understanding of the divinity. He also wrote a series of more than one hundred articles on religion and philosophy. Significantly enough, most of these were presented in the romantic form of "fragments." In these, Radowitz answered many of the Protestant criticisms and frequently cited the Bible and historical evidence to justify his defense of the historic Catholic position. For example, he argued that Protestants erred when they based their faith completely on the Scriptures, for it was the Church that had determined which books should be included in the canon. He defended the Papacy as a symbol of the unity of the Church and an institution sanctioned by Christ and history. In the 1830s he challenged rationalism and the attempts of such "higher critics" as David Friedrich Strauss to rid Christianity of mythology. His religious writings reveal that Radowitz based much of his belief on historical study.<sup>12</sup>

His most important religious work was his The Iconography of the Saints, first published in 1834. Here he applied a vast amount of historical research in an effort to describe hundreds of saints. He listed each saint, explained their symbols and indicated the activities they patronized. In one section of the book, Radowitz listed various professions, sicknesses, cities and countries and the patron saint of each. He also included a detailed essay on church symbolism. The many

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<sup>12</sup>See for example, Radowitz's monographs on "Wahrheit," "Petrus," "Der Glaubensgrund des Protestantismus," and "Formen des Unglaubens," in Gesammelte Schriften (Berlin, 1853), V, pp. 68-70, 130-139, 88-89.

facts in his work show the thoroughness of Radowitz's scholarship.<sup>13</sup>

As the power of the Church came under attack during the 1830s and 1840s, and especially following the Cologne episcopal dispute, Radowitz's religion began to transcend purely spiritual concerns to influence his political attitudes as well. In his writings, Radowitz consistently argued that the Church should concern itself solely with religious matters and leave political affairs to the jurisdiction of the state. In "The Church and Political Freedom," he stated that the Roman Catholic Church in Germany had made a major mistake by linking its interests with the destinies of Bavaria and Austria. The young officer declared it a cardinal error to tie the welfare of the Church to a particular political system.<sup>14</sup> This position was important, since one of the things that helped divide Germany into factions was the matter of religion. Radowitz's mystical Catholicism would later strengthen his ties with Frederick William IV of Prussia, who, although a Protestant, was also something of a religious mystic. Radowitz would also become the leader of the Catholic faction at the Frankfurt National Assembly in 1848.

Radowitz shared his quest for the meaning of life with a circle of friends, some of whom would later join in his activities during the Revolution of 1848. He found a second home in the house of the von Schwertzell family at Willingshausen. He also became friends with the

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<sup>13</sup>Radowitz, Ikonographie der Heiligen, Ein Betrag zur Kunstgeschichte, in Gesammelte Schriften, I.

<sup>14</sup>Radowitz, "Die Provisoren und die Allianzen," "Kirchliche und politische Freiheit," and "Der Katholik zwischen seiner Kirche und den Staate," Gesammelte Schriften, IV, p. 43, V, pp. 192-195, 248-253. See below for a discussion of the Cologne episcopal dispute.



painter, Gerhard von Reutern, and Alexis Boyneburg. A friend who would be deeply involved in his later life was the adjutant to Prince William of Prussia, Baron Ernst Wilhelm von Canitz and Dallwitz. Canitz was a frequent guest at Willingshausen, and would later serve as the Foreign Minister of Prussia. Radowitz spent much of the time discussing religion with his friends, and the young soldier, though remaining loyal to his Church, developed an ecumenical tolerance for Protestants which would later serve to bind him to the King of Prussia. At the same time, he also had the opportunity to grow closer to his immediate family, which had moved to Kassel. This renewed relationship between the young teacher and his father was cut short, however, by the death of the elder Radowitz late in 1819.<sup>15</sup>

Radowitz might have spent a long and happy career in relative obscurity as chief instructor of mathematics and military science in the Electoral Military Academy had not fate intervened to change the whole course of his life. In 1821, Elector William I of Hesse-Kassel died, and his unstable son, William II, ascended the throne. This proved to be the turning point in Radowitz's career. The new ruler of the small central German state appointed von Cochenhausen, Radowitz's former commander, head of the war department, and he in turn named Radowitz a member of the General Staff with the rank of captain first-class and a salary of 1,000 thalers per year. His duties in the Artillery Department included assisting the military studies commission in the development of examinations for the selection of officers.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 10-12.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 13-14.

This position gave Radowitz the opportunity to learn the art of diplomacy, which would be of such great importance to him later. In October 1821, the young officer undertook his first official mission to other German states. First, he traveled to Dresden, capital of the Kingdom of Saxony, to observe the Saxon method of building pontoon bridges, and then to Prussia, where he studied surveying methods. On this journey, Radowitz made his first acquaintance with his future home and met the Chief of the Prussian General Staff, Baron Friedrich Ferdinand von Müsling, and the Minister of War of the north German kingdom, Karl Georg von Hake.<sup>17</sup>

Radowitz would have continued to advance in the service of Electoral Hesse and probably would have spent the rest of his life there had the consequences of a court scandal not forced him to leave his comfortable position in Kassel and seek a living elsewhere. None of the German states had a more despised prince than Hesse-Kassel's William II. In his private life, the new Elector continued the habits of the princes of the Old Regime and allowed his mistress to occupy a very important place in his court. This notorious lady was Emilie Ortlöpp, from Berlin, who had been granted the title of Countess Reichenbach and who was able to exert almost complete control over the Elector. When William argued with her, Reichenbach threw expensive vases and cups at him, until the ruler, realizing the cost of her temper tantrums, gave in and granted her what she wanted. So strong was his mistress' hold over the ruler that she persuaded him to ennoble her brother and this disreputable figure proceeded to strengthen his position at court. Once, when he was challenged

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

to a duel by an officer because of a questionable love affair, the Elector protected the brother of his favorite by declaring dueling a capital offense and ordering that anyone challenging another to such an act would be liable to punishment.<sup>18</sup>

Since William's consort, the Electress Augusta, was the sister of King Frederick William III of Prussia, her objections to the presence of Reichenbach and her brother in the court led to tensions between the two German states. The Prussian King protested the mistreatment of his sister, and several scandalous incidents followed. At one point, the Elector abducted his sister, the Duchess of Bernburg, from Bonn to Hessian Hanau, claiming that she was insane. Since Bonn was part of the Prussian Rhine Province, the Hohenzollern ruler protested this invasion of his sovereign territory by recalling the Prussian envoy to Kassel, and a major break appeared imminent. Crisis was averted after the Elector was forced to apologize, but it was all most embarrassing.<sup>19</sup>

Radowitz, as a leading member of the military, was in a precarious position. He was not the kind of man to conceal his opinions concerning what he considered to be the immorality of the Elector and his mistreatment of the Electress and her son, the heir to the throne. The prince and his mother corresponded with Radowitz, and he informed them of his support. William II was furious over his son's opposition and ordered General Adam Ludwig von Ochs, a noted military historian, to discover his supporters. The General found several letters between Radowitz and the

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<sup>18</sup>Heinrich von Treitschke, History of Germany in the Nineteenth Century, trans. by Eden and Cedar Paul (London, 1919), IV, pp. 346-348.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

Electress and her son which contained statements by the captain which were critical of his ruler. This earned him the displeasure of the Elector and his mistress and led to Radowitz's exile from Hesse-Kassel,<sup>20</sup>

William II, alarmed by the criticism of his affairs by his officers, decided to take action to eliminate those deemed disloyal. On June 13, 1823, he suddenly left his palace at Wilhelmshöhe outside Kassel and moved to the city. The angry Elector ordered the alarm bell sounded and the garrison assembled in the Friedrichsplatz. He then announced the demotion of Radowitz and three other officers and their transfer to small garrison towns. Radowitz was informed that he had been reassigned to the university city of Marburg and ordered not to leave his post.<sup>21</sup>

But the disgraced officer refused to accept this humiliating penalty and chose flight instead. He hastily fetched his sickly mother and within an hour was on his way out of the city. The party fled to Willinghausen, where Radowitz had friends, and waited for further developments. They did not have long to wait. Within the month, William II issued a royal decree dismissing him from the service and granting him a pension only on the condition that he leave the Electorate. Radowitz realized that his position was beyond saving and secretly returned to Kassel in disguise to sell his house and retrieve his belongings. While in the capital, Radowitz met a friend from his youth, Alexis Boyneburg, who invited him to stay on his estate, Städtfeld, near Eisenach. Three days later, the exile and his mother began their journey to a new life. As their carriage crossed the border between Hesse and Thuringia, the

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<sup>20</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 16-17.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

fleeing Radowitz realized that a major portion of his life lay behind him and that he was on the way to many new experiences.<sup>22</sup>

At Städtfeld, Radowitz's friends attempted to make him and his mother feel at home, and he remained five months in the small town while considering his future. In his search for a new position, Radowitz turned towards Prussia. The earlier impressions from his journey there lay heavy on his mind as he pondered his next step. He decided that of all the thirty-nine states of Germany, Prussia had the most promise for the future. But there was also the possibility of entering the service of the greatest German state of the age, Austria. Since he was a Roman Catholic and his family had originally come from the Habsburg lands, the exiled captain gave serious thought to moving to the south.<sup>23</sup>

However, through what Radowitz considered to be an act of God, fate intervened and decreed that he should live in Prussia. The Electress of Hesse recommended him to her brother, Frederick William III, in an effort to obtain for him a position in the Prussian military. Encouraged by this support, Radowitz promptly applied for a post. In the meantime, William II revoked Radowitz's pension because he had received two threatening letters and suspected his former servant of involvement in a plot to kill him and his mistress. With his only means of livelihood lost, Radowitz had to find a way to earn a living. This problem was resolved when on October 4, 1823, he received a royal cabinet order from Frederick William III naming him a captain and placing him at the service of Friedrich Ferdinand von Müsling, the Chief of the Prussian General

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 18.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 19.

Staff.<sup>24</sup>

In December, 1823, Radowitz took his mother to Berlin. At first the large and bustling city seemed strange and hostile to the still young officer, but his old friend, Ernst Wilhelm von Canitz, and his wife helped the refugee find a new home in the Prussian capital. Von Müsling received his new worker with great enthusiasm and assigned him to the western section of the General Staff. A few days after his arrival, Radowitz learned that one of his new duties was to act as tutor to Prince Albrecht, the youngest son of the King. As he taught his young charge, Radowitz spent part of 1824 at the summer palace of the Hohenzollerns, Sanssouci, in Potsdam. It was here that he met the man who would most influence his career, Crown Prince Frederick William. Radowitz grew to be a devoted servant and friend of the future king and in doing so, laid the foundation for his work in the 1840s.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to gaining friends in the royal family, Radowitz met several important people with whom his future political activities would be deeply involved. At the home of Canitz, he associated with Leopold von Gerlach, a major in the General Staff of the Third Army and his brother, Ludwig, a justice of the provincial court at Naumburg. He also became acquainted with Count August Ernst von Voss, his future father-in-law. With his new friends and the Crown Prince, Radowitz spent many evenings discussing politics and sharing with them his religious views. A common mystical belief in the importance of Christ in the world

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., p. 21; Caroline von Rochow, Vom Leben am Preussische Hofe, 1815-1852, ed. by Luise v. d. Marwitz (Berlin, 1908), p. 196.

provided a bond between Radowitz and his Protestant friends.<sup>26</sup>

Radowitz continued advancing in the service of the north German kingdom. After advising General Rühl von Lilienstern, who was involved in reforming the Prussian officers' training program, Radowitz so pleased his superiors with his work that in 1826 they made him a member of the Board of Prussian Military Schools. Two years later, he became a member of the High Commission on Military Studies. In this new capacity, Radowitz was chiefly responsible for the direction of the School of War. From 1826 to 1836, every aspect of this institution came under his influence, though his chief concern was training in artillery and engineering. He also served on the Artillery Examinations Commission. During these years, Radowitz was very pleased with his work and accomplishments because he saw many of his proposals become reality.<sup>27</sup>

But the tangled affairs of Hesse-Kassel again entered into his happy life to cause him many problems, as they would during his entire career. After an argument with his father, the Hessian Crown Prince had fled to Berlin, where he took a room in a hotel. In September, 1826, he summoned Radowitz into his presence to inform him of the continued conflicts within the royal family and of his flight to Berlin and that of his mother to the court of her sister, Queen Frederica Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. The dispute this time had arisen over the desire of the prince and his mother to move from Kassel and set up an independent court either at Hanau or Fulda. When the Elector refused to allow this,

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<sup>26</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 24; Rochow, Preussische Hofe, p. 188.

<sup>27</sup>Radowitz; Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 26.

the mother and her son had fled.<sup>28</sup>

Radowitz helped the Crown Prince and his mother for the next two years and saw the prince every day to discuss possible solutions to their problems. They became good friends; the prince promised his confidant that when he came to power, he would name Radowitz his chief minister. When he heard of the activities of his son, Elector William II became furious and sent a representative to Berlin to bring back the wayward heir, only to be told by King Frederick William III that the prince was under his personal protection. To emphasize his solicitude for his nephew, the Prussian King moved the prince into his palace. Because the Prussian Crown Prince took great interests in the affair, Radowitz's efforts on behalf of his cousin and aunt led to stronger ties between the officer and his future sovereign.<sup>29</sup>

Radowitz's association with the Crown Prince of Hesse-Kassel also led to his first trip to England. In the summer of 1827, Radowitz accompanied the prince on a journey to visit his mother, who was living with the Dutch royal family at Lacken, near Brussels. After several weeks in Lacken, the group, at Radowitz's urging, decided to go to London, where they arrived on August 1. After a short stay in the British capital, the party returned to Berlin. The journey to and from England introduced Radowitz to several German courts and increased his knowledge of other parts of the Confederation.<sup>30</sup>

After his return to Berlin, Radowitz learned that the Hessian prince

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid., pp. 27-28.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 28-30.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.



did not get along well with his Hohenzollern relatives. Though on good terms with the Crown Prince, he constantly argued with the other members of the Prussian court. Radowitz soon realized that he could not remain loyal to both his superiors in Berlin and the Hessian Crown Prince. When the Prince insisted upon wearing a Prussian uniform without accepting the obligations that accompanied it, the break between the two became only a matter of time. Against Radowitz's advice, the Prince left Berlin to join his mother in Bonn, where she had moved. In January, 1829, General Müsling informed Radowitz that from then on he should confine himself to transmitting the opinions of the Prussian King to the Prince and should refrain from any other involvement in the affair. Naturally, upon being handed this ultimatum to choose between obeying the order or continuing his intimacy with the son of his former sovereign, Radowitz decided to remain a servant of the north German kingdom. Moreover, the Prince showed himself to be following in the footsteps of his father by becoming involved in an illicit affair with the wife of a Prussian lieutenant, and the break between the two became final. In September, 1829, Radowitz informed his friend that if he persisted in such immorality he could expect no further help from him or from Prussia. This earned Radowitz the undying hatred of the Prince and his advisor, Hans Daniel Hassenpflug, a hatred that would be a major factor in the final defeat of Radowitz's plans for German unification in 1850.<sup>31</sup>

As an officer in the Prussian military, Radowitz was expected to fulfill certain social obligations. This aspect of his duties was not accomplished quite as successfully as his purely military duties. He was

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-33.

an impressive man--tall and well built, with fiery deep-set eyes, a high brow and a mustache that gave him a decidedly non-Prussian look. But he was also something of an introvert. At social functions, he had the habit of sitting alone reading a book, occasionally glancing up and interjecting an opinion into the discussion carried on about him. He was very abstemious in his eating habits, consumed no alcoholic beverages, and drank only water. In other words, Radowitz's personal habits did not conform to the social traditions of the Junker ruling class.<sup>32</sup>

Despite his somewhat aloof personality, Radowitz was sufficiently sociable to meet and marry the girl who would be his lifelong companion through his greatest and worst days. This was Countess Maria von Voss, a member of one of the oldest and most respected aristocratic families of northern Germany. He met the young lady in May, 1826, during a visit to the home of Gustav von Rochow, a member of the Directory of State Schools, and she made an immediate impression on him. He saw her several times during the coming years, and each occasion strengthened his feelings for her. Soon, Radowitz realized that the emotion drawing him to the Countess was true love. When Maria's father, Count August Ernst von Voss, was appointed Prussian Minister to Naples, Radowitz was separated from the object of his love, and this merely strengthened his affection. When the Voss family visited Berlin early in 1828, Radowitz grasped the opportunity to propose.<sup>33</sup>

The circumstances of this proposal were characteristic of the man. Radowitz arranged to encounter Maria at a ball in the palace of Duke

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<sup>32</sup>Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, p. 314.

<sup>33</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 34-35.

Carl of Mecklenburg-Strelitz at Montbijou. Shaking with the fear of an anticipated refusal, Radowitz shyly approached the girl. In a short conversation during a lull in the dancing, Radowitz asked the object of his love if he might write her mother to ask for her hand, since her father was in Naples. After a short pause, Maria accepted his proposal and the dancing began again. Returning home in great excitement that night, Radowitz penned a letter to Countess Luise Kroline von Voss informing her of his love for her daughter and pleading for her permission to marry. The next day, the Countess sent a message that he should come to the Voss home to receive her answer. Breathless with anticipation, Radowitz hurried to the lodging of the Countess. In an emotional scene, Maria's mother agreed to the proposal and called her daughter to come to the room. When she arrived, the Countess put her in Radowitz's arms and in this symbolic act gave her blessing to the union. Radowitz would find in his mother-in-law a very important ally during the trials  
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ahead.

However, Radowitz's joy over his engagement was dispelled by the death of his mother, which occurred shortly thereafter. Frederika von Radowitz, who had been very close to her son, became ill with pneumonia in October, 1827. Her condition had worsened, and the efforts of her physicians failed to bring relief. Early on February 28, 1828, the dying mother called for her son, but Radowitz rushed to the sick bed only to find his mother already dead. The sorrow of the passing of his beloved mother filled Radowitz's heart with anguish. She was sixty-two years old and during her son's exile had served him as a strong

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

supporter. Thus, with both his mother and father gone, Radowitz was left at thirty-one without any family except for that of future bride.<sup>35</sup>

In a small wedding in St. Hedwig's Roman Catholic Church in Berlin, Radowitz married Maria von Voss on May 23, 1828. In accordance with the wishes of the groom, it was a simple ceremony conducted by a military chaplain. Through his marriage to a member of such a respected family, Radowitz enhanced his position and gained the ancient pedigree that he lacked. The aristocratic Junkers of Prussia were very suspicious of the intentions of any outsider, and Radowitz was now able to travel in the highest circles of the kingdom on a more equal footing than before. The marriage also gave Radowitz financial security to such an extent that when informed by the Brunswick Court of Justice that the estate of his grandfather consisted of 13,000 thalers, he made no effort to gain his inheritance.<sup>36</sup>

As Radowitz's social position improved, so did his place in the military. Shortly before his marriage, the King had promoted him to the rank of major. His work in education went so well and his favor with the Crown Prince grew so strong that he was promoted to Chief of the General Staff of the Artillery two years later. Naturally, his rapid advance and his attainment of such a high office at only thirty-three caused much criticism. The older Prussians resented the rise of the foreigner and his many suggestions to modernize the Prussian artillery. They considered Radowitz perhaps well versed in theory but inexperienced in its application. Some were envious that Radowitz should have such a

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., p. 37; Holstein, The Holstein Papers, I, p. 98.

great influence on the future king and were quick to find objections to his every proposal.<sup>37</sup>

Radowitz's promotion to the General Staff also gave him increased opportunities for travel. In the summer of 1830, he accompanied the Chief of the Artillery, Prince Augustus Frederick William, on what was to have been a trip to Paris. At Antwerp, however, the party learned of the outbreak of the July Revolution in their intended destination, and the Prince decided to travel to London instead. Fortunately, Radowitz had chosen a military rather than a naval career, since no matter how smooth the sea, the Channel crossing always made him ill. He went below deck immediately upon boarding and stayed there during the passage, sniffing smelling salts to avoid sea-sickness. Arriving in London, the Prince's party stayed at the Hotel Clarendon on New Bond Street.<sup>38</sup>

Since this was his second trip to the British capital, Radowitz was able to study the English with more attention than most tourists, and he found London astir with the bitter conflict concerning the reform of Parliament and the broadening of the franchise to include the middle classes. During his stay, the Prussian officer visited Windsor Castle and spent his evenings in a men's club discussing military affairs and political ideas with English gentlemen. Radowitz began to understand the British constitutional system and learned much from observing the debate on the reform of Parliament. He came to realize that constitutional reforms did not inevitably lead to the excesses of the French

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<sup>37</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 38-39.

<sup>38</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, p. 211.

Revolution; this realization would greatly influence his actions in 1848.<sup>39</sup>

The Prince's party also visited Portsmouth, the home port of the British fleet. Upon their arrival, they were greeted by the ringing of bells and shots fired in salute. They sought out the Victory, Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar, and dined with Admiral Folen. As they enjoyed the Admiral's hospitality, they received word that King Charles X of France had landed in exile at Spithead. Radowitz recalled the irony of the fact that the Admiral had helped place the Bourbon on the throne which he had now lost through revolution.<sup>40</sup>

Prince Augustus and his party left London late in August and arrived in Brussels just in time to witness the outbreak of the revolt that led to the loss of Belgium by the Dutch. Unable to move on because of the revolution, they spent three days in the capital city and watched the Dutch troops in their unsuccessful efforts to defeat the Belgian rebels.<sup>41</sup> His observations of an actual insurrection in progress made a great impression upon Radowitz. He could not help but compare the order he had seen in London with the revolution which swept over Brussels.

The revolutions which drove the Bourbons from France and won the independence of Belgium had considerable impact upon Germany as well. Revolts broke out in Brunswick, Hesse-Kassel, Saxony and Hanover. In Brunswick, Duke Karl II was driven from the throne and replaced by his

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

son, William I. In Hesse-Kassel, Elector William II was forced to call a meeting of the Estates and grant them considerable power, which they used to write a liberal constitution. At first William yielded to popular opinion and abandoned the notorious Countess Reichenbach, but as soon as he felt safe again he brought her back. This was a serious error in judgment, for on September 4, 1831, the Estates elected his rebellious son, Crown Prince Frederick William, as Co-Regent. Once in power, however, the Prince began in his turn an organized campaign to evade the provisions of the constitution and sowed the seeds of future problems which would involve Radowitz once again in Hessian politics.<sup>42</sup>

Radowitz's encounter with revolution in 1830 proved to be a turning point in his political development. In his "European Politics and the July Revolution," a long essay which he wrote shortly after his return to Berlin, he advanced the theory that once a revolution had begun it could not be stopped in mid-development, but would continue until it had run its course. In his assessment of the regime of Louis Philippe, the successor to Charles X of France, written in 1837, Radowitz saw a dangerous emphasis on materialistic concerns, which he believed should be but secondary to spiritual matters. However, Radowitz was no advocate of absolutism; this he felt to be as reprehensible as the new materialism of the French state. From impressions gained during his journey to England, he considered the settlement reached by the Glorious Revolution of 1688 to be the best alternative to the extremes of absolutism and the

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<sup>42</sup>Carr, Germany, p. 20; Treitschke, History of Germany, V, pp. 162-170.

excesses committed by the French after 1789.<sup>43</sup> Radowitz, in short, revealed himself to be a moderate who refused to support either form of extremism and placed himself closer in the political spectrum to the German liberal reformers than to the Prussian Junker reactionaries.

Another cardinal tenet which became ever more prominent in his writing was his general emphasis on German nationalism. He wrote that the highest form of statehood rested in a nationalism based on "family... origin and folk traditions." The most important element in the history of Europe since the Middle Ages was the destruction of the multinational state and the creation of new nations based on common origins and culture. He cited the examples of France and Spain as models for Germans to emulate. In his writings, Radowitz traced the awakening of German nationalism back to such men as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, who in his Letters Concerning the Newest Literature called for an end to blind imitation of French literary trends and for the creation of a German literature based on the English model of Shakespeare. According to Radowitz, the German poets and thinkers had spread this nationalism from the Eider to the Alps and from the Mosel to the Pregel.<sup>44</sup>

Radowitz shared his interest in political ideas with his friends who were alarmed by the storms of 1830. He often joined Carl von Voss, the cousin of his wife and advisor to the Crown Prince, the Gerlach

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<sup>43</sup>Among his more important political tracts were, "Die europäische Politik und die Juli-Revolution," "Idealismus-Materialismus in der Politik," and "Die Profisoren und die Allianzen," in Gesammelte Schriften, IV, pp. 43, 81-84, 192.

<sup>44</sup>Radowitz, "Frankfurt am Main, Erste Abschnitt von 1848," in Gesammelte Schriften, II, pp. 8-19. See below for a discussion of the crisis of 1840.



brothers and Canitz, who had served as the Prussian observer at Russian headquarters during the Polish revolt of 1830, in discussions at Canitz's offices on the Wilhelmstrasse. The chief of the artillery and his friends saw the revolts of 1830 as a continuation of the French Revolution of 1789 and the Napoleonic system. They believed that the principles of the revolution were dangerous and a serious threat to the established order.<sup>45</sup>

In the middle of 1831, Radowitz decided that one way to avert revolution was to establish a newspaper to serve as a platform for conservative ideas. He thereupon broached the idea to Karl Ernst Jarcke, an instructor of jurisprudence at the University of Halle and leading conservative Catholic. Jarcke approved, and Radowitz enlisted the help of the Gerlach brothers and Carl von Voss. They agreed to begin publication of the Berliner politische Wochenblatt on October 1, 1831, under the editorship of Jarcke. When the latter accepted a position in the Austrian State Chancellery soon after, Major Friedrich Streit became the new editor of the newspaper.<sup>46</sup>

The Wochenblatt became the leading conservative publication in the Germanies, and Radowitz contributed many articles on various subjects. The newspaper bitterly denounced the youthful excesses of the German liberals; it referred to the Hambach Festival, a mass meeting of liberals and patriots held in May 1832, as a "political Walpurgis Night."<sup>47</sup> This paper provided Radowitz with a very important platform to express

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<sup>45</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 213-214.

<sup>46</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 43-44.

<sup>47</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 225-228.

his ideas, and also made the Prussian officer well known throughout Germany as an opponent of revolution. It also brought him to the attention of the beleaguered officials of his former home, Hesse-Kassel.

In Kassel, the Regent and the Diet had come to open conflict by 1832. In May of that year, Frederick William named Hans Daniel Hassenpflug Minister of Justice and the Interior, and this official began a dedicated campaign to eradicate the last vestiges of constitutionalism in the Electorate. The main target of the attack against liberalism was the militia, which had fallen under the control of the supporters of the constitution. When the Minister attempted to restrict the power of the militia, the liberals in the Diet, led by Sylvester Jordan, protested. The Regent ordered the body dissolved, and the conflict intensified. The outcome of this struggle in the central German state was closely watched in Berlin. Treusch von Buttlar, a friend from his days in Kassel, wrote Radowitz detailed reports which the Prussian officer transmitted to the Crown Prince, who was especially interested in the dispute.<sup>48</sup>

The Hessian Minister of Justice needed the support of Berlin in his battle with the liberals in the Diet and sought to use his old friendship with Radowitz to secure this. He requested him to use his influence to secure the appointment of a Prussian minister to Kassel friendly to his aims. Radowitz, however, surprised his friend with a contemptuous condemnation of the "chicken fight" between the minister and the Diet. The Prussian officer advised Hassenpflug that every state must rest on the authority of law; since the Diet was established by law, the

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 228; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, p. 70.

opponents of liberalism should not abandon the constitution. Instead of violating the constitution by the unlawful repression of the liberals, Radowitz advised the Hessian minister to secure through a new election a Diet friendly to his cause. He believed that by adopting this tactic a real and lasting victory could be won against the liberals. Radowitz strongly advised against the adoption of violence, for this would only help the opposition. While urging moderation on Hassenpflug, Radowitz nevertheless used his influence to obtain the appointment of his fellow conservative Canitz as the new Prussian Minister to Kassel.<sup>49</sup>

Radowitz's advice to Hassenpflug shows a great deal about his political philosophy. While he opposed the liberals in their attempts to force the Regent to depose Hassenpflug, he was also a strong believer in the importance of the law. Radowitz realized that by fighting the liberals with legal methods, the chances for gaining a real victory were much better than by resorting to a show of force. Unlike many conservatives, the Prussian officer was not opposed to constitutionalism; he realized that a constitution did not necessarily mean the adoption of a liberal program. He had seen the British system in action and knew that it was possible to maintain old institutions without violating the law and adopting violence to suppress liberalism. Radowitz was a moderate conservative rather than a reactionary. He would use the same tactics of moderation in his own efforts in 1848.

While Radowitz was active in political affairs during this period, he also found time for other activities. In July, 1831, Radowitz accompanied Prince Augustus on an inspection trip to Silesia where the

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<sup>49</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 228-229.

group visited the fortresses at Glogau, Breslau and Schweidnitz. The following month, at a celebration of the King's birthday at Cels, the Crown Prince proposed that Radowitz join him on a pleasure trip through the mountains. The officer accompanied the royal party, which consisted of Crown Prince Maximilian of Bavaria, whom Radowitz had met when he studied in Berlin, and Prince Karl of Prussia. Throughout the month of August, they wandered around Silesia and Bohemia; the friendship between Radowitz and the future king grew stronger, and he made many important contacts which would later be of use in his work. Radowitz had become the constant companion of the Crown Prince and one of his most important advisers.<sup>50</sup>

Late in 1832, Radowitz left on another journey. Prince Augustus decided to take a trip to Italy and took Radowitz along as his courier. On the way south, the party stopped at several German courts in accordance with the wishes of King Frederick William III, who wanted to learn of the military practices and attitudes of the southern states.<sup>51</sup> While studying military matters, Radowitz also learned something about the art of diplomacy.

The first stop on the Junket was Darmstadt, one of the most liberal of the German states. Radowitz met Grand Duke Louis II and his wily first minister, Baron Karl von Bos du Thil, one of the most prominent proponents of monarchical supremacy in south Germany. Du Thil was at the moment locked in a controversy with the liberal opposition majority in the Hessian Diet, which demanded a greater share of legislative power.

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 216-217.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., pp. 230-231.

Within a year he would successfully parry the blows of the liberals and maintain monarchal prerogatives intact for another decade and a half. He was a practical politician and no visionary, but his methods disenchanted Radowitz, who considered him more versed in theories than political realities. The next stop was the Grand Duchy of Baden, a state which would support Radowitz through his fight for German unification. He met Grand Duke Leopold I and his brother, Count William. The loyal servant of Prussia wrote his wife of the great similarity of the small state to the great power and the pro-Prussian attitude he found. However, Radowitz did not have a pleasant experience in the Kingdom of Württemberg. On November 6, Radowitz dined with King William I, and an argument ensued, with the King criticizing the conservatism of the Wochenblatt.<sup>52</sup>

From Württemberg, the travelers turned south into Switzerland. At the border they were met by the Prussian Minister to Bern who guided them to the Swiss capital. From there they went to Milan, and Radowitz received his first impressions of Italy, which he found very beautiful and picturesque. The Italian journey took the party to Genoa, where Radowitz met King Charles Albert of Sardinia, to Florence, where the Prussian viewed the wonders of the Renaissance at the Uffizi, and on to Rome.<sup>53</sup>

The party remained in the Eternal City during the Christmas season, and the spirit of Rome overcame Radowitz. He spent countless hours contemplating the remains of the Roman Empire and the glories of the Roman

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<sup>52</sup>Ibid., pp. 231-232.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 233-236.

Catholic Church. He wondered at the paintings of Paphael and the statues of Michelangelo in the Vatican. From Rome the party journeyed to the capital of the Bourbon Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, Naples. They visited the ruins of Pompei and viewed the art treasures of southern Italy. Finally, in early February, 1833, they returned to Rome.<sup>54</sup>

In Rome for the second time, Radowitz spent his days learning about the operation of the Vatican. He received an audience with Pope Gregory XVI and attended services in the papal chapel, but was impressed neither with the papal court nor its worship and left disappointed. While in Rome, he met Otto, the Bavarian Prince who was on his way to become King of Greece, and Prince Henry, brother of the King of Prussia. Leaving Rome late in February, their return to Berlin took the party through Bologna and Modena, where Radowitz had a long talk about politics and religion with Duke Francis IV. From Modena, the Prince and his entourage visited Venice and spent several hours viewing the sights of the city. Radowitz was awed by St. Mark's Cathedral and its Byzantine style. From the maritime city, they traveled through Verona to Munich.<sup>55</sup>

They spent several days in the Bavarian capital. The Prussian officer got along very well with King Louis I, who admired his writings and the conservative position of the Wochenblatt. Radowitz, impressed by the efforts of the Wittelsbach to beautify the Bavarian capital, wrote glowing commentaries on the art he found there. The party arrived back in Berlin in late March. During this trip, Radowitz enjoyed the opportunity to ponder his political theories in the light of his observations of the

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid., pp. 238-243.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 243-246.

south German states and Italy. He also became acquainted with leaders of other parts of the Confederation.<sup>56</sup>

Upon his return to Berlin, Radowitz continued his duties and was honored several times for his work in education and his political writings. He received the Red Order of Nobility, Third Class, in 1832, and while in Baden, accepted the Cross of the Crying Lion from the Grand Duke. In 1834, Tsar Nicholas I of Russia awarded Radowitz the Order of St. Ann, Second Class. But the rapid rise of Radowitz in power, his influence on the Crown Prince, and his political activities did not meet with the approval of many Prussians. Above all, many objected to the closeness of Radowitz and the future king.<sup>57</sup>

The leader of this opposition was Job Wilhelm von Witzleben, the leader of a liberal group of Protestants who objected to the growing power of the conservative Roman Catholic. Since his appointment as Minister of War in 1833, Witzleben had sought grounds to demand the dismissal of Radowitz. When the officer argued with him over the organization of artillery, the Minister was able to use his influence over King Frederick William III to persuade him that Radowitz should be removed from the Prussian capital. When the Prussian representative on the Military Commission of the German Confederation retired, the King took advantage of this opportunity to send Radowitz away from Berlin and thus satisfy Radowitz's critics without actually demoting the officer. Upon arriving home on the evening of March 18, 1836, Radowitz found a Cabinet Order naming him the new Prussian member of the Military Commission.

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<sup>56</sup>Ibid., pp. 246-249.

<sup>57</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 47.

Thus the first chapter in Radowitz's life came to an end, and he received a new assignment which would open to him new possibilities for service to his adopted country.<sup>58</sup>

While Radowitz's origins are by no means shrouded in mystery, and the facts of his early life and rise are easy enough to discover, there still remains the question as to how and why he was able to advance from his beginnings as the son of a Brunswick lawyer to an advisor to the future King of Prussia and that country's representative on the Military Commission of the German Confederation. Radowitz's rather rapid advancement was due to several factors, one of the most important of which was luck. He seemed to have the ability to be in the right place at the right time, such as meeting the Crown Prince while tutoring his younger brother. Radowitz also benefited by knowing the right people. When his former commander in Hesse-Kassel became the head of the War Department, Radowitz became a member of the General Staff of the small electorate. When forced to leave Kassel, the influence of the Electress enabled him to find a comfortable position in the Prussian army. In Berlin, Canitz, a friend from his youth, introduced him into the right circles. Finally, an important reason for Radowitz's success was his ability and hard work. He did not take his duties lightly but worked long and hard at them, as his many memoranda on the minute details of his activities attest.<sup>59</sup> His assignment as Prussian Representative on the Military Commission would enable him to continue his advance on a level affecting all of Germany.

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 49-50.

<sup>59</sup>Many of these commentaries and memoranda are presently in the Radowitz Family Collection.



At Frankfurt, Radowitz would be at the very center of German politics and would learn at first hand the many failings of the Confederation.

## CHAPTER III

### THE MILITARY COMMISSION

Radowitz left his agreeable post in Berlin with mixed emotions. The German Confederation was at best a loose union without much power. Its thirty-seven member states retained all the rights of sovereign powers and guarded their traditional "German liberties" with great jealousy. The Military Commission, consisting of the representatives of all these states, was charged with creating some form of common military policy, an almost impossible task. On the one hand, Radowitz realized the difficulties inherent in this new position. But, he and his family believed that it would give him an opportunity to participate in European politics.<sup>1</sup> Despite many problems, Radowitz was to learn much during his six years at the seat of the Confederation, the free city of Frankfurt am Main; it was here that he was to come to the conclusion that a more stable union of the German states was necessary if the German people were to attain a position of power in the face of other European states. In Frankfurt, Radowitz would find himself involved in many petty intrigues and conflicts, which, although insignificant in comparison to his later work, reveal a great deal about the capacity of the German states to defend themselves in a dangerous world.

On May 3, 1836, Radowitz gathered his family and household to set

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<sup>1</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 51; Rochow, Preussischen Hofe, p. 199.

out for Frankfurt. Before his departure, as he took leave of Prince Augustus and the Crown Prince, Radowitz was on the verge of tears. During the ten-day journey, they spent some time visiting in Thuringia and Hesse-Kassel before arriving in the "capital" of Germany.<sup>2</sup>

As the Prussian member of the Military Commission, Radowitz's chief concern was developing the defensive capability of the Confederation, and he wasted no time in getting down to work. The first matter confronting him was the problem created by the separation of Belgium from Holland in 1831. In 1815, the German Confederation had pledged itself to the defense of the Maas River and the fortress of Maastricht. Since Belgium had become a sovereign nation, the new government in Brussels wanted this obligation terminated, and the Dutch monarch concurred. Radowitz resisted this, believing that it was the Prussian interests for the Germans to retain a presence on Flemish territory. However, his superiors in Berlin disregarded his advice and the German states lost the right to defend the fortress.<sup>3</sup>

The most important and potentially dangerous issue before the Commission was the question of building and maintaining federal fortresses to protect Germany from possible French aggression. The debate over this problem, which lasted several years, revealed all the jealousies among the German states, the rivalry between Austria and Prussia, and the distrust among the smaller states. Since 1815, the Confederation had spent fifteen million francs of the French reparation payments to fortify the Rhine and had already established three federal fortresses at

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<sup>2</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, p. 261.

<sup>3</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 53.

Mainz, Luxembourg and Landau. In 1817, Austria had proposed to build a fourth fortress at Ulm. However, the other southern states believed that this location, deep in German territory, would not serve their best interests because it would leave the Bavarian Palatinate, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Württemberg, Hohenzollern-Hechingen and Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen exposed to attack. They favored instead the site of Rastatt, which would protect all of south Germany. At first, even they could not agree on a proper site. Baden, the state in which Rastatt lay, protested out of fear that the presence of so many federal troops would compromise the military independence of the Grand Duchy. Bavaria, whose armies made up the largest contingent of the German forces on the Rhine, suggested in 1835 that Germersheim be made the center of the fortifications on the river. When Radowitz arrived at Frankfurt in the summer of 1836, the debate over the question was at its height.<sup>4</sup>

On June 7, Radowitz, who favored the Rastatt site, reported his suggestions to his superiors in Berlin. He reminded them that it was necessary for Prussia to maintain the best possible relations with the south Germans. He also pointed out that regardless of the objections from Baden, the frontier between Germersheim and Lake Constance still lay undefended and that it was necessary for the southern states to have a central location for the mobilization of men and supplies. Through his recommendations, Radowitz came into conflict with the Austrians who still wanted the fortress at Ulm. The Prussian deputy representatives at the Federal Diet, General Otto von Schöler, had informed his Austrian counterpart of Radowitz's suggestions, and they were promptly relayed to

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<sup>4</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 266-269.

the Habsburg member of the Military Commission, Franz Ludwig von Welden. Welden, believing that the young Prussian had not shown him or his state proper respect, scolded Radowitz for not first asking his advice before sending his recommendations to Berlin. After the two had an argument during a session of the Commission, Metternich sent a formal protest to the Prussian court. Because Berlin was in no mood for problems with Austria, Radowitz was instructed to avoid offending the Empire; the issue of the fortresses needed further discussion. Thus Radowitz experienced the first of many frustrations in trying to deal with Vienna.<sup>5</sup>

In October, 1836, King William I of Württemberg developed a solution to the problem. He proposed that instead of building one fortress the Confederation build two, one at Ulm to please Austria, and one at Rastatt to mollify the southern states. Two months later, Radowitz wrote Berlin in support of William's ideas. However, the Prussian deputy to the Diet itself disagreed and suggested that Prussia support the building of but one fortress at Rastatt. At this point, King Frederick William III instructed his representatives at Frankfurt to refrain from any further discussions of the matter as it might harm commercial negotiations then taking place between Prussia and Austria.<sup>6</sup>

After these petty but time-consuming controversies during his first year at the center of the German Confederation, the next few years were a time of comparative calm. He was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel and busied himself with the day-to-day affairs of the Military Commission. He got along well with his new Austrian colleague, Major

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 268-269.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 269-271.

General Karl von Roditzki, who came to Frankfurt in June, 1838. He enjoyed his duties, lost all desire to lead troops in the field, and hoped that when Frederick William IV came to the throne he would be called to Berlin to assume some post in government. Through his experience in diplomatic and administrative work in Frankfurt, Radowitz had found a new means of service to his adopted state.<sup>7</sup>

While he carried on his duties, Radowitz found some time for a personal life. He and his family lived in a house on the Mainkai, where a son was born on May 19, 1839. Since their firstborn had died, Radowitz and his wife carried on family tradition by naming the new member of their family Joseph Maria. He spent much of his free time studying military science, mathematics, philosophy and art. His favorite form of art was the sketch, and he assembled a collection of drawings by old and recent masters. Radowitz found his study of philosophy so depressing that he wrote that at times he felt as if he were sinking in water looking for a rope to pull himself out onto the land.<sup>8</sup>

Because of Frankfurt's central location, Radowitz met many dignitaries as they passed through the free city. He became acquainted with the Crown Princes of Mecklenburg and Denmark, Grand Prince Alexander of Russia, the future King William II of Holland and the Duke of Nassau. One of the most important of Radowitz's new acquaintances was Prince Clemens von Metternich, the Austrian Foreign Minister. Radowitz first met the Prince as he was traveling to his estate at Johannisberg on the

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<sup>7</sup> Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Maria von Radowitz (son of subject), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen aus dem Leben des Botschafters Joseph Maria von Radowitz, ed. by Hajo Holborn (Osnabrück, 1967), p. 1; Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 69-70.

Rhine. The Prussian was not impressed by the Austrian statesman, whom he considered frivolous and without true principles. Radowitz would later enter into serious negotiations with Metternich and witness his downfall in 1848.<sup>9</sup>

While busy with his efforts to strengthen German military power and mediate between the various German states, Radowitz began to realize fully the flaws in the settlement reached in Vienna. The Prussian officer saw that in the event of any real military threat, Germany could not hope to defend itself unless some major reforms were enacted. He also realized that as long as Austria dominated German affairs to suit its interests, the needs of Prussia and other German states could not be met.<sup>10</sup> His further experiences at Frankfurt would serve to reinforce these convictions.

In 1839, the debate over the federal fortresses again became a major issue. Berlin continued to support the plan to construct a fortress at Rastatt out of a desire to win the favor of the southern states, protect the Hohenzollern territories in the south and better serve the military interests of the Confederation. However, Württemberg temporarily changed its position on the issue, because Tsar Nicholas I of Russia intervened in the conflict to persuade King William I to adopt the Austrian position. While informing the Prussians of this decision, the King had moreover protested against Prussian interference in south German affairs. It appeared that Austria had won the point. However, political

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<sup>9</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 54-55, 62-65; "Aufenthalt in Königswart und auf Johannisberg," Clemens von Metternich, Aus Metternichs nachgelassenen Papieren, ed. by Richard von Metternich-Winneburg (Vienna, 1880-1884), VI, p. 502.

<sup>10</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 66.

developments in France, where the nationalists, led by Francois Guizot and Adolphe Thiers, had overthrown the moderate ministry of Louis Mole, caused a sudden reversal in the policies of the southern courts. With the growing power of the French nationalists and the threat of French aggression that accompanied it, the south began to abandon its loyalty to Vienna and to think in terms of self-protection. Since Ulm was deep in German territory, the location of a fortress in that city would protect Austria, but leave undefended Baden, Württemberg, the Bavarian Palatinate and Hesse-Darmstadt. Grand Duke Leopold of Baden led the other rulers who turned to Berlin for protection. As a result of this appeal, Frederick William III decided on May 25, 1839, to adopt the very proposal for the two fortresses which had been recommended by Radowitz three years earlier.<sup>11</sup>

In time, the conflict reached the Military Commission in Frankfurt, as Metternich tried to halt the exodus of states from the domination of Vienna. He instructed Roditzki to vote for the construction of a fortress at Ulm, while Berlin instructed Radowitz to work for the fortresses at Ulm and Rastatt. After a bitter debate, the Commission decided to recommend the construction of both fortresses.<sup>12</sup> Thus one of the controversial issues of the Pre-March period seemed at least temporarily resolved.

But the conflict began anew once the decision had been made to build both fortresses. This time the controversy centered over the exact location and the territorial rights of the state in which each was located.

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<sup>11</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 286-287.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.



The southern German states met at Karlsruhe, the capital of Baden, in April, 1840, to discuss the problem. Since Ulm lay on the Danube, the boundary between Bavaria and Württemberg, the fortress could be built in either kingdom. Both states wanted to preserve their independence from Vienna as much as possible, and feared that the presence of Confederation troops on its soil would compromise this independence too much. The southern states decided that regardless of what decision the Confederation made concerning the exact location of the fortress, the best way to preserve their independence was to form a unified organization for the defense of southern Germany. On April 24, 1840, Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden and Hesse-Darmstadt signed an agreement which in time of war provided for the creation of a unified army under the command of Prince Charles of Bavaria.<sup>13</sup>

Austria objected violently to this decision and immediately protested the south German alliance. Radowitz was also alarmed about the possibility of a major conflict among the members of the German Confederation at a time when France was assuming a rather aggressive posture. The sleeplessness that had plagued him in 1836 returned, and he was forced to leave his charge for a cure at Willingshausen. He suffered from a severe case of rheumatism, and he hoped that the healing waters would alleviate some of his pain. However, the waters could not cure his concern about the outcome of the quarrel over the fortresses. On June 6, 1840, the day before the death of his sovereign, he wrote his wife that were he not married and a father, he would resign his duties.

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

and seek the peace and seclusion of a monastery.<sup>14</sup>

While Radowitz was attempting to regain his health, events, which had their roots far away from Germany, in the troubled Near East made a quick solution to the conflict over the fortresses of the utmost importance. With French support, Mohammed Ali, the Pasha of Egypt, had declared war against the Ottoman Empire in 1832 and the great powers of Europe had become involved. France, with the ultra-nationalist Adolph Thiers as Foreign Minister, was willing to go to war to save face and Mohammed Ali from defeat. Ali attacked and occupied part of Syria. But the British, alarmed over the possible growth of French influence in that part of the world, aided the Ottoman troops in expelling him. When the people of Syria joined the fight against the invader, Ali was forced to retreat, and France lost considerable prestige. Had Thiers been willing to accept this outcome, the matter would have been forgotten. But the French Foreign Minister decided to repair the damaged prestige of France by uttering threats against divided Germany. French newspapers carried the demand to extend the French frontier to the Rhine, and cries of "To the Rhine, to the Rhine," were sounded through the Gallic kingdom. Fortunately for the preservation of peace, the aggressive schemes of Thiers were not shared by his monarch, Louis Philippe, and the war fever died down after he dismissed the Foreign Minister after only a few months in office.<sup>15</sup>

But the French rhetoric had by this time prompted a wave of patriotic indignation which swept over Germany in the early forties,

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 298-299.

<sup>15</sup>Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France (Baltimore, 1968), II, pp. 108-109.

leaving in its wake a spate of nationalistic anthems written by a group of radical poets. Nicholas Becker wrote his "Rheinlied:" "They shall not have it, the free German Rhine!" Max Schneckenburger, fired by patriotic zeal, wrote the well known and still popular "Die Wacht am Rhein." Ultimately this patriotic effusion of the 1840s produced the future national anthem of Germany, Heinrich von Fallersleben's "Deutschland Über alles." Other popular poets of the age, Georg Herwegh and Hermann Ferdinand Freiligrath, also lent their talents to the outpouring of German nationalism.<sup>16</sup>

The war never came, but the responsibility for military preparation for a possible French attack lay heavily upon the Military Commission of the German Confederation nonetheless, and Radowitz soon found himself in the middle of these concerns. On October 23, 1840, the King summoned his representative to Berlin. Radowitz spent three weeks at Sanssouci discussing every angle of the crisis with his monarch, and was greatly alarmed about the possibility of a war for which Germany was not prepared. As was his custom, he mathematically calculated the possible outcome of such a war and the possible German strategy. He figured that since England had split with France over the Egyptian question, the British and the Russians would side with the Germans. In this event, he speculated that Prussia, Austria and the other German states could have 400,000 men on a line from Trier to Rastatt in eight weeks and a force of one million under arms in eleven. The British and Russians would destroy the French fleet in the Mediterranean and capture the French colony

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<sup>16</sup>Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, pp. 389-395; J. G. Robertson, A History of German Literature, 5th ed., rev. by Edna Purdie et al. (London, 1966), pp. 455-465.

of Algeria. Then Russian troops would land near Antwerp and attack France from the north, while the German troops moved toward Paris from the Rhine. After the defeat of France, Radowitz believed that the German Confederation should be enlarged to include the German speaking peoples of Switzerland, the Low Countries and France. In this idea he was reflecting the spirit of German nationalism which called for the creation of a German nation-state including all German speaking areas. Radowitz also proposed to erect federal fortresses at Maastricht, Mainz, Strassburg and Basel. In this way, Germany would be safe from any possible French aggression, and the German people would be united. Radowitz argued that Frederick William IV should not wait for Vienna to make a decision, but seize the initiative himself and by so doing emerge as the leader of a stronger and more united Germany!<sup>17</sup>

Although Louis Philippe had removed Thiers from office and expressed his desire to preserve the peace, the French had mobilized their troops and still had 250,000 men on the German frontiers. While Metternich was satisfied with the actions of the French monarch, the Prussian King and his advisors believed that the incident had shown the necessity of preparation for war in case the extreme nationalists should once again gain the upper hand in Paris. Therefore, the Prussian King and his ministers decided to accept Radowitz's recommendations for a program which would require every member of the German Confederation to fulfill their obligation for the mutual defense and submitted this as a formal proposal.<sup>18</sup>

The original Confederation Army consisted of 300,000 men, of which

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<sup>17</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 72-83.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 83-85.

Austria and Prussia were to provide three corps and the other German states enough soldiers to make up four additional corps. The Prussian plan of 1840 would enlarge the size of the Federal Army to 610,000 men: 300,000 men from Prussia, 150,000 men from Austria and the remainder from the other states. Berlin also proposed to station an army of 100,000 Prussians on the lower Rhine and a second of the same size on the middle Rhine. The third Prussian army would be stationed on the Elbe to reinforce the other two armies. Officials in Berlin estimated that it would take from seven to eight weeks to organize the forces and move them into place. Austria was to station its army on the upper Danube. The other German states were to divide their forces between the lower and middle Rhine. Frederick William IV sent Radowitz and Grolmann to lay this proposal before Habsburg court in November, 1840.<sup>19</sup>

On the way to Vienna, Radowitz stopped at Dresden, the capital of the Kingdom of Saxony, to win the support of King Frederick Augustus II. He spent several days discussing the military reorganization with the King and his ministers and was able to persuade them to lend their support to the Hohenzollern program. Radowitz also spent some time in conference with the commander of the IX Corps and future King of Saxony, Prince John. The Prince was greatly impressed by Radowitz and wrote that he was the only person he had met who seemed to really understand the plans of King Frederick William IV, who had assumed the throne on June 7, 1840. After a short visit with the romantic author Ludwig Tieck, Radowitz traveled by way of Prague to the Habsburg capital to present

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 85; Holborn, History of Germany, 1648-1840, p. 446. •

the Prussian proposals.<sup>20</sup>

Arriving in Vienna on November 20, Radowitz spent several days in negotiations with Metternich. He pointed out the many weaknesses of the Confederation and championed joint Austro-Prussian cooperation to develop the defense capability of Germany. Radowitz learned that Vienna was as concerned with the possibility of war against Russia as against France, but the Austrian Foreign Minister agreed to the Prussian plan in principle, and Radowitz and Grolmann worked out the details with Karl Ludwig von Fiquelmont, the chief of the Austrian military. They agreed that within four weeks two Austrian units would move to Pilsen and Braunau and then within six weeks to Würzburg and Ulm. A division was to remain at Bregenz to act as reinforcements. Thus Austria had agreed to the Prussian suggestions and had abandoned her idea of an attack on France through Switzerland. After dining with Emperor Francis, Radowitz left Vienna to present the agreement to the south German courts.<sup>21</sup>

Radowitz arrived in Munich on November 30, where he found King Louis I open to the Prussian proposals. The King, who was very worried about the possibility of war with France, agreed to all aspects of the plan but expressed concern regarding Austria's loyalty to the Confederation. After Radowitz overcame Louis' doubts on this point, the monarch agreed that Bavaria's army would join that of the Confederation in the defense

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<sup>20</sup> John of Saxony, Lebenserinnerungs des Königs Johann von Sachsen. Eigene Aufzeichnungen des Königs über die Jahre 1801 bis 1854, ed. by Helmut Kretzschmar (Göttingen, 1958), p. 163; Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 317-318.

<sup>21</sup> Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 319-321; Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, pp. 404-405; "Aus dem Tagebuche der Fürsten Melanie, 23-24. November 1841," in Metternich, Nachgelassen Papiere, VI, pp. 396-397.

of Germany with the condition that the Wittelsbach troops would retain their separate identity, at least in name. From Munich, the diplomatic mission proceeded to Stuttgart, the capital of Württemberg.<sup>22</sup>

On the trip to Stuttgart, Radowitz paused a few hours in Ulm to study the proposed site of the federal fortress, and noted the many technical difficulties that had to be overcome before construction could begin. Upon his arrival in Stuttgart, Radowitz found an atmosphere similar to that at Munich. King William I was more than willing to lend his support to the defense program of Prussia with the one condition that the German commitment to defend Lombardy and Venetia be retained. Radowitz spent some time discussing the conflict over the fortresses with the Swabian monarch, who argued that the treaty between Württemberg and the other German states obligated him only to support the building of a fortress at Ratatt but not at Ulm. However, Radowitz left Stuttgart with his support and continued his journey to Karlsruhe, the capital of Baden.<sup>23</sup>

In Karlsruhe, Radowitz found a climate of fear. The Grand Duke and his ministers were very alarmed about the French threat and the possibility that the other German powers would not come to their aid in the event of an attack. After negotiations with Friedrich von Blittersdorf, the Foreign Minister, and General von Freydorf, President of the College of War, Radowitz had no problem winning the support of the Grand Duchy for his program. With the taste of success in his mouth, Radowitz left

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<sup>22</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, p. 323.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., pp. 324-325.

Karlsruhe for the last stop on his diplomatic tour, Darmstadt.<sup>24</sup>

As was the case throughout his travels of 1840, Radowitz found willing listeners in the Hessian capital. Arriving in the city on December 14, he spent a short time speaking with Grand Duke Louis II and continued his negotiations with Foreign Minister du Thil and the Chief of the General Staff, General Ludwig Jakob von Lynucker. He spent most of his time with Prince Emil of Hesse, who without hesitation pledged himself to the Prussian program. With his wife and daughter Marie, who had met him in Darmstadt, Radowitz returned to Frankfurt on December 18.<sup>25</sup>

His mission had made him a national figure, the newspapers featured laudatory articles about him, while Austria, Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Hanover and Saxony awarded him their highest orders. The travels also gave Radowitz some time to improve his health. He wrote that he had never felt better than during those nights and days of traveling during the winter of 1840. However, his satisfaction was short lived; for at the beginning of 1841, Radowitz again returned to Berlin to find a completely different picture from that which he had left a few weeks earlier. With the dissipation of the threat of war, the unity he had found before was beginning to fall apart, and most states had failed to carry out their part of the agreement for defense that he had worked so hard to achieve.<sup>26</sup>

Realizing that it would be a great mistake to allow the spirit of cooperation that had emerged among the German states to break up, he

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., pp. 325-326.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., pp. 326-327.

<sup>26</sup> Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 90.



proposed to Frederick William IV that a reform of the Articles of War of the German Confederation be undertaken to insure the compliance of the German states with the program on military deployment they had already accepted, but had failed to put into effect. On January 6, 1841, he sent a memorandum to the King outlining his suggestions. He proposed that each member state should be assigned a specific number of troops as its contribution and that the Confederation strictly control the size of each contingent. The most important part of his program was a requirement that each state adopt a clearly defined military budget. Finally, Radowitz advised his ruler that the Military Commission should inspect the various elements of the Federal Army every two years and report its findings to the Federal Diet. Radowitz's program would have greatly strengthened the authority of the Confederation. It would control the size and quality of the armies of the member states and, most important, exercise influence over their military spending, one of the most jealously guarded aspects of sovereignty. Thus through Radowitz's program, the foundations would be laid for further strengthening of the powers of the Confederation; the possibility of a stronger German union was opened.<sup>27</sup>

The Prussian monarch and his ministers agreed to Radowitz's proposals and realized the urgency of a fundamental reform of the Confederation so that should any future threat develop, it could be met at once. Prussia proposed to Austria that the two German powers issue a joint declaration to the Federal Diet on the importance of a stronger federal army and

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<sup>27</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, p. 331.

communicate in detail portions of Radowitz's reform proposals.<sup>28</sup>

Vienna replied to the Prussian notes by sending General Heinrich Hess, chief of the Austrian General Staff, to Berlin at the end of January, 1841, to negotiate on the matter. Frederick William IV assigned a commission consisting of William Johann von Krauseneck, Chief of the General Staff of the Army, Ludwig Gustav von Thile, Minister of the Treasury, and Radowitz to discuss the proposal with the Austrian representative. Radowitz found in Hess a reasonable man with whom he could work well. The two conferred throughout the following month, and Austria accepted all the proposals with the exception of the suggested inspections. At the end of February, Hess returned to Vienna to lay the plan before his superiors.<sup>29</sup>

After reaching agreement with the largest German power, Prussia still had to win the support of the other thirty-five German states. This task fell partially to Radowitz, who undertook another diplomatic venture, the first stop of which was Hanover. Radowitz spent almost three days trying to win King Ernest Augustus's approval for the program. After achieving his goal, Radowitz departed to Kassel, the site of his youthful humiliation.<sup>30</sup>

In Kassel, Radowitz, full of anticipation, encountered his former friend, Crown Prince Frederick William. As he explained the proposals to the Regent, the Prince treated the Prussian representative as if nothing had occurred between them. After Radowitz explained every

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid., pp. 331-332.

<sup>29</sup> Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 92-93.

<sup>30</sup> Hassel, Radowitz, p. 342.

detail of the Prussian plan, he was invited to dine with the Regent and his court. Naturally, the discussion turned to domestic politics, and Radowitz subsequently wrote that the attitude of the Prince was a "mixture between arrogance and willfulness which reminds one of the insanity of ancient tyrannies." Because of his strong belief in the importance of morality and family life, Radowitz believed that the major cause of the Prince's problems was his sexual licentiousness and that only a normal Christian marriage could save him from becoming an absolutist. So strong was the dedication to his religion that the Prussian thought that in order to be a good and effective ruler, one must also be a dedicated Christian. He found that many believed that the Prince would follow the lead of the King of Hanover and abolish the constitution upon assuming the throne. Despite Radowitz's efforts, the Prince refused to commit himself, and the Prussian envoy returned to his post in Frankfurt.<sup>31</sup>

On March 13, the Federal Diet met to discuss the proposed changes in the Articles of War. After some deliberation, the Diet instructed the Military Commission to recommend the measures necessary to place the Federal Army on a wartime footing. Through the combined efforts of Austria and Prussia, the Commission accepted the recommendations of the two leading powers and submitted its report on March 26, 1841. Thus, Radowitz's proposed changes in the Articles of War of the German Confederation were approved. Although there was some resistance to the inspections, within a few years Radowitz's program was in effect, and the German Confederation had a much more effective army.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 346-348, 315; Protokolle der deutsche Bundesversammlung von Jahre 1841 (Frankfurt, 1841), p. 181.

While the proposed changes were accepted, their value was obscured by the renewal of the argument over the fortresses. The same day that the Articles of War were changed, the Diet voted to build the two fortresses and to allow the states in which they were to be located the right to participate in their planning. Thus, Bavaria and Württemberg oversaw the building of the fortress at Ulm and Baden that at Rastatt. The Commission selected Radowitz to supervise the construction at Rastatt, and the Prussian representative quickly prepared preliminary plans for the project.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Diet had decided to build the fortresses and enacted regulations to supervise their operation, the powers of the German Confederation were so limited that it could not enforce its decision. Before Radowitz had a chance to complete his work, he found himself involved in the petty rivalry between Bavaria and Württemberg over the proposed fortress. Bavaria wanted the major portion of the project to be located on its side of the Danube, while Württemberg demanded that the center of the fortress be sited on its territory. In the debate, Austria threw its support to Bavaria, thus giving Prussia the opportunity to mediate.<sup>34</sup> Since the Confederation was too weak to solve the conflict, long negotiations followed.

Once the struggle between Bavaria and Württemberg began, it was not long before other elements were added to the conflict. On March 26, the Federal Diet had agreed that the two states would share the right to appoint the Governor, Commandant and General Director of the proposed

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Hassel, Radowitz, p. 349.

fortress at Ulm. This compromise was unacceptable to Württemberg, which refused to allow Bavaria to participate in the selection of the commanders. Naturally, the Wittelsbach Kingdom could not allow its rights to be disregarded by Württemberg, and a very serious argument ensued. On August 12, King Louis I of Bavaria conferred with Radowitz at Brückenau and denounced Württemberg's attempts to control the fortress. Radowitz proposed that the two kingdoms accept a compromise: Württemberg would name the Commandant, Bavaria would appoint the Governor, and both states would share the right to name the General Director. Louis agreed to this but expressed doubts that it would be accepted by William I. He asked Radowitz to use his influence to persuade Berlin to try to win Stuttgart's agreement.<sup>35</sup>

Throughout 1841, the argument between the two states continued. In November, Frederick William IV went to Munich to visit his dying mother-in-law, Dowager Queen Karoline of Bavaria. While paying his respects to her, the Prussian monarch found the time to attempt an arbitration between the two south German kingdoms. At Augsburg, on November 15, he met King William I, who attempted to win his support. When Frederick William returned to the Bavarian capital, he heard a similar plea from Louis I and his ministers. Finally, the Prussian King invited Radowitz to intercede once again between the rivals. After studying the issue further, Radowitz traveled to Berlin in December to present his report.<sup>36</sup>

After several weeks in Berlin, Radowitz left for Vienna, Munich and

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<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 353-354.

Stuttgart to attempt to find a solution to the conflict. In the Austrian capital, the Prussian envoy found that much had changed since his last visit. He encountered suspicion and unfriendliness at every turn. Metternich refused to commit himself on the issue, and after several days, Radowitz gratefully left the Habsburg court for his next stop.<sup>37</sup>

In Munich, Radowitz found a much more pleasant atmosphere. The Prussian messenger met with the Bavarian King, and although Louis I made clear his antagonism towards William I, the Wittelsbach monarch was willing to compromise and negotiate on the issue. He gave Radowitz a treaty to submit to William I as a solution to the conflict. This document put in writing the compromise first suggested by Radowitz.<sup>38</sup>

In Stuttgart, the greatest obstacle to agreement was the strong reluctance of the King to compromise his position in any manner. William I's chief concern was his sovereignty over Ulm, which was the second largest city of his kingdom. Radowitz argued that the German Confederation was not a "foreign power" as the King saw it. Finally, on February 16, 1842, the monarch signed the proposed treaty between his kingdom and Bavaria, and Radowitz ended his mission with success. Therefore, Radowitz had been able to finally solve the dispute over the fortresses and in so doing, safeguard the provisions of the revised Articles of War.<sup>39</sup>

His diplomatic efforts during 1841 and 1842 had made Radowitz fully aware of the real weakness of the German Confederation. The specter of old German particularism threatened to destroy all his work towards a common defense against possible attack from France as the German states

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<sup>37</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 100.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.; Hassel, Radowitz, p. 360.

<sup>39</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 100; Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 360-361.

involved themselves in petty disputes. The settlement of 1815 had failed to unite the thirty-seven states, and France would have no trouble dividing Germany as it had done throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although he had met with success in his efforts to reform the Articles of War and had solved the fortress dispute, the Confederation still required radical reform, and to this end Radowitz began developing a plan which would culminate in this proposal of 1847.

While occupied with finding a solution to the fortress problem and revising the Articles of War, Radowitz found himself involved in other controversial matters. The transfer of Radowitz from Berlin to Frankfurt in 1836 had not satisfied his enemies at court. Within a year they had found a pretext to accuse him of disloyalty. This came about as the result of the Cologne episcopal dispute of 1837. Since Prussia had acquired the Rhine Province in 1815, mixed marriages between Protestant Prussians and the local Roman Catholic population had become quite frequent. In such cases, the Hohenzollern kingdom had applied the law of Frederick II, which required that all male children should be brought up in the religion of their father and all females in that of their mother. Such a compromise was in direct violation of Roman Catholic canon law, however, which required that all children of a mixed marriage be taught the Roman Catholic religion. When the devout Clemens August von Droste-Vischering was named Archbishop of Cologne in 1837, the conflict between Prussian law and Roman Catholic canon law erupted into open warfare. The new Archbishop refused to depart from the letter of canon law and follow the laws of Prussia. Frederick William III, who had allowed him to assume the archepiscopal see on the understanding that he would follow the Prussian law, demanded that he resign at once.

When Droste-Vischering refused to do so, the King ordered him arrested and imprisoned at the fortress at Minden in November, 1837. The dispute led to a deepening of the conflict between Rome and Berlin and involved all of Germany in a passionate debate over the rights of the state in matters of religion.<sup>40</sup>

Since Radowitz was at the same time a servant of the Prussian state and a devout Roman Catholic, he was deeply affected by the struggle. While he objected to the violent reaction of the ultramontane party, led by Joseph Görres of Munich, author of the anti-Prussian tract, Athanasius, he believed that Berlin had acted unjustly in the case. At first, he considered leaving the Prussian service; had he been at the center of the dispute in Berlin he might have done so. But in time his feelings cooled and he decided against resignation. Yet the controversy was so bitter that Radowitz broke with a number of his friends, including the Gerlach brothers, who were most ardent in their support of the action of the King. He also ceased to take part in the publication of the Berliner politischen Wochenblatt.<sup>41</sup>

When the Prussian government searched the effects of the Archbishop and his supporter, Anton Joseph Bintern, it discovered several papers and letters which put Radowitz in a rather compromising position. Among these documents were spurious reports that Radowitz had been critical of his King in his support of the Catholic cause. Berlin was full of rumors about these alleged disloyal acts and statements by Radowitz. The Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung, the Fränkische Merkur, Europas Salon and

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<sup>40</sup> Holborn, History of Germany, 1648-1840, p. 505.

<sup>41</sup> Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 56-60.



other newspapers spread rumors to the effect that he had engaged in acts of treason. Some conservative Protestants in Berlin demanded his dismissal; Radowitz faced what could have been the end of his career. But he vehemently denied the charges, and fortunately his many friends, including the Crown Prince, rallied to his cause and thwarted his enemies. The cabinet ordered the Leipziger Allgemeine Zeitung to publish a retraction of its stories critical of Radowitz, and his name was cleared. But the whole incident caused him great mental turmoil and many sleepless nights.<sup>42</sup> The most important result of the Cologne episcopal dispute was that Radowitz separated himself forever from the reactionary circles in Berlin and began to realize that some form of freedom had to exist in any state. With this step, Radowitz began the journey that would lead him to favor a constitution during the stormy years between 1848 and 1850.

The passions stirred by the dispute might have continued to smolder had not Frederick William IV become King in 1840 and reached a compromise with the Catholic prelate. As Crown Prince, the King had disapproved of his father's handling of the affair, so Radowitz hoped for a change in the Prussian attitude towards Roman Catholicism once the new King could take action on the matter. As head of the Lutheran state Church, the Prussian monarch was greatly influenced by developments in the Church of England. He watched with anticipation and sympathy the development of the Oxford Movement and the work of Edward Pusey, who had emerged as the leader of a group of Anglican priests who called upon

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 60-62.

their church to restore its Catholic heritage. The Prussian monarch had read the works of the leaders of the movement and desired a similar renewal in his own church. He was also convinced of the importance of bishops and because of this sought a solution of the conflict with the Roman Catholics.<sup>43</sup>

The King first had to reach a reconciliation with the troublesome Archbishop von Droste-Vischering which would leave the monarch's prestige untainted but at the same time not alienate his Roman Catholic subjects. He decided to ask the prelate to name a Vicar General and then resign, hoping in this way to win back the support of the Catholics. When asked for his opinion, Radowitz suggested that the Archbishop name a Coadjutor, a bishop with the right of succession to the see, who would be acceptable to both the King and the Pope, and then resign. Frederick William IV accepted this proposal and pardoned the prelate for his actions in 1837. The Prussian King then asked Radowitz to travel to Rome to negotiate with the Vatican on the matter. Believing that it would be better for the King to send someone who was not suspect to the Protestants, Radowitz declined the King's request, and Count Friedrich von Brühl went to Rome instead. However, Radowitz continued to mediate the dispute behind the scenes. Johannes Geissel received the approval of both the King and Rome, and after the death of Droste-Vischering on October 19, 1845, became the Archbishop, thus ending the conflict in a manner acceptable to both sides.<sup>44</sup>

Radowitz's religious activity did not confine itself to matters

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<sup>43</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 76-77.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 78; Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 322, 359; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, p. 356.

relating to his Roman Catholic faith, but also led to the establishment of the joint Lutheran-Anglican Bishopric in Jerusalem. With the involvement of Europe in the Near East, it was only natural that religious factors should enter into the issue, since the powers were arguing over the Holy Land. Mohammed Ali had adopted a policy of religious toleration for Roman Catholics, Orthodox and Protestant Christians. Since he had been driven back to his native Egypt and the power of the Sultan was restored in the Holy Land, Europeans were greatly concerned over the future of religious toleration. In order to guarantee the rights of the three great branches of Christianity, Radowitz suggested to his King that each have a representative in Jerusalem to protect its interests. The Prussian King accepted Radowitz's proposal and attempted to win the support of Paris and St. Petersburg for this idea, but found that both states were unwilling to accord toleration to any other branch of the faith. However, Radowitz's suggestion was not fruitless, for the Protestant monarch began negotiations with London with the object of founding a joint Lutheran-Anglican mission to the Holy Land. In 1841, the Bishopric in Jerusalem was founded by England and Prussia. Both sides agreed that the bishop and clergy should have Anglican apostolic succession and that the two nations would alternate in the right to name the bishop. This joint venture lasted until 1887, when the Prussian Church withdrew. But the Anglican support continued, and the Jerusalem see grew to become an autonomous member of the Anglican Communion under an Archbishop in Jerusalem and several bishops. Through his suggestion, Radowitz significantly affected the growth of the Anglican Communion.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 95; Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, pp. 438-443.

In addition to bringing a solution to the Cologne episcopal dispute and opening negotiations leading to the establishment of the Bishopric in Jerusalem, 1840 opened a new chapter in Radowitz's life through the ascension of the Crown Prince to the throne as King Frederick William IV. He had been a close friend of the new monarch for several years and through his intervention had climbed higher in the service of his adopted land. German liberals greeted the new King in the belief that his reign would bring about constitutional reform in the Hohenzollern lands. Some believed that he would lead Prussia to the foremost position in the Germanies and work for unification, and his first actions as ruler gave credence to these hopes. He restored the exiled poet Ernst Moritz Arndt to his chair at Bonn and called the historian Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann to a position at the university on the Rhine. Dahlmann had won fame and support from the liberals for his resignation from his chair at Göttingen University rather than accept the absolutist government of the King of Hanover in 1837. The Grimm brothers, who had joined Dahlmann in resigning their posts at the Hanoverian university, were granted posts at the Berlin Akademie. Frederick William also appointed a new ministry composed of men with liberal sentiments. He also relaxed censorship of the press and restored the provincial estates, which he invited to establish committees to advise him.<sup>46</sup>

However, those who believed that the ascension of the new King would herald a new age of liberalism in Germany were mistaken. For the monarch was not a liberal but a romantic, to whom the modern ideas of liberalism were meaningless. His goal was not to provide for the

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<sup>46</sup>Carr, History of Germany, p. 29.

welfare of his people in a material or intellectual sense, but rather to assist them to live according to the will of God and prepare themselves for the afterlife. The new King dreamed of a restoration of the Holy Roman Empire with the Habsburg Emperor on the throne. He also hoped to erect a great alliance of all European states to insure peace and cooperation. Frederick William IV was a product of the romantic age, and his political ideas and actions showed this. He had a tendency to vacillate on the issues and to agree with whomever he was speaking. It is of no little significance to remember that in 1858, the King was declared insane and his brother, the future Emperor William I, made regent. While the study of psychology was not advanced enough in his day to obtain a scientific diagnosis of his illness, his symptoms suggest that the new King might have been mentally incompetent throughout the entire period he sat on the throne.<sup>47</sup>

Many assumed that Frederick William IV would call Radowitz to Berlin immediately and appoint him to a high post in the government, perhaps a place on the General Staff or as Minister of War. The Countess Voss, Radowitz's mother-in-law, had written Frederick William IV while he was still Crown Prince to ask him to relieve her son-in-law of his duties in Frankfurt and assign him to Berlin. However, on May 8, the future monarch replied that he was very pleased with Radowitz's accomplishments on the Military Commission and wished him to continue his good work. Speculation on the matter continued, and on June 17, 1840, the Augsburger Allgemeine Zeitung lent credence to the belief that the

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<sup>47</sup>"Resume d'une conversation en septembre 1841 avec Mr. de Radowitz a Francfort sur le Main," Peter von Meyendorff, Ein russischer Diplomat an den Höfen von Berlin und Wien, ed. by Otto Hoetzsch (Berlin, 1923), p. 184.

new King would promote Radowitz through a report that he was to be named to an important office in the new government. However, upon the ascension of Frederick William IV, Radowitz did not receive a new post, but continued his work in Frankfurt.<sup>48</sup>

Although he remained in Frankfurt, Radowitz became one of the new King's most important advisors on problems such as that which arose over the coup de etat of King Ernest Augustus of Hanover. Since 1837, the Kingdom of Hanover had been involved in a bitter dispute between the ruler and the Diet. The Guelph monarch attempted to impose an absolutist constitution on his kingdom and met with the resistance of the Diet. In January, 1848, Frederick William IV traveled to England for the baptism of the Prince of Wales and stopped in Hanover. While there, King Ernst Augustus won his support in the argument with the Diet. Later that year, the Hanoverian King traveled to Berlin seeking additional encouragement from the Hohenzollern ruler. In March, 1842, the Prussian King called Radowitz to Berlin to ask his advice on the problem. After studying the issue, Radowitz determined that Ernest Augustus was wrong and that Frederick William IV would make a serious mistake if he were to lend support to the Guelph monarch in his struggle with the Diet. Gratified that his sovereign had called him to Berlin to seek his opinion. Radowitz used his influence to persuade the Prussian King to separate himself from the actions of Ernest Augustus and helped the monarch write a manifesto clarifying his position on the issue. This document stated that the Prussian King believed that the King of Hanover should follow the constitution of his kingdom and that the dispute did

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<sup>48</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 73; Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 301-303.

not involve matters of concern to the German Confederation.<sup>49</sup> Thus Radowitz again favored legal methods in the struggle with the liberals and opposed attempts to use coercion against them.

Since Radowitz had enjoyed considerable success in diplomacy, many began to believe that he could better serve the interests of his country in the diplomatic service. In 1841, Count Mortimer von Maltzan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, had suggested that Radowitz be named Director of the Political section of the Foreign Ministry, but before this could be acted upon, Maltzan became ill, and his suggestion was forgotten. For several years, Radowitz had wanted to become Prussian Minister to the Courts of Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt and Nassau, with headquarters in Karlsruhe. He had long enjoyed the atmosphere and location of the capital city of Baden and hoped to live there, but the dispute over the fortresses had delayed any discussion on the matter. While Radowitz was in Berlin in March, 1842, discussion began about the possibility of assigning him to some diplomatic post. For a time, the King considered naming his friend as the new Prussian member of the Diet of the German Confederation, but decided instead to give the post to Count August von Donhoff-Friedrichstein. Disappointed, Radowitz returned to Frankfurt to find that he had been awarded the post he desired, Prussian Minister to Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt and Nassau. On August 1, 1842, Radowitz and his family arrived in Karlsruhe to begin a new chapter in his career.<sup>50</sup>

In the years spent at Frankfurt, Radowitz had learned a great deal that would shape his political philosophy and prepare him for his work

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<sup>50</sup>Ibid., pp. 102-106.

for German unification. He saw first hand the disunity and weakness of the Confederation and began to consider how to remedy this situation. He deepened his knowledge of the art of diplomacy and of the other German states. Through his efforts to formulate a common defense posture in the face of the French threat in 1840, he had emerged a well known and respected figure in German affairs, a position he would be able to use in the years ahead. In short, Radowitz matured greatly in knowledge and experience during the years of service in Frankfurt and learned much that would aid him in 1848. He would continue to learn and develop his political ideas during the years at Karlsruhe and the stormy Vormärz period.



## CHAPTER IV

### KARLSRUHE

The next chapter in Radowitz's life was an interlude of relative calm between his years with the Military Commission and the events that were to follow the Revolution of 1848. By the time Radowitz arrived in the capital of Baden on August 1, 1842, the tension caused by the conflict over the fortress had been forgotten, and once again Baden and Prussia enjoyed a cordial relationship. From one of the centers of the German liberal movement he witnessed firsthand the constitutional struggles in Baden as well as those in Hesse-Darmstadt and Nassau.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, and despite his distance from Berlin, Radowitz still exerted an influence over Frederick William IV and thus contributed to the shaping of German history. Though one often gets the impression that the 1840s were a period of such intense reaction that the liberals had no alternative but revolution in 1848, this is not really the case. Many important reforms had taken place before the outbreaks of March, 1848, and even before then Prussia was well on the road to the development of a constitutional form of government. From his new position in Karlsruhe, Radowitz watched these events with great interest.

Since the ascension of Frederick William IV to the throne, liberals had looked to him with the hope that he would undertake much needed

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<sup>1</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 106-107.

reforms and lead his state toward a constitutional system. Throughout 1840 and 1841, the new monarch had indeed contemplated changes in the Prussian government and gave evidence that he intended a thoroughgoing reform. He believed that the legislative arm of the state should be composed of the historical estates which had been in existence since medieval times. Since the estates formed the provincial diets which only considered matters of a local nature, the cabinet issued an order on August 18, 1842, instructing the provincial diets to name committees to represent their interests at a meeting in Berlin on October 18. The King hoped that this action would complement the regional chambers with a body to discuss issues of national importance. The United Committees of the Diets were to have no real power and could only consider matters referred to them by the government,<sup>2</sup> but many interpreted the calling of the committees to be the first step in providing Prussia with true representative government. However, time was to show that the optimists of 1842 misinterpreted their King's motives.

Again in September, while the Prussian ruler participated in the laying of the cornerstone of the Cathedral at Cologne, he evinced further signs of a reformist mood through a speech on the importance of German unity. After leaving Cologne, the King traveled to Koblenz where he met Radowitz, who acted as his guide as he journeyed through Baden to Neuchatel, the Hohenzollern principality in Switzerland, and back to Frankfurt. While accompanying his ruler, Radowitz discussed with him the plans for the upcoming meeting of the United Committees and the hopes

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<sup>2</sup>Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, p. 516; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, p. 488.

of the liberals that this would lead to true representative government. Since many had misinterpreted the calling of the Committees as a sign that the King was on the verge of granting a constitution, Radowitz recommended that he make his intentions clear by issuing a manifesto on the issue. Radowitz drafted a proposed statement and gave it to the monarch while they were in Frankfurt.<sup>3</sup>

In the meantime, the Austrians became quite concerned with the developments in Prussia, and Metternich traveled to the Rhineland to discover the intentions of the Hohenzollern ruler. Radowitz met with the Austrian Foreign Minister at his estate, Johannisberg, to reassure him that Frederick William had not been converted to liberalism. As the two discussed the issue, Radowitz realized how different it was to be a political leader, for men at the center of politics had to be concerned with every possible change in the system that might jeopardize their position.<sup>4</sup>

Radowitz's proposed manifesto was couched in very vehement terms and stated that the King had no intention of turning his state into a liberal constitutional monarchy or yielding power to the majority. The wording of the document was so strong that many of the King's advisors believed that it would cause too much antagonism. Therefore, the monarch and his ministers decided that it would be better for the ruler not to make a statement to the Committees, but instead to have the Minister of the Interior, Count Adolf von Arnim, open the proceedings with a less defiant but also more ambiguous statement of the King's purposes

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<sup>3</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 111.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 110; Hassel, Radowitz, p. 370.

in calling the meeting. Furthermore, when the Committees of the Provincial Diets met at Berlin on October 17, 1842, Frederick William IV spent a great deal of time conferring with members of the Committees and left them with the impression that he favored constitutional reforms. Consequently, though the government had called the Committees merely to support the construction of an all-Prussian railroad system, the discussions soon turned to the matter of constitutional reform. After the delegates began to demand the creation of a representative government, the King ordered the meetings ended on November 10. Although they had actually accomplished very little, the meetings aroused in many the hopes of more permanent representative institutions.<sup>5</sup>

At the end of 1842, Frederick William called Radowitz to seek his advice on proposed changes in the censorship law. When the King ascended the throne, he favored freedom of the press, but the Karlsbad Decrees of 1819 and the Prussian Censorship Law of the same year forbade this. The Karlsbad decrees required that all publications of less than twenty pages receive the approval of governmental officials before release. The Decrees also held the local governments responsible for the prevention of the publication of any works that might threaten the security of the Confederation. As required by the German Confederation, Prussia had created a strict system of national and local censorship under the Censorship office of the Ministry of the Interior. The Prussian law required the submission of the manuscript of every periodical, tract or book to the censor for approval or change before publication.

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<sup>5</sup>Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, pp. 516-517; *ibid.*, pp. 520-521; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, p. 488.

In the summer of 1841, the King decided to allow the press in his lands as much freedom as possible without violating the censorship laws of the Confederation. He secured the advice of Radowitz, who fully approved of his ruler's intentions. On December 24, 1841, Frederick William IV instructed provincial officials to relax enforcement of the censorship law.<sup>6</sup>

The new freedom of expression resulting from the King's decree caused a substantial increase in the publication and importation of works critical of the Prussian government. This led the King to support several conservative publications which he hoped would act as a counterweight to the liberal ones. Since the old conservative Berliner Politische Wochenblatt had ceased publication in 1841, the government transferred its support to the Literarische Zeitung, edited by C. H. Brandes. Upon recommendation of Radowitz, Frederick William called Victor Aime Huber to Berlin, where he founded a conservative journal entitled Janus. However, this was unsuccessful, and the increasing criticism of the government caused the monarch to begin to reconsider his reform of the censorship law.<sup>7</sup>

Radowitz arrived in Berlin shortly after the beginning of 1843 to advise the Hohenzollern monarch on the censorship question. He went immediately to work and within a month produced a draft law for submission to the ministry. Radowitz suggested that a system of self-censorship

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<sup>6</sup>Treitschke, History of Germany, VI, pp. 525-527; "Provisorische Bestimmungen hinsichtlich der Freiheit der Presse von 20. September 1819," and "Preussische Zensur-Verordnung von 18. Oktober 1819," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 91-93, 95-98.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 527-546.

be introduced. Each person in an official or scholarly office would be required to censor his own works and give assurance that they did not contain dangerous ideas. The works of men who could not give this assurance would be submitted to the censor for examination. Radowitz was not so lenient with newspapers and pamphlets. These he considered business ventures rather than true literature. He proposed that newspapers be placed under the strict control of the state, which would then issue licenses to publish only to respectable men who would guarantee that their publications would not contain dangerous ideas. In Radowitz's plan, the publisher would be personally responsible for the contents of his newspaper and subject to fine or loss of license for violation of the censorship law.<sup>8</sup>

However, the special commission set up by the King to examine the press did not sympathize with Radowitz's proposals. Instead the King and his ministers decided to end the limited freedom of the press and reinstate strict censorship through enforcing the old law. Still, Frederick William did not completely abandon his desire for censorship reform and even asked Radowitz to undertake a diplomatic journey to Vienna to win Austrian approval for reform of the Federal censorship law. But Radowitz, believing that such an effort would end in failure, declined the request.<sup>9</sup>

His duties in Berlin completed, Radowitz returned to Karlsruhe, where he and his family lived in a house on the Kraiserstrasse. The Prussian Minister observed very closely the political affairs and

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<sup>8</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 113-114.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 114-115.

representative institutions of Baden and also traveled frequently to Frankfurt to follow the affairs of the Military Commission, on which he still represented Prussia. His best friends during this period were Julius Gottlob von Nositz, the Saxon member of the Federal Diet, and Friedrich von Pechlin, the member of the Federal Diet for Holstein-Lauenburg. Radowitz's duties were not demanding, and he had time to become acquainted with the growing radical element in Baden. He occasionally discussed politics with such men as Johann Adam von Itzstein, the chief spokesman of the opposition in the Badenese Diet, and Friedrich Karl Hecker, the leader of the democratic faction. The Grand Duke often conferred with Radowitz in times of political crisis and was advised to avoid any illegal actions.<sup>10</sup>

His observations of German liberalism and radicalism in action led Radowitz to think very seriously about political matters, and this led him to continue his writing. In 1846, he published anonymously his most important political work of the Vormärz, his Colloquies upon State and Church. In this book, he constructed a hypothetical discuss among a Prussian officer, a liberal, a bureaucrat and a socialist. In spirited debate, each states his political position, and Waldheim, the central character and a personification of the author, intervenes to condemn political factionalism and the divisions it can cause in society. Waldheim appeals to each to adopt a moderate course of action. He criticizes not only democracy, as a source of partisan division, but absolute monarchy as well, as a relic of the past no longer viable as a form of government. The disdain for political parties as divisive forces in

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<sup>10</sup>Radowitz (son), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen, p. 2.

society and his appeal to moderation are very important aspects of Radowitz's political philosophy.<sup>11</sup>

After 1843, Radowitz did not meet with Frederick William IV for almost two years. Finally, in July, 1845, the Hohenzollern King summoned Radowitz to Stolzenfels, where he was entertaining Queen Victoria of England. The King not only promoted his friend to the rank of Major General but took the opportunity to discuss his hopes and plans for Prussia as well. Frederick William confided to him that he had not forgotten his desire to give his land a constitution, but that a group led by his brother, the future Emperor William I, fought every suggestion of this. But the King was determined; he had begun to consider calling together an assembly of deputies from the Provincial Diets to exercise very limited powers over taxation and laws.<sup>12</sup>

Since Frederick William had recalled Canitz from his post in Vienna and had named him Foreign Minister in July, 1845, speculation circulated that the King would name Radowitz either Prussian Minister to Vienna or to the Federal Diet. Radowitz himself discussed this possibility with the King at Stolzenfels, hoping to use either position to begin reforms in the German Confederation. However, Radowitz would have to wait several years for his opportunity, for he remained at Karlsruhe.<sup>13</sup>

At the end of 1845, sorrow struck the happy home of Radowitz and his family. On Christmas day, his daughter, Marie, fell ill and died after an illness of several weeks. The Prussian Minister was greatly

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<sup>11</sup>Radowitz, Neue Gespräche über der Gegenwart über Staat und Kirche (2nd. ed. Erfurt, 1851).

<sup>12</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, pp. 123-124.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., pp. 124.



shaken by the loss of his child, and during the anxious hours at her bedside, the rheumatism which plagued Radowitz through his life became unbearable. Consequently, he left Karlsruhe for two months in Switzerland and Italy during the spring of 1846. Unfortunately, the vacation failed to bring Radowitz relief from his pain, and when he returned to Karlsruhe his condition was even worse than it had been before his departure. He even changed doctors without success. Finally his old physician in Hanau, Dr. Klopp, was able to treat him and relieve the anguish.<sup>14</sup> Although he obtained some temporary relief from his rheumatism, Radowitz's health would never cease to cause him problems.

The conflict between the liberals and the Grand Duke Leopold I of Baden continued to grow, and Radowitz soon found himself involved. Since the election of 1843, the liberals had a majority in the Diet of the Duchy and had attempted to erect a parliamentary government. The first move of the liberals was to force the removal of the reactionary Minister of the Interior, Frederick von Blittersdorf. This was the first instance of the dismissal of a minister through a vote of no confidence in German history. The Diet then relaxed censorship and limited the power of the police. One night the ruler secretly visited the Prussian Minister to ask his advice on the continually explosive situation. Radowitz suggested that the ruler follow legal channels to reestablish his power over his lands, develop close ties with Berlin and Vienna, appoint ministers in agreement with his basic goals and secure a sympathetic Diet through new elections. The Duke accepted this advice and removed the Minister of the Interior, Karl Friedrich Nebenius, the leader of the liberals,

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 126-127.

and named a moderate, Johann Baptist Beck, in his place. However, Radowitz's advice proved to be ineffective, because the new minister soon championed liberal programs and was himself in conflict with his ruler.<sup>15</sup> The clash between the liberals and conservatives would continue throughout the Vormärz and spread to other areas, including Prussia.

Throughout the 1840s, rumors continued to fly that Frederick William IV was considering the introduction of constitutional forms. On February 3, 1847, many believed that their hopes had come true when the King called the Provincial Diets to meet in Berlin as a United Diet, to discuss the financing of a proposed railroad between Berlin and East Prussia. However, the enthusiasm of the liberals soon cooled, for as soon as the meeting was announced, the King began to limit the Diet's power. He announced that a Curia of Lords would be placed over it, and that he retained the power to determine matters to be considered. He also refused to guarantee that the United Diet would hold supreme legislative authority in the Kingdom.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the limitations on the power of the Diet, many still believed that its opening in April, 1847, would begin a new era of constitutionalism in Prussia. However, this cooled when the King addressed the assembled delegates. He asserted that those who believed that Prussia was on the road to constitutional government were mistaken, for he would allow "no paper document to come between him and his people." When the United Diet demanded a guarantee that it would continue to meet regularly before it would approve loans for the construction of the

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>16</sup>"Prussian Politics," The Times (London), February 17, 1847, p. 4.

railroad, the King ordered the body adjourned after only two months in session.<sup>17</sup>

Despite its failure, the Prussian United Diet of 1847 opened the door to representative systems in the Hohenzollern lands, and once opened it could not be shut. The Diet had provided a forum for liberal ideas and a platform for aspiring leaders of Prussian liberalism. Such men as the Westphalian Baron Georg von Vincke and the Rhenish merchants Lucolf Camphausen and Hermann Beckerath rose to positions of national prominence through their activities in 1847. The conservative side also developed new leaders, one of which was an obscure young Junker named Otto von Bismarck.<sup>18</sup>

Although Radowitz did not actually take part in the meetings of the United Diet, he watched its activities from Karlsruhe with great interests. By publishing a series of four Speeches Undelivered in the Diet Hall in Berlin, he was able to comment on the business before the body and the arguments of some of the participants. In his first address, Radowitz defended the King's opening remarks, charging that when the liberals demanded a representative system in return for approval of the loans to finance the railroad, they were guilty of using means that would lead to the destruction of the standing monarchy. Radowitz next commented on a proposal that would open membership in the United Diet to all regardless of religious affiliation. While favoring religious toleration, Radowitz also believed that it was essential for Prussia to remain a Christian state. Because he believed that it was impossible for the

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<sup>17</sup> Hajo Holborn, A History of Modern Germany, 1840-1945 (New York, 1969), pp. 33-35.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

state to assume the right to judge which branch of Christianity followed the true teachings of Christ, he argued that the state should recognize the legal rights of all sects professing loyalty to Christ and allow their members the opportunity to participate in state affairs. One reason for Radowitz's position was his own adherence to a minority religion. Although he favored toleration of all Christian denominations, he was not in favor of all religious freedom. He strongly believed that the state must remain in the hands of Christians and opposed allowing Jews to participate in government or hold teaching positions, for this would undermine the Christian nature of the state.<sup>19</sup>

In his third address, Radowitz dealt with the most important issues before the United Diet: the proposed railroad and the liberal demands. The spokesman for Prussian conservatism bitterly denounced the liberals, who were blocking a necessary railroad with their demands that the United Diet be accorded more power. Radowitz argued that posing such conditions would allow a political faction to dictate to the people of Prussia. He believed that the King was the highest power in the state and that he alone could govern in a manner that would be in the best interests of the people as a whole.<sup>20</sup>

In the conclusion of his work, Radowitz assessed the importance of the United Diet. He praised Frederick William IV for calling the meeting, because Radowitz believed that the estates should have some advisory power, but condemned the liberals because he opposed the creation

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<sup>19</sup> Radowitz, Reden welche in dem Stände-Salle zu Berlin nicht gehalten worden, in Gesammelte Schriften, III, pp. 206-216, 235-252.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., pp. 217-234.

of a representative government. The leading conservative declared that a state based on rule by the majority alone would soon turn into a tyranny, but he also opposed unlimited despotism, which he believed to be equally dangerous. To Radowitz the highest principle upon which to base a state was the law, and he consistently opposed any attempt by liberal or conservative groups to violate the basic laws of the land.<sup>21</sup>

The events of 1847 brought Radowitz out of the inactivity of Karlsruhe and once again into the political arena. In September, Radowitz was once again at the side of Frederick William IV, who had called him to join him as he traveled in the Rhineland. As they journeyed from Mainz to Münster, they found time to discuss the outcome of the United Diet and German politics in general. Radowitz realized that the monarch had lost much prestige by the unfortunate outcome of the United Diet and resolved to find a means whereby this could be regained and at the same time make important changes in the German Confederation.<sup>22</sup>

For years, Radowitz had realized the many flaws of the Confederation, and in the fall of 1847, he decided that the time was ripe for reform. On October 12, he sent a detailed program to Frederick William IV. In this document, he pointed out the defects of the old organization and argued that by being tied to Austrian interests, Prussia was prevented from taking any actions to protect herself in the event of a serious crisis. He asked the King to use his influence to call a congress of princes to discuss a set of proposed changes in the composition of the Confederation. Radowitz suggested that a majority of two-thirds

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pp. 253-265.

<sup>22</sup>Radowitz, Geschichte Meines Lebens, p. 135.

of the Federal Diet be granted the power to change the Federal Act instead of the absolute unanimity required by the settlement of Vienna. This would make it impossible for one state to block changes in the organization of the Confederation. He also proposed to develop a new structure on the basis of the Customs Union, created between 1818 and 1846 under Prussian auspices, to replace the Confederation. This would result in a more unified state and eliminate Austrian control over Prussian interests. To settle any dispute between member states, he proposed the establishment of a Supreme Court, thus preventing the reoccurrence of an incident like the argument over the site of the fortress at Ulm. Radowitz also proposed to limit the sovereignty of the states through the creation of common criminal and commercial law codes, emigration regulations, and a unified postal and military system.<sup>23</sup> Thus, his reforms would replace the weak and disunited German Confederation with a Federal state, which would not destroy the separate identity of the states but would limit their ability to indulge in the old particularism that had plagued Germany for such a long time.

Radowitz defended his proposals in "Thoughts on the Pressing Needs of the German Confederation," published in November, 1847. In this work, he pronounced the German Confederation a complete failure. To support this contention, he cited its inability to face the threat posed by the Revolutions of 1830, the lack of agreement concerning military precautions in response to the French threat of 1840, and the rivalry among the small states and between Austria and Prussia. Radowitz

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<sup>23</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Frankfurt, October 12, 1847, Radowitz, Nachgelassene Briefe und Aufzeichnungen zur Geschichte der Jahre 1848-1853 (Osnabrück, 1967), pp. 3-4.

maintained that it was very important that the old divisions cease and that Prussia remain a strong state.<sup>24</sup>

However, before serious consideration could be given to Radowitz's plan for reform, events in Switzerland created a crisis that required immediate attention. Civil war rocked the small state in the fall of 1847, and the powers of Europe became involved. The troubles had begun in 1841, when the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Aargau came into conflict during the process of revising the cantonal constitution. The Catholics, who were displeased with the final form of the document, resorted to a rebellion in which several monasteries were involved. This was quelled, and the government of the canton ordered the offending convents disbanded. The Catholics next appealed to the Federal Diet of Switzerland which upheld the decision of the cantonal government.<sup>25</sup>

The events in Aargau and the decision of the Diet caused the conflict to spread throughout the rest of Switzerland. On December 11, 1845, the cantons of Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, Zug, Freiburg and Valois formed a society called the Sonderbund to protect Roman Catholic interests. On July 20, 1847, the Protestant-dominated Diet demanded its dissolution. When the members of the alliance resisted, a civil war broke out. The Protestant army led by General Guillaume Dufour of Geneva conducted a well-organized campaign from November 10 to 26, 1847, and decisively defeated the Sonderbund forces.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Radowitz, "Denkschrift über die von deutsche Bunde zu ergriefenden Massregeln," Deutschland und Friedrich Wilhelm IV, in Gesammelte Schriften, III, pp. 334-337.

<sup>25</sup>Charles Gillard, A History of Switzerland (London, 1955), p. 86.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., pp. 89-90.

Because of the important geographical position of Switzerland, a civil war there could not be overlooked by the other European nations. Prussia was especially concerned because the King of Prussia was also sovereign Prince of the Canton of Neuchatel. Although a Protestant country, the Hohenzollern Kingdom, along with France and Austria, sided with the Sonderbund because of the liberal tendencies of the Protestant forces. England, on the other hand, supported the Protestants.<sup>27</sup>

With the beginning of actual fighting, the concern of the powers deepened. On November 4, the French Foreign Minister, Francois Guizot, sent a note to London, Berlin, Vienna and St. Petersburg demanding that the Protestants cease immediately all military actions against the rebellious Roman Catholic cantons. He also required that the Sonderbund be given special representation on the Diet and that the religious conflict be resolved by the Pope. The French minister suggested that the proposals for the reform of the Swiss constitution be submitted to a conference of the five great powers for approval.<sup>28</sup>

The next day the Prussian Foreign Minister, Canitz, summoned Radowitz to Berlin. Radowitz tried to use his appearance before the ministry to urge immediate action on his proposals for the reform of the German Confederation, but the King and his ministers were too concerned with the outcome of events in Switzerland to become involved in Radowitz's projects. Instead, they decided to send him to Vienna to reach an agreement with the Habsburg court on a common position on Switzerland and the location for the conference of the five great powers. Frederick

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<sup>27</sup>Lina Hug and Richard Stead, The Story of Switzerland (New York, 1893), p. 392.

<sup>28</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, p. 458.



William IV hoped that the powers would agree to meet in Neuchatel, believing that this would emphasize the neutrality of the principality. The Prussian monarch also hoped that if the German Confederation could act with unity during the crisis, this would be a step toward establishing it as a European power.<sup>29</sup>

Traveling by rail, Radowitz arrived in Vienna in November to begin negotiations with Metternich. After a month of discussions on the Sonderbund war, the two men agreed that the conference would take place in Neuchatel according to the wishes of the Prussian monarch. They also decided that if intervention became necessary, the great powers should impose a commercial embargo and occupy the frontier cantons of Ticino, Geneva and Basle.<sup>30</sup>

His work finished in Austria, Radowitz returned to Berlin on December 17, 1847. He found the King more alarmed than ever by the events in Switzerland. Frederick William believed that the anti-Sonderbund coalition was seething with radicalism which could infect Europe as far as the Hohenzollern kingdom. The King consequently decided to send Radowitz to Paris to win approval for the agreement reached between Berlin and Vienna.<sup>31</sup>

Radowitz arrived in the French capital on Christmas Eve, and met Foreign Minister Guizot for the first time the next day. This official agreed that order must be restored in Switzerland and that the European powers must combat radicalism wherever it developed. But Radowitz found

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid., pp. 458-459.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., p. 463; Treitschke, German History, VII, p. 588.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

King Louis Philippe far less resolute; he showed himself singularly unenthusiastic about military involvement in the Swiss dispute. The ruler explained that the French people had a great fear of war; as long as they believed that the monarchy would not involve the country in armed conflict and that a return to a republican government would inevitably lead to war they would support the monarchy. However, if Louis Philippe led his nation to war over the Sonderbund crisis, this belief would be destroyed and the monarchy would be in danger of being overthrown. Discussing domestic politics, the French King informed Radowitz that the radical party in the French Chamber was not dangerous, but that Adolphe Thiers, the leader of the Left Center Party who invoked the glories of the Napoleonic era and had the support of the youth and the army, represented a potential threat.<sup>32</sup>

After meeting with the King and his Foreign Minister, Radowitz was able to report to Berlin that Guizot had the will to destroy the radicals in Switzerland, but wanted to postpone action until he had more support in the Chamber. He suggested that Austria and Prussia delay any action until France was willing to support them. The wait was not long, for on January 2, 1848, Guizot submitted to Radowitz a note for his consideration. The French Foreign Minister demanded that the anti-Sonderbund troops immediately evacuate the Sonderbund cantons and demobilize and that all changes in the Swiss constitution be made by unanimous agreement. Two days later the text was transmitted to Vienna and Berlin. Radowitz suggested that Austria and Prussia reinforce the French note with one in German, because he believed that the German language

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<sup>32</sup>Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 473-474.

would carry with it a more earnest and majestic tone.<sup>33</sup>

While awaiting the outcome of his diplomatic efforts, Radowitz also found time for other activities. His wife had joined him in Paris at the end of December. He studied in the French National Library and spent his evenings at the salon of Princess Dorothea Lieven, where he met the leaders of the government and important diplomatic officials. In the Rothschild mansion he met Adolphe Thiers, whom he considered a dangerous fanatic because of his fiery French nationalism.<sup>34</sup>

Finally, the powers agreed to accept Guizot's note, France, Prussia and Austria signed the document on January 18, 1848, and it was promptly dispatched to the Swiss Diet. However, the outbreak of the revolution in Paris the next month and its spread to Germany in March prevented the powers from enforcing their will on the Swiss, and the anti-Sonderbund forces won a complete victory. Despite the failure of the powers to force the Swiss to accept their demands, Radowitz's efforts in international diplomacy had been a success. His work in Paris completed, the Prussian diplomat returned to Berlin on January 31.<sup>35</sup>

With this matter out of the way, he could now turn his attention to his reform proposals for the Confederation. Upon his return to the Prussian capital, Frederick William kept his word and sent Radowitz to Vienna to attempt to win Austrian acceptance for changes in the German Confederation. Radowitz arrived in Vienna on March 4, 1848, to discuss his program with Metternich. The Austrian Foreign Minister received

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., p. 474.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 476-479.

<sup>35</sup>Treitschke, German History, VII, p. 58.

him and his proposals with unusual cordiality, for revolution had broken out only a week before in France and Louis Philippe had been deposed. France was in a state of dangerous turmoil, for an ominous Second Republic had been established, and Metternich was anxious to come to an accord with Prussia in the event of renewed French aggressiveness. They agreed to call a congress consisting of either the German Princes or their representatives to meet in Dresden. The ministers also decided to summon a military congress to meet on March 30.<sup>36</sup> However, while Radowitz and Metternich pondered the future of the German Confederation in Vienna, events in other cities were rendering their discussions obsolete.

The fall of King Louis Philippe on February 24 soon triggered the outbreak of revolution in Germany, as the revolutionary fervor spread to the south German states. Public meetings in Mannheim and Heidelberg issued demands for freedom of the press, trial by jury, the introduction of constitutional government in all German states, and the calling of a national parliament to discuss the revision of the German Confederation. In these states, well-known progressives, or "March Ministers," were appointed to high positions in the government. In Baden, Karl Mathy became prime minister, and Karl Theodor Welcker was appointed the new minister to the Federal Diet. In Württemberg, King William I elevated Paul Pfizer to a cabinet position. In Hesse-Darmstadt the Grand Duke named Heinrich von Gagern, who later became the President of the Frankfurt National Assembly, prime minister. In Munich, indignation over the

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<sup>36</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Vienna, March 4, 6 and 13, 1848, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 11, 12, 24-25.

affair between Louis I and the notorious Lola Montez accelerated the revolution and forced the King to abdicate. From the south the revolution spread to other German states. In Hanover, King Ernest Augustus appointed liberal ministers, thus undoing the authoritarian coup of 1837. From southern Germany, the revolution then found its way to Austria. On March 13, after a series of disturbances centered around the City Hall, Metternich was forced to resign. Within a week, all of Radowitz's carefully conceived proposals for a reform of the Confederation were thus overtaken by events; his first attempt at German unification had been a failure.<sup>37</sup>

Radowitz first reacted to the Revolution by pressing for the calling of his proposed congress at Dresden which he believed would revise the Confederation, unify Germany and thus solve the problems posed by the insurrection. By March 17, however, he realized that things had progressed to such a point as to make this impossible. In a letter to his wife, the Prussian statesman expressed the fear that the result of the revolution would be the end of the Prussian monarchy and also of his years of service. On the same day, he informed the King of the refusal of the south German states to participate in the proposed meeting at Dresden. In this situation, Radowitz could do no more than advise monetary capitulation to the triumphant forces of revolution. On March 16, he urged Frederick William to appoint several ministers dedicated to constitutionalism and open discussion in the cabinet. He further suggested that censorship be terminated and that the Prussian United Diet be summoned to prepare a new constitutional system based on

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<sup>37</sup>Holborn, Germany 1840-1945, p. 48; Valentine, Deutsche Revolution, I, pp. 402-405.

representative government. In the event of an uprising in Berlin, Radowitz advised the King to call the troops back to their barracks at Spandau, since a prolonged battle in the city would only demoralize the soldiers and their leaders.<sup>38</sup>

Radowitz's ideas represented the thoughts of a realist. He believed that once the forces of revolution had been unleashed, a return to the old order was impossible. He had witnessed the fall of Charles X in 1830 and more recently that of Metternich, and did not want to see the same thing happen to Frederick William IV. He was also progressive because he supported changes that would remove the major causes of discontent. Even before the Revolution, he had realized that the existing Confederation had to be revised in order to enable it to meet the demands of the modern world.

As Radowitz feared, the Revolution which had swept the rest of Germany soon reached Berlin. The center of revolutionary activity in the Prussian capital was a park along the Spree River, called the Zelte, after the tents which had once stood on the location. On March 7, the King issued a decree announcing the regular meeting of the United Diet and calling upon his people to stand behind him rather than revolt as the people of other German states had done. The crowd in the Zelte replied by drafting a petition demanding the immediate calling of the United Diet and freedom of the press. It is significant that the leadership in the crowd decided to mail this document to their sovereign

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<sup>38</sup>Radowitz to Canitz, Vienna, March 16, 1848, and Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Vienna, March 17, 1848, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 31-36; Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Vienna, March 16, 1848, Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 572-574.

rather than march on the palace.<sup>39</sup>

This initial protest was followed by a series of clashes between the demonstrating crowds and the troops guarding the city. These reached a climax on March 16, when a company of soldiers killed two persons while attempting to clear a square. On the evening of March 17, Frederick William IV signed a patent announcing the opening of the Diet on April 2, conceding to it the authority to control finances and to meet regularly, as the first United Diet had demanded in 1847. The King ordered soldiers from as far away as Magdeburg to move to the city to quell any possible trouble. At 10:00 on the morning of March 18, a crowd assembled in front of the palace, and the monarch appeared to receive its demonstrations of loyalty. But because of an insult either to the King or his troops, an officer commanding a cavalry regiment ordered his men to open fire. After the soldiers fired two volleys which killed several in the crowd, the people dispersed and began to erect barricades in the streets. The troops attacked these and the fighting continued throughout the night, but little was actually accomplished by either side.<sup>40</sup>

The sight of his subjects involved in fratricidal combat greatly distressed Frederick William IV. During the night of March 18, he drafted a proclamation, "To the Inhabitants of my Beloved Father City," which promised to withdraw all troops from Berlin if the people would demolish all barricades and send him men of "the true old spirit of

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<sup>39</sup> Priscilla Robertson, The Revolutions of 1848: A Social History (Princeton, 1967), pp. 116-117.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.; Andrew Jackson Donelson, "The American Minister in Berlin on the Revolution of March, 1848," American Historical Review, XXIII, No. 2 (January 26, 1918), p. 360.

Berlin." He also promised to devote himself to the creation of a new Prussia and through it, a new Germany. The people formed a procession bearing the bodies of those killed in the fighting and marched to the palace, where the King was forced to review this demonstration and remove his hat in its honor.<sup>41</sup> While it would be an oversimplification to suggest that the letter from Radowitz on March 16 was the sole reason for these actions by the King, it is indicative of the influence wielded by Radowitz that the course he suggested was that taken in the end.

At first the news from Berlin greatly distressed Radowitz, but after the full details of what had taken place reached him, he began to approve of the King's actions. He believed that through his statements to the people, Frederick William IV had placed himself at the head of Germany and had finally separated the destiny of Prussia from that of Austria. He felt that the King should now steer a middle course between the extremes of radicalism and reaction, depending upon his leadership of the army in time of war as a basis for his restoration of power. He believed that the monarch should remain above the petty fighting among parties, gain support from the monarchists of the liberal-constitutional faction, and most important, show his concern for the plight of the working class. Radowitz believed that the workers were not opposed to the monarchy and would fight for their King if he championed reform in their favor. From Vienna, the Prussian emissary advised his ruler to support the adoption of a constitution similar to

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<sup>41</sup>"Berlin 16 März," Deutsche Zeitung, March 23, 1848, p. 659; Hans Blum, Die deutsche Revolution, 1848-1849 (Leipzig, 1897), p. 190.



that of the English. He also suggested that he remain aloof from the argument over the constitution; when the combatants of the various factions were numb from the struggle, he should intervene as a leader and thus restore his power. Radowitz's proposals caused no little discussion among the more intimate members of the court. Indeed, after a session in the Queen's tea room during which Radowitz's ideas formed the topic for conversation, General Leopold von Gerlach, who was now the King's Adjutant General and who had parted with Radowitz over the Cologne episcopal dispute, concluded that the King's friend was crazy.<sup>42</sup>

As was his style, rather than rush to Berlin to advise the King in person, Radowitz chose to counsel his friend through letters and to help him through his writings. He joined his family at Giewitz and busied himself with the completion of the manuscript of his work, Germany and Frederick William IV, which was published on April 13. In this tract, the King's friend summed up his attitude toward the revolution and his hopes for the future. He developed the idea of the Prussian King as the future leader and unifier of Germany:

King Frederick William IV will unite himself and Prussia as well as the German princes and their people to the greatest and holiest work that lies before us. He placed this as the goal of all, for all, and to which all sacrifices must be made.<sup>43</sup>

On April 26, 1848, Radowitz asked to be relieved of his position in the Prussian service. He believed that this action was necessitated

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<sup>42</sup>Radowitz to his wife, Vienna, March 24, 1848, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 42; "Denkschrift, 28 März 1848," and Radowitz to Frederick William IV, April 2, 1848, Hassel, Radowitz, pp. 57, 580; Leopold von Gerlach, Denkwürdigkeiten (Berlin, 1891), VI, p. 153.

<sup>43</sup>Radowitz, Deutschland und Frederick Wilhelm IV, in Gesammelte Schriften, III, p. 277.

by the new strength of the republican forces; he also wanted more time to devote to his writings.<sup>44</sup> It may seem that he failed to live up to his obligations to his King by this decision. This is partially true for Frederick William needed the loyalty of his officers as he prepared to face the Revolution, and Radowitz was willing to leave him at this crucial point. However, Radowitz did not cease to advise his friend in his customary manner, through letters. He quit because he was convinced that once the forces of rebellion had been unleashed little could be done to stop them; with the Revolution, the time had come for younger men to assume positions of responsibility. In this Radowitz was mistaken, for the Revolution opened to him new opportunities to carry on his work at the Frankfurt National Assembly.

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<sup>44</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, April 26, 1848; Hassel, Radowitz, p. 590.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FRANKFURT NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

Although Radowitz believed that the revolution had ended his career, it actually heralded the beginning of his most important work. One of the major demands of the revolutionaries was the election of a national parliament to build a united German nation-state. On March 5, 1848, fifty-one leaders of German liberalism met at Heidelberg to issue a call for a national constitutional convention. They also chose a committee of seven to issue invitations for a Pre-Parliament to make the final plans for the elections to the National Assembly.<sup>1</sup> It would be as a member of this body that Radowitz would continue and enlarge his efforts toward a reform of the Confederation.

While on an unofficial level plans were being made for the parliament, important changes were taking place in the composition of the Federal Diet. Through the influence of the liberal "March Ministers," the supporters of Metternich and his principles were removed and more progressive men appointed to the Diet. Among the new members of the highest body of the German Confederation were Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann, a historian and one of the Göttingen Seven, the poet Ludwig Uhland, Friedrich Daniel Bassermann, a leading supporter of German unification in Baden and Georg Gervinus, a historian and editor of the liberal

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<sup>1</sup>Frank Eyck, The Frankfurt Parliament (New York, 1969), pp. 36-41.

Deutsche Zeitung. The new progressive members of the Diet supported the call for a national parliament and on March 30 instructed the state governments to hold elections for the National Assembly. Using the census of 1819 as a basis, the Diet proposed that the larger states be divided into electoral districts of 70,000 people, each of which would elect one delegate to the parliament. The sixteen states which were too small to form a district were allowed to choose one delegate each to represent them. However, the Diet made no decision concerning the date of the elections or the nature of the franchise.<sup>2</sup>

The next day 574 delegates met in Frankfurt as a Pre-Parliament to make preparations for the election of the National Assembly. Most of those assembled represented small south German states: Austria sent only two men, while eighty-four came from little Hesse-Darmstadt. After a debate between the liberals and the radicals, the Pre-Parliament decided to allow every free, self-supporting adult male to vote in the elections, which were to take place on May 1. This body also appointed a committee of fifty to make final arrangements for the Assembly and oversee elections. However, the Pre-Parliament did not stipulate that the method of election would be direct; in many states the voters were merely permitted to choose electors who selected their delegate to the National Assembly.<sup>3</sup>

On May 16, the voters of Arnsberg-Ruthen, a Westphalian constituency, informed Radowitz that they had chosen him as their delegate to the National Assembly. Roman Catholics had supported him in the

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 41-45.

election because of his religious affiliation, and Protestants had favored him because of his well-known friendship with Frederick William IV. When he heard that a population of both faiths had elected him to the Assembly, the elated delegate wrote the King of his hopes to use this as a vehicle to further his work for German unification.<sup>4</sup>

After several false starts, the National Assembly convened on May 18, 1848, in St. Paul's Protestant Church in Frankfurt am Main.<sup>5</sup> The men assembled in this first freely elected German parliament would consider all the problems that had arisen as a result of the Revolution. The old German Confederation had for all practical purposes ceased to exist and had handed its power over to the men at Frankfurt, who now had to create a new Germany to replace it. This means that they had to decide first who were to be considered "Germans" and what areas should be included in the new state. They also had to define the roles of the old states and to decide whether or not they were even to remain in existence. Once this had been accomplished, the most important task before the National Assembly was the erection of a new central government and a decision concerning the form this government was to take: republican or monarchal. Perhaps the most serious matter before the men at Frankfurt was that of determining which of the two great powers would lead the new Germany: Austria or Prussia. In short, the Frankfurt National Assembly faced the task of creating a new nation-state on the ruins of the old discredited Confederation.

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<sup>4</sup>Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 79; Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Giewitz, May 17, 1848, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup>Franz Wigard, ed., Stenographischer Bericht über die Verhandlungen der deutschen constituirenden Nationalversammlung zu Frankfurt am Main (Frankfurt, 1848-1849), I, p. 4.

When men gather to make political decisions, they usually divide into factions or parties. The men in Frankfurt were no different; they formed political groups which came to be identified by the names of their meeting places. The Democratic Left, which emphasized the power of the people and had its roots in the radical movement of the Pre-March period, met at the Deutscher Hof, a restaurant, under the leadership of Robert Blum. However, as a result of internal quarrels, the Left soon divided when Franz Raveaux led his followers out of the Deutscher Hof to form the Donnersberg Club, or extreme Left. Both factions believed in the absolute right of the National Assembly to construct the new constitution, the strict limitation of the powers of the states and the importance of universal manhood suffrage. They differed in that the Deutscher Hof was willing to court the support of the moderate liberals through a less dogmatic interpretation of the importance of popular sovereignty, while the extreme Left refused to compromise its principles.<sup>6</sup>

The moderate liberals of the Vormärz also divided into several factions. The Right Center "Kasino-Partei" consisted of moderates, like Dahlmann, who desired the modification of existing German institutions rather than their destruction. The Left Center favored the creation of a strong central government with a popularly elected legislative branch. This group consisted of the more doctrinaire liberals, like Robert von Mohl, and insisted that the ministry of the new national government be dependent on the support of the legislative branch. The chief difference between the two factions was the willingness of the Right Center

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<sup>6</sup>Eyck, Parliament, pp. 137-139.

to cooperate with the Right and that of the Left Center to work with the Deutscher Hof.<sup>7</sup>

Radowitz, who had arrived in Frankfurt on May 20, became the leader of the right-wing faction, or Steinernes Haus. Although he did not approve of the formation of parties at the Assembly, he felt it necessary to associate with men in agreement with his ideas, since the Left and Center had already organized. On June 6, a group of his friends formed a conservative association at the restaurant Steinernes Haus am Markt near the St. Paul's Church. In order to emphasize that they were not attempting to organize a political party, these men called their group a "society" (Verein). The major plank in the platform of the Steinernes Haus was the unification of Germany under a constitutional monarchy in which the states would retain a measure of their old powers. Radowitz and his conservative friends met regularly to discuss the issues and plan a common strategy to follow during debates.<sup>8</sup>

It would be a mistake to consider Radowitz and his fellow conservatives reactionaries. His earlier plan for a revision of the Confederation shows that the leader of the Right realized the inadequacies of the

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<sup>7</sup>Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, pp. 615-616.

<sup>8</sup>Radowitz to Countess Voss, Frankfurt, June 6, 1849, Radowitz Nachlasse, Bundesarchiv, Frankfurt. The original copies of these papers, with the rest of Radowitz's correspondence are now in the possession of the Zentralarchiv of the German Democratic Republic in Merseburg. Before World War II, these papers formed Section 92 Roll 58 of the Prussian State Archive in Berlin-Dahlem. The author has made several unsuccessful attempts both personally and through correspondence to obtain access to these papers, but the East German officials have denied this request; Prince Felix Lichnowsky to August von der Heide, June 23, 1848, Lichnowsky Nachlasse, Bundesarchiv, Frankfurt, Number 131; Radowitz to his wife, Frankfurt, May 25 and June 6, 1848, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 51, 53; Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 103.

old order and the importance of change. On June 23, he spoke to this question in the Assembly:

I ask you: who is a reactionary?...Is there any such party in Germany? It cannot be found in the Assembly; no one here is a reactionary. To be sure, Gentlemen, there are men here who have faithfully and sincerely served the old monarchies. However, they are not blind to their failures and have not attempted to hide all the faults of the police state. They know very well that only a state based on justice is the just political order and carry this thought constantly in their hearts. They wish that the reorganization might follow the path of legality. They desire evolution, not revolution.<sup>9</sup>

Thus the political groups of the pre-revolutionary period found formal representation in the Frankfurt National Assembly, with the exception of the socialists who were still too weak to organize. The formation of political factions at Frankfurt is much more important than it may seem at first glance, for these embryonic organizations represented the first formal definition of the five German political ideologies which had begun their development in the pre-revolutionary period. At Frankfurt, the division into parties laid the foundation for parliamentary life from the era of Bismarck to the Weimar Republic.

In addition to his role as the leader of the Right, Radowitz also became the chief spokesman for the Roman Catholics in St. Paul's Church. On June 14, he, Malchoir von Diepenbrock and August Reichensperger organized a society of Roman Catholic members of the National Assembly. This Catholic Society, which consisted of sixty members, including numerous academicians and four bishops, elected Radowitz as their president. He was not a universally popular choice. Many bitterly criticized him because he refused to support the conversion of the society into

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<sup>9</sup>Wigard, Bericht, p. 478.



a separate political party. His chief critic was Wilhelm von Ketteler, later Archbishop of Mainz and Bismarck's opponent during the Kultur-kampf, who accused the Prussian of being more concerned with the interests of Berlin than those of the Church.<sup>10</sup>

Radowitz's duties as leader of the Steinernes Haus and of the Catholic Society, along with his responsibilities as a delegate to the National Assembly took a great deal of time. He usually arose at 6:30 A.M., and by 7:00 visitors had begun to arrive. The leader of the Conservatives found himself a popular source of advice, and often people whom he did not even know came to seek his opinion on matters before the parliament. At 9:00 A.M. he usually went to St. Paul's Church for the session of the National Assembly. At 3:30 P.M., the delegate left the Church for a nearby restaurant, where he invariably dined on roast with carrots or "viper's grass," a carrot-like vegetable. Radowitz usually consumed his meal alone, and this gave him a few minutes to think. At 5:00 he returned to the meeting, which usually lasted two hours. After the end of the day's session, Radowitz spent his evenings with either the Catholic Society or the Conservative Society and did not return home until after 10:00, often not before midnight.<sup>11</sup>

The first important task faced by the National Assembly was the creation of a provisional government to rule Germany while it defined the boundaries of the new state and completed the constitution. The debates over the issue, which began on June 19, are very important in

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<sup>10</sup> Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 146; Radowitz to his wife, Frankfurt, June 15, 1848, Radowitz Nachlässe; Eyck, Parliament, p. 145.

<sup>11</sup> Radowitz to his wife, Frankfurt, July 3 and August 28, 1848, Radowitz Nachlässe; Radowitz (son), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen, p. 4.

showing at the same time Radowitz's devotion to German nationalism and his moderate approach. The major issue at stake was the position of the old German states in the new order. Representatives of the Liberal Center and Left argued that the revolution had terminated the authority of the states, and therefore the power to create a new government for Germany rested solely with the National Assembly.<sup>12</sup>

On the first day of the debate, Radowitz took the liberals to task, stating that the German people would not allow the destruction of their states. He believed that Germany had two sets of interests: regional concerns, which should be represented by the state governments, and national aims, which should be the province of the federal government. The leader of the Right maintained that in the new organization of Germany, national interests should be served by a House of the People and those of local importance by a House of States. But since the present structure of Germany failed to provide a body to represent national interests, he believed that the state governments should be given the power to name the provisional government. Radowitz argued that this would not mean that all power would belong to the princes instead of the people; it would simply provide that interim authority would be in the hands of the individual states instead of the National Assembly.<sup>13</sup> His position reveals the moderation of Radowitz's politics. He supported the formation of a stronger national government but also realized the importance of the states.

After Radowitz had completed his speech, the debate continued. On

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<sup>12</sup>Eyck, Parliament, p. 174.

<sup>13</sup>Wigard, Bericht, I, pp. 375-376.

June 21, George von Vincke, a member of the Conservative Society, proposed that the states name a Federal Director to govern Germany while the drafting of the constitution proceeded. The next day, Radowitz spoke in favor of the proposal. He opposed the creation of an executive committee, as advocated by Ludwig Simon and the Left, and favored instead the appointment of one man as head of state. Finally, on June 27, Heinrich von Gagern intervened in the debate with a bold affirmation of the authority of the Assembly alone to create a provisional government, and most delegates responded to his statement with loud shouts of approval. He also recommended that the head of the provisional government be a prince who would serve as Imperial Regent.<sup>14</sup> This meant that the National Assembly would take upon itself full authority to govern Germany without any interference from the states. It would also mean that the Assembly would commit itself to a monarchy, since Gagern wanted a prince to become Regent and thus eliminate a republican solution to the German problem. Most important, Gagern's suggestion ended a deadlock that might have lasted for weeks or even months.

The Assembly began at once to vote on the issue. The forces of the Right, including Radowitz, attempted to soften the blow to the traditional power of the states through a motion that would have rendered the Assembly's actions on the provisional government subject to the approval of the states. The members of the National Assembly defeated this by a vote of 577 to thirty-one, a division which showed the relative weakness of the Right in St. Paul's Church. Later, Radowitz voted with the majority against an attempt by the Left to abolish the National

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 444, 479, 521-522.

Assembly after the creation of the provisional government. This was followed by a motion granting the provisional government the authority to declare war and peace and negotiate treaties with foreign powers, thus depriving the states of one of the major symbols of their sovereignty. Radowitz, acting in his role as leader of the Right, rose to object to the consideration of this motion on the grounds that the members of his faction had not been given prior notice of its consideration at that time. The Assembly overruled his protest, and approved the proposal by a vote of 408 to 143. Resigned to the strong tide of centralization and true to his strong belief in German unification, Radowitz voted with the majority.<sup>15</sup>

Radowitz remained a strong supporter of the rights of the German states, however, and opposed a motion which would empower the head of the provisional government to form a ministry. Nevertheless, this passed by a vote of 498 to 143. He also dissented when the Assembly gave itself the right to elect the Imperial Regent by a division of 403 to 135. Discussion of the issue continued the next day with the passage of a measure making the Regent independent of the Assembly. This curtailed the Assembly's powers and meant that the provisional government would not become a complete parliamentary democracy; it would remain a monarchy with the Imperial Regent in the position of sovereign. In the next vote, the Assembly dissolved the Diet of the German Confederation by a vote of 510 to 35, thus eradicating the last remains of the old order. In his position as leader of the Right, Radowitz opposed this action. However, when the final division on the creation of a central

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., pp. 576-602.

authority began, he rose to call for its passage in a grand effort to preserve the unity of the Assembly. The law passed by a vote of 450 to 100. Next the men at St. Paul's Church elected Archduke John, the brother of Emperor Ferdinand of Austria, Imperial Regent. The people of Frankfurt greeted this victory for German unification with cheers, the ringing of church bells, the firing of a cannon and the waving of flags from their windows.<sup>16</sup>

After the election of the Habsburg Archduke, rumors flew around Frankfurt concerning his choice of members of the new ministry. One such rumor was that the Regent would name Radowitz as Minister of War. Naturally the Steinernes Haus attempted to use its influence in favor of the candidacy of their leader to this important post. However, the Left declared their violent opposition to the appointment of a man with such well known conservative opinions. When leaders of the Center announced their belief that Radowitz's religious and political opinions were incompatible with the office, the possibility of Radowitz becoming the new Minister of War disappeared. It was all just as well, for despite the support of his conservative friends, Radowitz was never enthusiastic about his candidacy for the position. He wrote his wife that the new ministry would have so many problems with the various parties of the National Assembly that he would prefer to avoid association with it.<sup>17</sup>

With this issue decided, the National Assembly was free to consider

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 576-638; Lichnowsky to Heide, Frankfurt, June 29, 1849, Lichnowsky Nachlässe.

<sup>17</sup> Radowitz to his wife, Frankfurt, July 8, 10 and 14, 1848, Radowitz Nachlässe.

other important problems, one of which was the position of the Church in the new Germany. In Prussia and several other states, Protestantism was the established state religion, while Roman Catholicism occupied a similar position in Austria and Bavaria. On August 24, the Assembly began discussions on Article III of the Basic Rights, the provisions designed to guarantee religious freedom. Some members, such as Hermann von Beisler, opposed the article as being too vague; indeed, both friends and foes of the established Churches supported it. A few Protestants feared that a separation of church and state would weaken their religion. Wilhelm Weissborn answered this contention by arguing that religious compulsion was a part of the past and that the time had come for the churches to make adjustments. Radowitz deplored a division between Catholics and Protestants on the article, and pleaded that freedom of religion receive the same consideration as freedom of the press and other basic rights. In response to those who maintained that the church required state support in order to exist, he declared that no power on earth had the strength to destroy either the Protestants or Roman Catholic Churches. He also assured the Protestants that the followers of his faith had no desire to use religious freedom as a pretext to introduce the hated Jesuit order. The leader of the Catholic Society argued that the division of Germany into rival Protestant and Catholic states as a result of the Peace of Westphalia was no longer justified. He ended his speech with a plea for freedom for every religious group no matter how large or small. The debate ended with the passage of the article.<sup>18</sup> Thus, the new Germany would guarantee freedom of religion

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<sup>18</sup>Wigard, Bericht, III, pp. 1662-1772.

to all Germans.

To create a new Germany, the men at Frankfurt had first to define the territories to be included in the new state. One of the problems involved was the fate of the minorities living under German princes. One such group was the Czech population living in the Habsburg Kingdom of Bohemia. There had been centuries of rivalry between the Slavic Czechs and the Sudetenland Germans who populated the territory. Czech nationalism, growing out of the religious reforms of John Hus, had been one of the chief causes of the Thirty Years' War. At the Battle of White Mountain in 1620, the Habsburg had defeated the Czechs and established German rule.<sup>19</sup> In the nineteenth century, this nationalism had experienced a rebirth, thus leading to a renewal of conflict between the German and Czech Bohemians.

Instead of responding to the call to elect delegates to the German National Assembly in Frankfurt, the Czech nationalists had summoned their own Slavic Congress in Prague. Its organizers issued a manifesto on May 1, 1848, calling for the unification of all Slavic peoples into a new and independent state. When the Slavic Congress opened on June 2, it passed a resolution demanding the submission of the nationalities problem to a general European conference. It also asked that all German states grant self-determination to Slavs living in their lands. An uprising in Prague on June 12, which many Germans believed was the outgrowth of the passions aroused by the Congress, temporarily halted its proceedings.<sup>20</sup> Since Bohemia was under the rule of a German prince and

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<sup>19</sup>Arthur J. May, The Habsburg Monarchy 1867-1914 (New York, 1951), pp. 6-16.

<sup>20</sup>Eyck, Parliament, pp. 70, 160-161.

had a substantial German population, the problems posed by the Slavic Congress were of prime importance to the men at Frankfurt. The nationalist element among the delegates saw the question in terms of "German versus Slav" and believed that the granting of the Czech demands would result in the persecution of the Sudetenland Germans.

The debate at Frankfurt began on July 1, with Radowitz arguing that the Germans should not allow the disruption of the six-hundred-year association of Bohemia with the German Reich. He believed, however, that the Assembly should wait for the Austrian officials to indicate their position toward the Slavic Congress before taking any independent action. He held that the Habsburg government had a duty to see to it that elections for the Frankfurt Assembly be held in Bohemia; if Austria should request help in restoring order, the Assembly should give it without hesitation. After the debate ended, the men at St. Paul's Church voted their approval of Radowitz's position, but the question was never resolved. Although the revolt in Prague was crushed by the bombardment of the city by Austrian troops under Prince Alfred von Windischgrätz on June 17, the elections were held only in the German-speaking areas of Bohemia and never in the Czech areas of the kingdom.<sup>21</sup>

The next national question to be considered at Frankfurt was the problem revolving around the status of Prussian Posen, with its Polish population. During the partitions of Poland by Austria, Prussia and Russia from 1772 to 1795, Posen had been awarded to the Hohenzollern kingdom. However, it was not included in the territory of the German Confederation. During the early years of the nineteenth century,

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<sup>21</sup>Wigard, Bericht, I, pp. 666-667; Stearns, 1848, pp. 110-113.



Polish nationalism had intensified. After the abortive revolt of 1830-1831 in Russian Poland, the struggle by the Poles for self-determination won the support of many German liberals. Prompted by the demand of Polish nationalists for local self-government, Frederick William IV had appointed a German-Polish commission to reorganize the government of the Duchy on March 24, 1848. The Germans, feeling threatened by the possibility of Polish domination, demanded the inclusion of the whole of Posen in the German Confederation. However, the Prussian King decided to compromise between the demands of the rival nationalities by dividing the territory into several areas. Only those districts with a German majority would become a part of the Confederation. But this measure failed to meet the terms of the Poles, who longed for the creation of an independent state and felt that Posen should be treated as a completely Polish area. They also objected when the German National Assembly assigned twelve delegates to represent the contested territory.<sup>22</sup>

In this way, the controversy found its way into the discussions in the St. Paul's Church. On May 22, the Polish National Committee, headquartered in Paris, protested against election of delegates to the National Assembly on the grounds that Posen had not been a part of the German Confederation prior to 1848. Jacob Venedey, of the Left, presented a motion denying the right of the representatives of the Duchy to participate in the Assembly. After a series of debates and conflicting motions, the delegates approved the recommendations of the President, Heinrich von Gagern, to refer the matter to the credentials committee for further consideration. On June 24, the committee reported its

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<sup>22</sup> Eyck, Parliament, p. 269.

findings and charged that the Polish nationalists were seeking to restore Poland to its pre-1772 boundaries and thus place about two million Germans under Polish domination. To avoid this, the committee proposed the division of Posen into counties (Kreisen) based on the nationality of the population, much as the King of Prussia had earlier recommended. Those counties with a German majority would become part of the future German Reich.<sup>23</sup> The report led to a long debate.

On the second day of the discussion, Radowitz rose to speak on the controversial issue. He first deplored the attempts of some delegates to introduce the religious question into the matter and turn it into a quarrel between Catholics and Protestants. The leader of the Right demanded that the Posen problem be considered solely on the basis of law and not as a confessional question. He stated that the separation of Posen from Germany would force many Germans to live under Polish domination, thus giving rise to a serious injustice. He also opposed the re-establishment of a Polish state as being against Germany's best interests. However, he also felt that it would be equally unjust to force the Poles to live under complete German control. He concluded his speech with a statement in support of the recommendations of the committee. This would allow the majority ethnic group in an area in the Duchy to control the local government in each country.<sup>24</sup> Thus Radowitz took a reasonable and moderate position on the Posen question and refused to support the extreme views of either the German or Polish nationalists.

The debate ended with a series of votes. The Assembly rejected a

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<sup>23</sup>Wigard, Bericht, I, pp. 196-229, II, p. 1127.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., II, pp. 1155-1156.

motion by Robert Blum to send a special commission to Posen to further investigate the matter. Radowitz voted with a majority of 333 against 139. Next they voted to recognize the incorporation into the German Reich of those areas proposed for inclusion by the Prussian government. Radowitz voted with the majority on the measure. They also approved the demarcation line between Polish and German sections of Posen as drawn by Berlin, with a stipulation that a final investigation take place before implementation. Next, the delegates approved a motion by Prince Felix Lichnowsky, of the Right, calling on Berlin to agree to protect the rights of its Polish subjects. Finally, the Assembly rejected by a vote of 331 to 101 a resolution backed by the radicals which stated that it was the "holy duty of Germany to work for the re-creation of Poland." Naturally, Radowitz voted against this proposal.<sup>25</sup>

These votes did not end the controversy over the position of Posen. On February 6, 1849, the committee asked the National Assembly to approve the final line of demarcation between the German and Polish countries of the Duchy. Ignaz von Döllinger, a member of the Catholic Society, criticized the boundary because it had placed most of the Poles in German areas. Radowitz rose to defend the line on the grounds that its location was in the best military interests of Germany. After several delegates from the Left spoke in defense of the Poles, the Assembly voted 280 to 124 to approve the division. As before, Radowitz voted with the majority. However, the debate made little difference, for after the defeat of the Polish rebels by Prussian forces, the plan was never put

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid., II, pp. 1228-1247.

into effect.<sup>26</sup>

Some historians have seen the debate on Posen as a turning point in the history of the Frankfurt National Assembly. Veit Valentin charged that in its decision to reject the plea of the Poles for self-determination, the parliament repudiated the very principles of the Revolution that had created it. Another writer finds the roots of Nazism in the decision of the National Assembly to reject the national aspirations of the Poles. Indeed during the Vormärz, the German liberals had strongly supported the Polish cause. However, when Polish nationalism conflicted with the best interests of Germany, the men in the Paulskirche chose to lay aside the principles of the past and support German nationalism above liberalism. Yielding to the demands of the Poles would have created many serious problems. Such a step would have placed many Germans under Polish domination and jeopardize relations with Russia. The Slavic empire ruled over the largest portion of the former Kingdom of Poland and violently opposed any action that would further Polish nationalism. Therefore, the decision to divide the area into Polish and German districts and to allow each a degree of local autonomy represented a realistic compromise which avoided the extremes of a complete denial of Polish rights or the creation of a Polish state.<sup>27</sup>

The final majority group to be considered at Frankfurt were the Italians of South Tyrol. At first the Italian population of this

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., VII, pp. 5066-5089; Alexander Gieysztor, et al., History of Poland (Warsaw, 1968), p. 143.

<sup>27</sup> Valentin, Deutsche Revolution, II, p. 127; Hans Kohn, The Mind of Germany (New York, 1960), p. 143; Lewis Namier, 1848: The Revolution of The Intellectuals (Garden City, 1964), pp. 103-112.

Habsburg territory had refused to elect representatives to the National Assembly, though Baron Giovanni, a Roman Catholic priest, had conducted a campaign in support of the Assembly. After the defeat of a short-lived Italian uprising in Tione in April, the people of Trent realized that Vienna would never relinquish control of South Tyrol without a fight which the Italians knew they could not win. So they elected men to go to Frankfurt. However, other areas in Habsburg Italy were not so cooperative. In Lombardy and Venetia, which had been under Austrian rule since the Congress of Vienna, the people rose in revolt on March 18. This won the support of the Italian nationalists of other areas. They found a leader in King Charles Albert of Sardinia-Piedmont, who marched his army into Habsburg territory on March 23, thus beginning a war between his small state and the Austrian Empire.<sup>28</sup>

The National Assembly began discussions on the Italian question on August 12. After some debate, they voted against the separation of South Tyrol from the German Reich. Radowitz proposed that the German Provisional Government offer its services to mediate between Sardinia and Austria, since he believed that the war in Italy was of national importance. If Austria lost control over northern Italy, it would open the way for French hegemony in southern Europe and pose a serious threat to Germany's flank. He also stated that a loss of Venice would endanger the Dalmation coast and Trieste, both areas necessary for German security. For these reasons, he advocated the retention of the German hold in the area. Both the Right and Center greeted his speech with loud applause. After the conclusion of the debate, the delegates voted to pass

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<sup>28</sup>Eyck, Parliament, p. 74; Robinson, Revolution, p. 346.

these motions on to the Provisional Government for consideration. But once again the actions of the Frankfurt National Assembly made little difference, for Austria held its own in northern Italy. On July 24 at the Battle of Custoza, the Austrian General Josef Radetzky decisively defeated the forces of Charles Albert. Other victories followed, Radetzky continued to subdue the Italians and after a siege occupied Venice on August 28, 1849.<sup>29</sup>

After considering the problems posed by non-Germans living under a German ruler, the National Assembly now turned its attention to the case of a German majority living under a non-German ruler: the complex Schleswig-Holstein question. Owing to claims dating as far back as the Middle Ages, the Danish King was also Duke of Schleswig, though the Duchy itself was an autonomous territory. During the territorial settlement following the Napoleonic Wars, the powers had also awarded Holstein to the King of Denmark as partial compensation for the loss of Norway to Sweden. Since Holstein had a completely German population, it became a part of the German Confederation, while Schleswig, with its mixed Danish-German population, remained outside the organization. This solution failed to please either nationality. The Germans resented living under a foreign prince and took every opportunity to assert their rights, arguing that both territories should become a part of the German Confederation since they had been united throughout modern times. They also challenged the right of the Danish dynasty to continue to rule the Duchies. The male line of the Danish house was about to die out and future kings of Denmark would base their right to rule on succession

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<sup>29</sup>Wigard, Bericht, II, pp. 1560-1568.

through the female line of the family. According to the Germans, only a prince descended from the male side of the family could rule over a German territory. The Danes, on the other hand, sought to strengthen the ties between the Duchies and Copenhagen.<sup>30</sup>

When the revolutionary fever of 1848 spread to Scandinavia, the Danish nationalists, or Eider Danes, led by Orla Lehmann, came to power. They persuaded their King to announce the incorporation of Schleswig into Denmark on March 21, 1848. Two days later, the Germans in the Duchies revolted and formed a provisional government at Kiel. Heinrich von Arnim-Suckow, the Prussian Foreign Minister, recognized the provisional government of Schleswig-Holstein and sent General Friedrich von Wrangel with troops to support it. This led to a war between Prussia and the Nordic kingdom. The intervention of Sweden, the effectiveness of the Danish blockade and the protests of Russia and England forced Prussia to finally sue for peace and conclude an armistic at Malmö, Sweden, on August 26. In this truce Prussia agreed to rescind its recognition of the provisional government and to place the Duchies under a mixed commission dominated by the Danes. Thus, the Germans in Schleswig-Holstein were abandoned; German nationalism had suffered a major defeat.<sup>31</sup>

Since Prussia had signed the treaty in the name of the German Confederation, it required the approval of the Frankfurt National Assembly. On September 4, the parliament began its discussion of the issue. Johann

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<sup>30</sup>Lawrence D. Steefel, The Schleswig Holstein Question (Cambridge, 1932), p. 4; Holborn, Modern Germany 1840-1945, pp. 55, 65-67.

<sup>31</sup>Holborn, Modern Germany 1840-1945, pp. 55, 65-67; Eyck, Parliament, p. 47.

Gustav Heckscher, the Foreign Minister under Archduke John, read the provisions of the Malmö agreement to the delegates. After a fiery debate, the Assembly referred the matter to a special committee with instructions to report the next day. However, the committee was unable to reach agreement. The majority, speaking through Friedrich Christoph Dahlmann, opposed the endorsement of the truce. The Left supported him, believing that Germany had an obligation to fight for the rights of the Germans in the Duchies.<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, the Right, led by Radowitz, favored the armistice. The leader of the Conservative Society was well aware of the Schleswig-Holstein problem. In 1846, he had written an article entitled, "Who Succeeds in Schleswig?" In his essay, he traced the claims of the Danish royal family to the Duchy back to 1110, but cited historical evidence to prove that it was united with Holstein rather than with Denmark. He also argued that the Schleswig succession, along with that of Holstein, could lawfully pass only through the male line of the Danish royal house rather than the female as recognized by the Danish law of succession. But Radowitz believed that the Prussian response to the revolt in the Duchies in 1848 had been confused and self-defeating. In the National Assembly, Radowitz argued that the question was of such international significance that a failure of negotiations could lead to a general war which would do great harm to Germany. The Truce of Malmö, therefore, must be sustained. In his arguments, he cited the strength of the Danish fleet and reminded the delegates that the provisions of

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<sup>32</sup>Wigard, Bericht, II, pp. 1857-1868.



the final peace were still to be decided.<sup>33</sup>

The members of the Right greeted their leader's speech with cheers, while the Left and the galleries replied with hisses. Radowitz supported a motion calling for a postponement of action by the Assembly until agreement could be reached on the final terms of peace. His motion failed, and a proposal by Dahlmann condemning the Malmö armistice passed by a vote of 238 to 221, with Radowitz voting with the minority. But this condemnation did not stand. On September 16, after a serious crisis caused by the resignation of the ministry and the failure of attempts to form a new one, the parliament reversed its decision and ratified the Malmö armistice.<sup>34</sup>

This action provoked a violent response from the people of Frankfurt. Mobs flowed across the Main bridges from the workers' quarter of Sachsenhausen to attack St. Paul's Church itself, while others erected barricades. Alarmed by the reaction against the armistice, the Minister of the Interior, Anton von Schmerling, with the approval of the Assembly and the city authorities summoned troops from the federal fortress at Mainz to restore order and protect the National Assembly. In spite of these precautions, a group of protesters actually broke through the military cordon around the Paulskirch and stormed the building. As they pressed through the doors, Heinrich von Gagern shouted in desperation, "I declare every transgressor against this holy place a traitor to the Fatherland," and the startled mob turned back. But the violence

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<sup>33</sup>Radowitz, "Wer ebt in Schleswig?" Gesammelte Schriften, III, pp. 167-194; Radowitz to Countess von Voss, September 5, 1848, Radowitz Nachlässe; Wigard, Bericht, III, pp. 1895-2149.

<sup>34</sup>Wigard, Bericht, III, pp. 1895-2149.

continued outside the National Assembly and grew in intensity. After leaving the site of the parliament, groups of radicals roamed the streets attacking known conservatives, and one group actually printed copies of a picture of Radowitz in order to assist the radicals to hunt him down. The unrest reached a climax with the murder of Prince Felix Lichnowsky, who had been mistaken for Radowitz by some members of the crowd.<sup>35</sup>

The violence made a deep impression on the leader of the Right. He witnessed the storming of a barricade by some Prussian troops and wrote his wife of his strong desire to join them. The outbreak strengthened his dissatisfaction with the whole undertaking of the National Assembly. As early as June 19, 1848, he had written his wife that he had accomplished nothing through all his work. As we have seen, the Left greeted his speeches with jeers. He was so unpopular that a fellow conservative had urged him not to speak at a particular session because of the strong feeling against him.<sup>36</sup>

Seeking refuge from the tumult of Frankfurt, Radowitz left on September 23 for Mecklenburg to join his family. When he returned with them the next month, he found that the passion against him had not died down. His children could not go out on the streets without being met with shouts of "Prussian" and "Reactionary." By December it reached such a point that his friends in Berlin sent his family helmets and military equipment to protect themselves as they walked around town.

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<sup>35</sup> Eyck, Parliament, p. 312; Neue Preussische Zeitung, September 21, 1848, p. 477; Radowitz (son), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen, p. 4; Robinson, Revolutions, p. 160.

<sup>36</sup> Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 149; Radowitz to his wife, Frankfurt, June 19, 1848, and Usedom to Radowitz, Frankfurt, May 24, 1848, Radowitz Nachlässe; Radowitz (son), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen, p. 465.

Faced with such opposition, Radowitz ceased to take an active part in the affairs of the National Assembly. He even resigned his post as leader of the Steinernes Haus faction. Under the presidency of Georg von Vincke, the conservatives changed their meeting place to the Milani restaurant in order to disassociate themselves from Radowitz and the Catholic Society.<sup>37</sup> Throughout the remainder of his time in Frankfurt, Radowitz played but a passive role in the deliberations of the National Assembly.

The September riots marked a turning point in the history of the Frankfurt National Assembly. When the parliament, itself a product of the Revolution, was forced to call upon the troops of the old order to protect it from the very people it claimed to represent, it lost the support of many Germans who saw this as a betrayal of the principles of the Revolution. From this moment on, it was only a matter of time until the forces of the old order, upon which the National Assembly was now dependent for its existence, would be able to undermine the parliament and the principle of popular sovereignty which it represented.

Though Radowitz was himself absent from Frankfurt during most of October, the debates in St. Paul's Church droned on. After erecting a provisional government and dealing with the nationalities problem, the men at Frankfurt had to decide upon the role of the Habsburg Empire in the new Germany. The Emperor in Vienna ruled lands that included a number of non-German areas such as Hungary, Slovenia, Galicia and Croatia. It was necessary to reach an agreement on the relationship between these non-German territories and the new German state. One

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<sup>37</sup>Eyck, Parliament, p. 313.

faction, called the Greater Germany (Grossdeutsch) Party, favored a nation which would include most if not all of the Austrian Empire. The other so-called Small German (Kleindeutsch) Party advocated the exclusion of the Danubian Monarchy from Germany, thus making it possible for Prussia to assume German leadership.

Radowitz had long supported the Small German position, because he believed that the Hohenzollern kingdom, as a true German state and a European power, was the natural head of the German nation rather than the multinational Habsburg Empire. On October 27, 1848, after a long debate, the National Assembly voted 340 to 76 to prohibit the union under one government of a part of the German nation with a non-German area, thus excluding the non-German lands of Austria. They also accepted by a large majority a proposal which provided that a German state under the same ruler as a non-German one could be joined only by a personal union. Although Radowitz had not yet returned to Frankfurt from Mecklenburg, his subsequent actions would show that he approved of the decisions of the parliament.<sup>38</sup>

The decision of the National Assembly to bar the inclusion of non-German areas from the new German Reich placed it on the side of the advocates of Prussian hegemony and automatically ruled out any further Austrian support of its activities. After playing a major role in German affairs for several hundred years, the Habsburgs refused to acquiesce to their expulsion from Germany. Even while the National Assembly was debating the role of Austria in the future Germany, forces were coming to

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<sup>38</sup>"Privataufzeichnungen von Radowitz, 11 September 1848," Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 60-63; Wigard, Bericht, IV, pp. 2918-2936.

power in Vienna that would defy the attempts of the Paulskirche to divide the Danubian Monarchy into German and non-German areas. Following the outbreak of the Revolution in Vienna, Emperor Ferdinand had called an Austrian Constitutional Assembly on March 15. When the Emperor attempted to force the adoption of a constitution before the promised Assembly had met, a revolt in Vienna had forced him to flee to Innsbruck on May 17. After crushing rebellions in Hungary, Bohemia and Italy, Metternich's successor, Prince Felix von Schwarzenberg, could concentrate on recapturing control of his capital city. On October 13, Prince Windischgrätz occupied Vienna and executed the radical leaders, including Robert Blum, the leader of the Left in Frankfurt, who had traveled to Vienna to lend his support to the revolt. The Austrian Constitutional Assembly moved to Kremsier, where, in defiance of the decisions of the Frankfurt National Assembly, Schwarzenberg declared that the unification of the Habsburg lands was a matter of both German and European necessity.<sup>39</sup> Thus the largest and most powerful German state had declared its opposition to the proceedings in Frankfurt.

After discussing the future of Austria, the National Assembly could now turn to its most important work, the consideration of a final draft of the constitution. On January 17, 1849, the Constitution Committee, which had been working since the summer of 1848, submitted its report. Owing to its inability to agree, the membership of the committee was divided into two groups. One favored an hereditary emperor, while the other supported government by a five-member Imperial Directory

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<sup>39</sup>Robinson, Revolutions, pp. 223, 248-249; Heinrich von Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire by William I (New York, 1890), I, p. 301.

representing the major states. Those who favored an hereditary emperor supported the candidacy of Frederick William IV of Prussia for the post. Owing to his absence from Frankfurt following the September riots, Radowitz did not serve on the Constitution Committee, but he had committed himself to this position at least six months earlier. On January 5, he had written his King: "When Germany's princes and people call you to this throne, I will pull your carriage on my shoulders to old St. Bartholomew's Cathedral," the former coronation site of the Holy Roman Emperors. The Assembly debated the issue from January 17 until March 27, 1849, when it voted 267 to 263 in favor of the establishment of the office of hereditary emperor. The next day, they elected Frederick William IV to this position; naturally Radowitz voted for his friend. The National Assembly selected a delegation of twenty-four to inform the King of his selection, and waited for the monarch's answer.<sup>40</sup>

While awaiting word from Berlin, the Assembly promulgated the final version of the constitution. The new central government of Germany was endowed with considerably more power than the old German Confederation. It would have the exclusive right to handle all diplomatic matters, and the states were forbidden to receive any representatives of foreign governments. The new government was also to be given the right to declare war or peace and control the military forces of the nation, although the individual states retained a degree of power over their contingents in the national army. The national government also would have exclusive control over fortresses and naval concerns, as well as the

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<sup>40</sup>Wigard, Bericht, VI, p. 4675; Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Frankfurt, January 5, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 72; Wigard, Bericht, IX, pp. 6084-6096.

power to regulate foreign and interstate commerce, including railroads and harbors. The new Germany was to form a customs union, with the central government in control of duties. Finally, the postal and monetary systems of all the states were to be consolidated under the federal authority.<sup>41</sup>

The head of the German state was to be a hereditary prince with the title Emperor of the Germans. His place of residence was to be the capital of Germany, and he was required to remain in the capital when the Reichstag was in session. When away from the capital, one of the ministers was to accompany him. The Emperor had the power to appoint all diplomatic personnel, to declare war and negotiate all treaties with foreign powers. He also had the right to call and close meetings of the Reichstag and to dissolve the House of the People. As chief executive of Germany, the Emperor was to propose legislation to the Reichstag and enforce all laws. He had the right to issue pardons and to name ministers, who were answerable to the Reichstag for both their own actions and those of the ruler.<sup>42</sup>

The chief legislative body of the new Germany was to be a Reichstag consisting of a House of States and a House of the People. The membership in the House of States was to be divided between the member states. Prussia was to be given the largest representation with forty members, followed by Austria, which would have thirty-eight. Bavaria would have eighteen, and Saxony, Hanover and Württemberg each would have ten. Baden would receive nine representatives, and Hesse-Kassel, Hesse-Darmstadt

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<sup>41</sup>"Frankfurt Reichsverfassung," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 304-310.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., pp. 311-312.

and Holstein six. Mecklenburg would receive four delegates, Luxembourg and Nassau three, and Brunswick, Oldenburg and Saxe-Weimar each were awarded two members. The other German states would have one member of the House of States. Should Austria refuse to join the new German Empire her thirty-eight seats were to be divided among the smaller states. The members were to serve six-year terms, and half the membership was to be elected every three years. The state governments were to appoint half the members and the local diets the remainder. In those states which would send only one member to the House of States, the state government and the state assembly would jointly appoint its representative.<sup>43</sup>

The House of the People would consist of representatives of the German people to be elected according to a franchise law promulgated on April 12. Every free German at least twenty-five years old had the right to vote directly for a representative, to exercise this right, a person must have lived in the district at least three years. The states were to be divided into electoral districts each with a population of approximately 100,000. However, if a state had at least 50,000 more than needed to form a district, a special district would be created. States with less than 50,000 would receive one representative in the House of the People.<sup>44</sup>

The Reichstag was to meet every year at a time announced by the Emperor and elect a President, Vice President and Secretary. Meetings of both houses were to be open to the public. Members would receive a

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<sup>43</sup>Ibid., pp. 312-314.

<sup>44</sup>"Reichswahlgesetz," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 324-325.



salary and travel expenses and were required to swear their allegiance to the Constitution. Legislation would be passed through a majority vote of both houses. The Emperor would have the right to veto a law, but this could be overridden by three successive sessions of the Reichstag. The parliament also would have the power to amend the Constitution by a vote of two-thirds of its membership.<sup>45</sup>

The third branch of the new central government was the Supreme Court, which had the right to hear cases involving the states and the central government and arguments between the houses of the Reichstag concerning the interpretation of the Constitution. The court also had the power to consider all matters pertaining to the rights of individual citizens as well as all matters relating to the federal government and federal law.<sup>46</sup>

The final portion of the Frankfurt Constitution contained a set of the Basic Rights guaranteed to all citizens of the German Reich. These included equality before the law and the right to a fair trial. The police could not hold a person more than one day without bringing formal charges and could not search a home without a proper search warrant. Every citizen was to have complete freedom of opinion and expression, and censorship of the press was forbidden. The document also assured to all Germans absolute freedom of religion as well as academic freedom. Finally the Constitution granted freedom of assembly, protected private property and assured all citizens the right to communicate with their

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<sup>45</sup>"Frankfurter Reichsverfassung," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 314-323; Eyck, Parliament, pp. 378-380.

<sup>46</sup>"Frankfurter Reichsverfassung," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 324-325.

representatives in the Reichstag.<sup>47</sup>

The Frankfurt Constitution contained many provisions which Radowitz favored. He approved of the expansion of the powers of the federal government, and strongly supported the choice of Frederick William IV as hereditary Emperor. Even before the discussion of the Constitution had begun, Radowitz had suggested the establishment of a bicameral legislative branch consisting of a House of States and a House of the People. But there was one aspect of this frame of government with which he was most dissatisfied: he considered it a major mistake to complete work on the Constitution before some sort of agreement with Austria had been reached.<sup>48</sup>

Radowitz's concern over the attitude of Austria was based on facts. Since October, the strength of the anti-revolutionary forces had grown. On December 2, the incompetent Emperor Ferdinand abdicated and his eighteen-year-old nephew, Francis Joseph, ascended the throne. On March 1, the Austrian Constitutional Assembly adopted a frame of government which conflicted directly with the provisions of the Frankfurt Constitution by reaffirming the indivisibility of the Habsburg Empire. Four days later, Schwarzenberg dissolved the Austrian Assembly and promulgated a constitution that was even more centralized in nature and thus more incompatible with the document being written in Frankfurt. After the publication of the Frankfurt Constitution, the government of the Habsburg Empire sent a note to Frankfurt rejecting the document and

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 317-323.

<sup>48</sup> Wigard, Bericht, I, pp. 375-376; Radowitz to Clemens von Diepenbrock, Frankfurt, March 30, 1849, Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Frankfurt, January 5, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 76-77, 70-71.

demanding its amendment in accordance with Austrian demands. Schwarzenberg also refused to recognize the election of Frederick William IV as head of the German Empire. Instead, he proposed that Germany be ruled by a seven-member directory under a Habsburg president. In the Austrian plan, the Reichstag was to be replaced by a chamber of seventy members elected by the state governments.<sup>49</sup>

Since Austria refused to accept the Frankfurt Constitution, its fate was placed in the hands of King Frederick William IV. The Prussian King had several alternatives. He could accept the crown and risk a major war with Austria and her supporters among the German states; he could reject it outright; or he could temporize and wait for a solution to present itself. Radowitz, like the King, was beset by doubts concerning his position. He could have rushed to Berlin to be at his sovereign's side, but he preferred to remain at his post in Frankfurt and put his recommendations in writing as he had done in the past and would continue to do throughout his years of service to the Prussian monarch. But even this advice was uncertain and indecisive. On March 13, 1849, he had outlined the possible actions of the King should the National Assembly elect him Emperor. He realized that an open break with Austria might lead to war but maintained that the Habsburg monarchy had already isolated itself from the rest of Germany. In the end, Radowitz refrained from advising him on what course to take if elected Emperor, explaining that he was not fully informed on the attitude of the Austrian government.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, pp. 340-341.

<sup>50</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Frankfurt, March 31, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 75.

Despite his friend's uncertain advice, Frederick William needed him in Berlin for the King was confused as to which alternative to choose. The Hohenzollern monarch questioned seriously the right of the men at Frankfurt to grant him the imperial crown; he would have preferred to receive it from the hands of the German princes. On April 3, he received the official invitation to become the Emperor from the representatives of the Assembly. He did not actually reject the crown outright, but replied with a carefully worded message. He thanked the National Assembly for its work and his election as Emperor, but informed its delegation that he believed it would be a great disservice to the German people, the princes and the free cities of Germany, were he to accept the crown without their approval. Therefore, he could not accept either the Constitution or the imperial crown until both were approved by the princes and the German states.<sup>51</sup>

This stipulation was not really unreasonable. It should be remembered that even in the United States, the Constitution required the ratification of the states before it could go into effect. So despite the claims of some historians, Frederick William did not reject outright the leadership of Germany, and in fact would fight for German unification and a revised form of the Frankfurt Constitution in the year ahead. Nevertheless, many at Frankfurt interpreted the King's statement as a rejection. After this, the Assembly went into swift decline. Most delegates including Radowitz, left Frankfurt with a sense of disillusionment. On May 30, the remaining fraction of the original members still in Frankfurt decided to move to Stuttgart, where they took an ever more

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<sup>51</sup>Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 216-217; Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 104.

radical position. Finally, Württembergian troops dissolved the rump parliament on June 18, 1848, and the Frankfurt National Assembly faded from the scene.<sup>52</sup>

The reasons for the failure of the Frankfurt National Assembly to achieve its goals were many and varied. The men in the Paulskirche had no real power to force the adoption of their constitution. The Assembly could debate and adopt motions as much as it wished, but it had no army; in Germany in 1848, he who controlled the army controlled the nation. The states possessed the troops and refused to use them to support their own destruction as semi-independent entities. The Assembly had also alienated many German revolutionaries by its decision to support the Malmö Armistice; it could not now call upon them for support against the states. In reality, the Frankfurt National Assembly had adopted a moderate solution to the German problem, and in doing so had alienated both the German states and the revolutionaries.

Similarly, from a study of his work at Frankfurt, Radowitz emerges as a moderate. He was the leader of the Right, but refused to support a reaction that would reinstate the old order and its ineffective Confederation. He fought for the establishment of a monarchy and the retention of the position of the states, but at the same time was willing to work for the erection of a freely elected parliament as a voice for the German people. As he neared the end of his work in St. Paul's Church, Radowitz viewed the results of the National Assembly with mixed emotions. He was deeply disturbed by the factionalism and the intermediate debates at Frankfurt which had delayed the decision on the

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<sup>52</sup> Eyck, Parliament, pp. 383-386.

Constitution until the time for effective action had passed. At the end of March, 1849, he wrote despairingly: "As it is always my fate, I will go my lonely way and put this brew of hell out of my mind... To the people here, I am a stranger and a Catholic; this makes any effective work with such elements impossible." Finally on April 23, Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg, the Prussian Minister President, recalled him to Berlin.<sup>53</sup> In spite of his disillusionment, however, he did not feel that the Assembly had been a total failure. He was encouraged by the foundations for unification laid by the Constitution and would incorporate a revised version of this document in his own proposals of 1849 and 1850. It is clear that he would have preferred the acceptance of the Constitution and of Frederick William IV as Emperor, but he was too realistic to expect such a thing in the face of such strong Austrian opposition. In the next chapter of his career, Radowitz would be forced to carry on his fight for German unification through other channels.

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<sup>53</sup>Wigard, Bericht, VII, p. 5807; Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 229; Radowitz to Countess von Voss, Frankfurt, March 21, 1849, Radowitz Nachlässe.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE LEAGUE OF THREE KINGS

The end of the Frankfurt National Assembly left a political vacuum in Germany. The Revolution had destroyed the old German Confederation of 1815, and the attempts at Frankfurt to replace it with a unified German constitutional state had been unsuccessful. In the spring of 1849, there were still three possible solutions to the German problem: the reestablishment of the defunct Confederation, as favored by the reactionaries, the creation of a republic, as advanced by the radical elements, or the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership. Radowitz favored the third option, and he was subsequently criticized from several quarters for his efforts to achieve this goal. Although he would later unify Germany on the basis of a program very similar to Radowitz's Otto von Bismarck became one of his chief critics. The reactionary Junker accused Radowitz of deliberately trying to lead the Hohenzollern kingdom to humiliation, either from a desire to harm the Protestant cause or else as a result of his selfish determination to curry the favor of Frederick William IV regardless of the consequences. Others, such as the historian Veit Valentin, have charged that Radowitz was completely out of touch with reality owing to his strong romantic leanings.<sup>1</sup> Yet

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<sup>1</sup>Otto von Bismarck, Gedanken und Erinnerungen (Berlin, 1915), I, p. 84; Valentin, Deutsche Revolution, I, pp. 320-321.

during the spring and summer of 1849, it appeared for a time that the Radowitz plan for German unification might still succeed.

After his participation in the unsuccessful meetings in Frankfurt, Radowitz returned to Berlin disillusioned and chastened. He wrote to his wife that he felt like a soldier who had gone into battle with the foreknowledge of certain defeat. He had seen his high hopes in the possibilities of the National Assembly crumble into dust just as he had also met with defeat in his earlier efforts to bring about a reform of the Confederation. In this state of mind, without any idea of what lay before him, he returned to the Prussian capital in April, 1849.<sup>2</sup>

In Berlin, he made one final effort to save the work of the National Assembly. On April 26, he met with Count Frederick Wilhelm von Brandenburg, the Minister President of Prussia, and the King. Radowitz proposed three possible solutions to the disagreement between Berlin and Frankfurt. First, Prussia could break completely with the Assembly and dictate a German constitution from above. Secondly, the Hohenzollern kingdom could appeal directly to the German people. And finally, Berlin could reach an understanding with the middle German states while coming to some sort of separate agreement with Austria. Both Brandenburg and the King entertained serious doubts as to which alternative to choose. Four days later, the ministry met to discuss the issue. In the debate over the problem, Radowitz championed the last alternative, arguing that since the men at Frankfurt had taken the initiative and drafted a constitution, the ministry should act to unite Germany on the basis of a revision of that document. He also emphasized the importance of reaching an accord with the Habsburg Empire. Because the King and his ministers considered other matters, such as the sporadic revolts in

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<sup>2</sup>Radowitz to his wife, Eisenach, April 24, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 18.



the Rhineland more pressing, they delayed action on Radowitz's suggestions, but discussions on the issue continued. On May 5, he again met with the King, who proposed the restoration of the defunct Holy Roman Empire with the Habsburg Emperor at the head and the Prussian King as chief of the ministry.<sup>3</sup> This plan was impractical, because the Revolution had unleashed forces that would never settle for this solution to the German problem. The men of 1848 had fought to create a strong unified nation and would never accept the linkage of German fortunes with those of the multinational Habsburg Empire. Also, the possibility of Austrian approval of the King's program was most remote.

Even the Prussian ministry rejected the King's proposal to resurrect the Holy Roman Empire. Instead, they instructed Radowitz to draft a plan of union. He based his proposal on the Frankfurt Constitution and on his consultation with members of the ministry and the King. On May 13, he presented the fruits of his work to the ministry, which accepted it after two days of discussion.<sup>4</sup> This proposed constitution was to be submitted to a conference of representatives of the German states which had been called to assemble in Berlin, an approach which was very realistic. The states held the real power in Germany, and any solution to the German problem would have to meet with their approval.

The representatives of the states were invited to gather in Berlin on May 17, 1849. Of the thirty-seven sovereignties, however, only Hanover, Saxony, Bavaria and Austria responded to the Prussian invitation. The other German states replied that events no longer justified the

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<sup>3</sup>Diary, April 26 and 30, *ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

<sup>4</sup>Diary, April 30, May 4, 5, and 6, *ibid.*, pp. 90, 92.

convening of a conference. Radowitz opened the session in the name of Prussia with a proposal that the Frankfurt Constitution provide the basis for negotiations to form a new German confederation.<sup>5</sup>

The conference had before it several important issues. First, Radowitz had to convince the participating states to agree on the importance of forming a new German union. This accomplished, he would then have to lead them to agreement on his revised form of the Frankfurt Constitution. The Prussian officer realized that the other German states would never recognize Frederick William IV as Emperor, so he decided to propose a College of Princes to act as the executive of the new Germany. One of the major questions would be the attitude of Austria and the willingness of other German states to follow Prussian leadership should the Habsburg Empire refuse to participate in the new union. This issue would almost break up the conference before it had even begun its work, and would hover over Radowitz's efforts to unite Germany throughout the next year and a half.

Radowitz led the talks throughout the conference and began by moving that the German Reich consist of those states of the former German Confederation which recognized the constitution. With the exception of Austria, the conferees agreed to this proposal and began to revise the Frankfurt Constitution. Bavaria objected to the provision barring diplomatic correspondence between states in the confederation and foreign countries on the grounds that the Wittelsbach kingdom had special relations with Rome owing to religion, and Greece because of dynastic ties.

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<sup>5</sup>"Konferenz-Protokolle," Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss von 26sten Mai und die deutsche Verfassungs-Angelegenheit (Berlin, 1849), I, p. 13.

Hanover supported the Bavarian argument with the contention that it too had special interests in certain foreign countries. The delegates then decided to amend the proposed constitution to allow the states to appoint diplomatic personnel to represent their special concerns in foreign countries. The session next decided that the states should maintain control over taxation and the postal system within their territories, with the Reich retaining the authority to levy taxes for national matters and to supervise interstate postal traffic. The first session ended with Anton von Prokesch, the Austrian Minister to Berlin, declaring that his country would refuse to relinquish its sovereign rights to the new German union and walking out of the conference.<sup>6</sup>

The next day the delegates from Prussia, Bavaria, Hanover and Saxony met to continue their business. Radowitz opened the session by reading a note from the Austrian Minister informing the conference that his country would not participate as long as the Frankfurt Constitution formed the basis for the talks. He further declared that the Habsburg Monarchy would oppose any attempt to force German unification on the basis of the Frankfurt Constitution. The Austrian statement prompted protests from other states and threatened to undo Radowitz's work before it had even begun. Von Beust, the delegate from Saxony, came forward with a declaration that his country could not bind itself to accept any agreement reached in Berlin. Gustav von Lerchenfeld of Bavaria further proposed that the meetings be discontinued until Austria agreed to participate. Fighting to save the proposed union, Radowitz argued that the events of the past year had made reform of the Confederation absolutely

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-17.

necessary and that the delegates should not allow Austria to force them to abandon their important work. After some spirited discussion, they decided to continue their efforts toward a revision of the constitution.<sup>7</sup>

The delegates first agreed to reject the decision of the National Assembly to place an Emperor at the head of the new Germany. Radowitz proposed instead that a College of Princes under the presidency of the King of Prussia hold executive power. This body was to consist of seven members with one each from Prussia, Austria and Bavaria. The other four members were to be divided among the member states. Württemberg, Baden, Hohenzollern-Hechingen and Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen would share a vote. Saxony, the Saxon duchies, the Reusses, the Anhalts and the Schwarzburgs would form one unit, as would Hanover, Brunswick, Oldenburg, the Mecklenburgs, Holstein and the Hansa Cities. Finally, the Hessian states, Nassau, Luxembourg, Waldeck, Detmold, Schaumburg and Frankfurt would share one member. In the event that the Habsburg Empire should continue in its refusal to join the new Germany, the College of Princes was to consist of only six members.<sup>8</sup>

This proposal led to a debate on the position of Austria towards the proposed union. Johann Stüve, the representative of Hanover, became the chief spokesman for those who were willing to go any lengths to avoid offending Vienna. He stated that his country would oppose any step which would exclude Austria from Germany and proposed that the Habsburg Emperor rather than the King of Prussia serve as the presiding officer

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<sup>7</sup>Ibid., pp. 18-20.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 20-21.

of the College of Princes. But Beust argued that although the way should remain open for a later adherence of Vienna to the union, no decision concerning its position should be made immediately, since the Danubian monarchy had denounced the proceedings. Further Radowitz reminded the delegates that the new Austrian Constitution had provided for a centralized state comprising both German and non-German lands. Austria had announced its refusal to join any German union which would require it to divide the Empire in any way. Prussia, he said, was adamantly opposed to Austria forcing its preferred version of the reorganization of Germany on the other states. He also asserted that Berlin had decided that if the other states did not agree they could go their own way. After further discussion, the delegates voted to reduce the membership of the College of Princes to six. They also concluded that the constitution should state clearly the special relationship which would exist between Austria and the future German union.<sup>9</sup>

With the problem of Austria at least temporarily shelved, the delegates continued to explore other revisions designed to render the Frankfurt Constitution more compatible to their aims. On the question of the site of the meetings of the Reichstag, the Hanoverian delegate objected to the consideration of Frankfurt as the center of the new Germany. Eventually all agreed to the city of Erfurt, in southern Prussia, as the ideal location: it was centrally located in a militarily secure region. The meeting then adjourned until the following morning, when the delegates would spend several more hours in discussion.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-24.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 26-31.

On May 20, Radowitz proposed that the delegates issue a public statement to the effect that Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony and Hanover had formed an alliance for the purpose of internal and external security. The document declared that the member states had accepted Prussian leadership and the revised Constitution and invited other German states to join the alliance. After StUve registered the reservations that the members reaffirm their obligations under the Federal Act and the hope that Austria would decide to join the alliance, the delegates signed the statement.<sup>11</sup>

Five more meetings followed until the negotiations were concluded on May 26, 1849. At 10:00 that evening, after ironing out the last details of the Constitution, Radowitz and his colleagues from Bavaria, Saxony and Hanover formally signed the final protocol of the conference, which certified their acceptance of the revised Constitution and the election law. However, since the delegates believed that the Constitution of the Union could not go into effect until agreement had been reached with Vienna and the other states, they concluded a temporary alliance to govern the new Union and work for the acceptance of the Constitution through negotiations with Austria and the other states. Because the Bavarian delegate refused to endorse this agreement until receiving approval from Munich, only Prussia, Hanover and Saxony signed this treaty, and the alliance came to be known as the League of Three Kings or the Alliance of May 26, 1849. The three kingdoms also invited the other German states to join them in forming the new German union.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 32-33.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., pp. 34-54.

The treaty established an Administrative Council to direct the affairs of the League, admit new members and issue the call for the meeting of the Reichstag. For the sake of expediency, the King of Prussia was named the leader of the League and given the responsibility for carrying out all diplomatic and military measures necessary with the assistance of the Administrative Council. As soon as possible, the armies of the member states were to be united to form a League Army. The Reichstag, elected in accordance with the election law, was to meet to give final approval to the Constitution of the Union at a time and place to be announced by the Administrative Council. The Treaty also established a supreme court of the League to consist of three Prussians, two Saxons and two Hanoverians. The oldest Prussian member would act as the presiding officer of the court which was to meet in Erfurt beginning on July 1, 1849.<sup>13</sup>

Thus, Radowitz seemed well on the way toward achieving his goal of a united Germany. Three of the most important German states had agreed to adopt a revised form of the Frankfurt Constitution and had established an organization to govern Germany until that Constitution could go into effect. There were many problems yet to be met, such as the objections of Austria and the reluctance on the part of some states to depart from the strong tradition of Austrian leadership; but at least for the moment it seemed that Germany had begun the process of unification and that the principles of the Revolution of 1848 had not been totally repudiated.

Four days after the signing of the Treaty of the League of Three Kings, the proposed constitution was made public. This document declared

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<sup>13</sup>"Statut des Bündnisses vom 26. Mai 1849," *ibid.*, pp. 85-88.

that the German Reich would consist of those states which were members of the Confederation and which ratified the Constitution. In an obvious reference to Austria, it provided that if a German land shared a common monarch with a non-German land, it must have a separate government, and that only a German land could become a member of the German Reich. The Constitution also required any German ruler assuming the throne of a non-German area to lay aside his right to rule the German area. The individual German states retained their independence except where this was specifically limited by the constitution.<sup>14</sup>

The powers of the central government included all diplomatic correspondence and the right to name ministers and consuls. While the member states would have the right to receive special diplomatic correspondence and negotiate with other German states, all diplomatic intercourse of a national character was to be carried out by the central government, which also had the right to declare war and negotiate peace.<sup>15</sup>

Since Radowitz had seen firsthand the importance of military agreement between the German states during his years on the Military Commission, it was only natural that the proposed constitution would specifically state the military powers of the central government and the obligations of the member states. It was empowered to name a field marshal and generals to lead the Federal Army, which was to consist of the armies of the member states. The Reich would bear the cost of maintenance of the military and establish and support federal fortresses. Although

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<sup>14</sup>"Entwurf der Verfassung des deutschen Reiches," *ibid.*, p. 55.

<sup>15</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 56.



the individual states did retain the right to keep their armies, subject to the regulations of the Reich, they would have no power over the navy, which would be a federal concern exclusively.<sup>16</sup> It was hoped that these provisions would avert a squabble like that of the fortress dispute of 1840.

The Central Government was also given all authority over commercial matters: this embraced control of water transportation, including the rivers, which would be open to all German states. The relatively novel concern involving the regulation of railroads fell also within the competence of the national government, which had the power to construct new lines should they be needed. The new German state would form a customs union, with the Federal Government controlling duties and the customs police; the individual states would lose the right to collect customs duties. The postal and telegraph systems of Germany fell under the auspices of the Federal Government, which was also to determine weights and measures and issue money.<sup>17</sup>

The most important difference between the Frankfurt Constitution and the Constitution supported by the League of Three Kings involved the executive branch. Instead of an Emperor, the conference had agreed on a six-member College of Princes under the King of Prussia as the head of the new German government. This body was to control all diplomatic correspondence and had the right to declare war and negotiate peace. The College of Princes had the right to convene and prorogue the sessions of the Reichstag and to dissolve the House of the People. Decisions of the

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 56-57.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 59-61.

College of Princes were to be reached by an absolute majority of the membership. The executive branch also could issue pardons and commute sentences and would serve as commander-in-chief of the Federal Army.<sup>18</sup>

As in the case of the Frankfurt Constitution, Radowitz's Constitution provided for a legislative branch consisting of a House of States and a House of the People. However, the division of votes in the House of States differed under the new charter. As long as the Habsburg Empire refused to join the new German union, the House of States was to consist of 159 members, with Prussia having forty representatives and Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Württemberg twenty each. Hesse-Kassel and Hesse-Darmstadt each had seven, Holstein six, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Nassau four and Luxembourg three delegates. Hamburg, Brunswick, Saxe-Weimar and Oldenburg were awarded two seats. The other German states each received one member. Half of the delegates to the House of States would be selected by the state governments and the remainder by the local diets. In those states with only one seat, the government of the state would nominate three men, one of whom would be elected by the diet. Members of the upper house would have to be residents in the states they represented and at least thirty years old. The term of office would be six years, and elections for half the delegates would be held every three years. Members of the House of the States would not be bound by instructions from the states.<sup>19</sup>

The lower house, or the House of the People, was to be elected on the basis of a separate election law also approved by the delegates.

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 62-63.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., pp. 64-66.

This statute followed the Frankfurt election law in its apportionment of electoral districts, but prescribed a more limited franchise. Although the law granted every financially independent German over twenty-five the right to vote, it excluded from the franchise all persons who were under the protection of a guardian, receiving welfare payments or involved in legal proceedings arising from indebtedness. Unlike the election law of the Frankfurt National Assembly, elections would not be direct. The voters would choose only electors, who then would elect the delegates to the House of the People for four-year terms. Despite these limitations, at least the German people would have some control over their national government, and there was a possibility of a more democratic election procedure in the future.<sup>20</sup>

The Reichstag would be the supreme legislative body of the new German Reich. Laws would require the approval of a majority of both houses and acceptance by the executive branch. Any statute passed by the Reichstag but rejected by the College of Princes could not be reconsidered during the same session. The budget would be proposed by the College of Princes and submitted to the House of the People for consideration. After receiving the approval of the lower house, a budget would be sent to the House of States which could accept it or return it to the House of the People for further discussion. Financial matters would be considered every three years. The Reichstag would meet once a year in the seat of government, and each house would elect its own presiding officer, vice president and secretary. All meetings of the

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<sup>20</sup>"Entwurf eines Gesetzes betreffend die Wahlen der Abgeordneten zum Volkshause," *ibid.*, pp. 79-81.

legislative branch were open to the public, and each house would be the final authority on the validity of the credentials of its members.<sup>21</sup>

The Constitution completed the central government by the erection of a judicial branch with the same powers as those provided by the Frankfurt Constitution. The single additional right of the Supreme Court would be to hear cases involving charges against citizens of member states in matters outside the competence of the local courts. Thus the new government of Germany would consist of three independent branches, each having its own prescribed powers and none able to completely dominate another branch.<sup>22</sup>

The last part of the Constitution of the Union dealt with the basic rights of the German people and was taken almost word for word from the Frankfurt Constitution. The single difference was that the police would have the power to forbid outside meetings that might threaten the peace and security. All other basic rights, such as freedom of speech and of the press, freedom of religion and assembly, trial by jury and the right of habeas corpus were guaranteed. The Constitution accepted by the Prussian King and his ministers and the other members of the League had many liberal features and contained a detailed statement of the rights of the people.<sup>23</sup> It belies the historical cliché that the months following the fall of the Frankfurt National Assembly constituted a period

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<sup>21</sup>"Entwurf der Verfassung des deutschen Reiches," *ibid.*, pp. 68-69.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 69-70; "Die Frankfurter Reichsverfassung," Huber, *Dokumente*, I, pp. 316-317.

<sup>23</sup>"Entwurf der Verfassung des deutschen Reiches," *Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss*, I, pp. 71-76.

of brutal reaction. Considering the fact that this chapter was the creation of the representatives of the German princes, it becomes clear that 1849 was far from being a year of unrelieved reaction.

Since Radowitz had supported the election of Frederick William IV as Emperor in Frankfurt, it may seem strange that he made no substantial effort to preserve this feature of the Frankfurt Constitution during the negotiations of May, 1849. The explanation lies in the fact that he was simply realistic enough to comprehend that the other German states would never accept giving this much power to the Hohenzollern king. In fact, Saxony and Hanover even had reservations about placing the Prussian monarch in the presidency of the Council of Princes.<sup>24</sup>

In accord with Radowitz's view as to their importance, the power of the states was secured by several features of the Constitution. The House of States, through the election of its membership by the state governments, was the major source of this protection. The position of the states was also guaranteed by the representatives of their rulers in the Council of Princes. However, the states were also limited by Radowitz's Constitution. Their most important symbol of sovereignty, the right to carry on diplomatic relations with foreign powers, was substantially curtailed. The Union was designed to create a united Germany while preserving the rights of the states.

The limited grant of power to the people also reveals Radowitz's political philosophy. While a generous franchise was a part of the Constitution, the method of indirect election and the subordinate position of the House of the People combined to limit the actual impact

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<sup>24</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 382.

of the general public on the proposed Union. Radowitz and his fellow ministers were willing to allow the electorate to get its foot in the door, but stopped short of giving it free entrance to the government. Yet, when one considers that before 1848 the people had no right to participate in the national government at all, the Constitution of the Union represented a major step towards democratic institutions.

A very important aspect of the Union, and one which eventually would contribute to its failure, were the provisions of the Constitution which would exclude Austria. Vienna had made clear its refusal even to consider dividing the government of the Empire into German and non-German sections. If Austria were to join the Union this would be required, and this had the effect of excluding the Habsburg Monarchy from participation. Even if this were not a sufficient obstacle, the ruler in Vienna would never agree to the primacy or even the equality of the Hohenzollern king in Germany, nor would he ever accept the limitations of his power contained in the Constitution. Thus the Constitution of the new German Union had the effect of assigning Austria to the status of a foreign state and placing Germany under Prussian leadership.

At first the League seemed to be a success. On June 6, King Frederick Augustus II of Saxony announced his decision to join. On June 28, the Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach sent his representative to Berlin to announce his adherence to the League. By July 20, the two Mecklenburgs, Oldenburg, the Saxon duchies, the Hessian states, and the Anhalt duchies had declared their intention to become a part of the League. On September 6, the Prussian government informed the remaining German states that they had fourteen days to reply to the invitation to become a part of

the alliance.<sup>25</sup>

During the summer Radowitz feverously worked in Berlin for the success of his program, realizing that the attitude of Vienna would be crucial to the survival of the Union. Even before the conference had completed its work, Radowitz persuaded the Prussian government to begin its efforts to win Austrian acceptance of the program, and on May 10, Canitz, the Foreign Minister, had traveled to Vienna to present two diplomatic notes to the Emperor and his advisors.<sup>26</sup>

The first of these documents stated the position of Prussia concerning the future of Germany and the second was a proposed treaty. The Prussians argued that the influence of the democratic revolutionaries would be nullified as soon as the German governments demonstrated their interests in the welfare of their people. According to Berlin, the way to do this was to form a unified German federal state with an elective parliament. The document emphasized two factors which had to be considered when discussing German affairs: the relationship between the individual states and the relationship between the two great German powers. It was the Prussian position that since Austria was a multinational state and Prussia an almost exclusively German state, Prussia stood in closer connection to the other German states than the Habsburg Empire. Canitz proposed, therefore, that two organizations be formed: a federal state, on the one hand, and a wider German union which would

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<sup>25</sup>"Prussia," The Times (London), June 6, 28, July 20 and September 6, 1849, p. 6.

<sup>26</sup>"Instruktion für den General Leutnant von Canitz," Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, I, pp. 130-131.

include Austria, on the other.<sup>27</sup>

Accompanying the formal statement was a draft treaty which would have formalized the structure of the wider union between the Danubian Monarchy and the German federal state. Eternal peace was to exist between the two members, and either member could resign from the union. Prussia also suggested that the leadership of the new German union be entrusted to a Directory of four members: two for Austria and two for Prussia and the other states. The representative of the Empire would preside over sessions of the Directory.<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately for Radowitz's simultaneous efforts to launch the League of Three Kings, Canitz found a cold reception in Vienna. On May 16, the Austrian government issued two statements on the issue. The first stated that Austria had hoped to work together with Prussia to rid Germany of democratic revolutionary action, but the actions of Berlin had made this cooperation impossible. The second Austrian statement declared that force was the only method of dealing with the revolutionaries.<sup>29</sup>

Canitz spent several days in discussions with Prince Felix von Schwarzenberg, but was unable to persuade the Austrian chief minister to change his position on the Prussian proposals. The government in Vienna took the stance that before any discussion of the German question could take place, the last remnants of the revolution must be crushed.

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<sup>27</sup>"Denkschrift der Königlich Preussischen Regierung, Berlin, 9 Mai 1849," *ibid.*, pp. 131-137.

<sup>28</sup>"Grundlinien zu einer Unions Akte," *ibid.*, pp. 131-137.

<sup>29</sup>"Denkschrift der K.K. Oesterreichischen Kabinets, Wien, 16 Mai 1849," and "Zweitz Denkschrift des K.K. Oesterreichischen Kabinets, Wien, 16 Mai 1849," *ibid.*, pp. 140-145.



Canitz also discovered that the Habsburg court still regarded Archduke John to be the Imperial Vicar. The Danubian monarchy insisted that after the revolution was defeated, the first order of business must be the erection of a new central authority for the German Confederation, and refused to consider any attempt to win the support of the people through any constitutional form.<sup>30</sup>

While these negotiations were taking place in Vienna, Prussia made an effort to persuade the Bavarians to join the League. Brandenburg sent Leopold von Gerlach to Munich to carry on talks with the Wittelsbach court. Here he found an attitude similar to that found by Canitz in Vienna, which he attributed to the influence of agents of the Austrian government. Accordingly, he reported to Radowitz that Bavaria could be considered in agreement with Austria.<sup>31</sup>

However, Gerlach's report did not close the question, for there was still some hope that the south German kingdom might reconsider and join the Union. On June 22, 1849, the Bavarian Foreign Minister, Ludwig von der Pfordten, met with the Prussian Minister President in Berlin to discuss the issue, informing him that his country wishes to reach an accord with Prussia. He also hoped to act as a mediator between Vienna and Berlin and help the two great German powers come to an understanding about the German question.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>"Promemora des General Leutnant von Canitz an den K.K. Minister Präsidenten, Fürsten von Schwarzenberg," and "Promemora des K.K. Minister Präsidenten an den General Leutnant von Canitz, Wien, 19 Mai 1849," *ibid.*, pp. 146-150, 151-153.

<sup>31</sup>Gerlach, Denkwürdigkeiten, VI, p. 329.

<sup>32</sup>Pfordten to Brandenburg, Berlin, June 22, 1849, Brandenburg to Pfordten, Berlin, June 23, 1849, and Pfordten to Brandenburg, Berlin, July 1, 1849, Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, I, 2nd. Ed., pp. 29-33.

The Bavarian minister also wanted to persuade the Prussian government to make several revisions of the Constitution, which he thought might make it more acceptable to both his state and Austria as well. Meeting with Radowitz, he proposed that the section which prohibited the union of a German area with a non-German area be replaced with a provision which would simply exclude the non-German area from the Union. This would remove one of the major Habsburg objections to the Constitution. Pfordten also wanted the document changed to allow the member states the right to send and receive diplomatic representatives. Showing the effects of the long dispute over the fortresses, the Bavarian official requested that the Constitution carry a provision requiring the approval of a member state before a federal fortress could be built on its territory. He also wanted the Constitution to clearly specify that in the event of Austrian participation in the Union, the College of Princes would consist of seven members, one of which would represent Vienna. In a further effort to make the Constitution acceptable to the Habsburg Emperor, Pfordten proposed that the two German powers alternate as the presiding officer of the executive council. He also requested that the individual states be allowed to make a distinction between citizens of the Reich and citizens of the state.<sup>33</sup>

Although the Bavarian proposals might have removed many of the Austrian objections to the Constitution, Prussia was unwilling to accept them. Radowitz replied that Berlin felt an obligation to resist any attempts to change substantially the spirit of the Constitution from that accepted by the conference. On July 1, he informed Pfordten that

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<sup>33</sup>"Vorsläge des Ministers v.d. Pfordten dem General von Radowitz zu vertraulicher Besprechung übergeben," *ibid.*, pp. 39-43.

the Hohenzollern kingdom lacked the authority to change any portion of the Constitution without the approval of the other member states. Radowitz also argued that the Bavarian proposals would lead to a weakening of the Union in such a way as to render it ineffective. Though he was willing to change the Constitution to provide for Bavarian primacy in the College of Princes in case of Prussian absence, he refused to agree to alternate this power between Berlin and Vienna, as the Bavarian representative had requested.<sup>34</sup>

After concluding his talks in Berlin, Pfordten returned to Munich to report to King Maximilian II on July 12, 1849. The Foreign Minister maintained that in spite of Prussian arguments to the contrary, the Union violated the Federal Act and that Austria was right in its objections to the proposal. After the Prussian Minister renewed the invitation to join the alliance, Pfordten responded on September 8 that Bavaria could not join as long as the Constitution remained in its present form. He also stated that participation in the conference did not obligate a state to join the League, and that the south German state could never agree to an association of states that did not have the full approval of Austria.<sup>35</sup> Bavaria officially rejected the League until the Constitution was changed to such an extent that it would be little better than the old German Confederation.

Austria and Bavaria were not alone in their opposition to the Prussian Plan of Union. In September, the ministry of Württemberg informed

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<sup>34</sup>"Vertrauliche Schreiben des Generals von Radowitz an Herrn von der Pfordten," *ibid.*, pp. 44-48.

<sup>35</sup>"Staats-Ministerium des Königl. Hauses und des Aeussern. Auf Seiner Majestät des Königs Allerhöchsten Befehl; "Pfordten to Rosenberg, Munich, September 8, 1849, *ibid.*, pp. 49-51.

Berlin of its decision to decline the invitation to join the League. On September 14, the small central state of Hesse-Homburg added its rejection to those of the southern states. Bavaria and Württemberg declined membership in the League partially owing to a fear of earning the displeasure of Vienna, while Hesse-Homburg guarded its sovereignty jealously out of the fear that in becoming a part of the alliance the tiny country would be absorbed by other larger states.<sup>36</sup>

Not only was the League rejected by several states, but its program had determined critics from within. Stüve of Hanover objected violently to plan, demanding that any draft constitution which did not receive the blessing of Vienna be rejected. While in Berlin, the Hanoverian attempted to persuade Frederick William IV to revise the Plan of Union to delete aspects offensive to the Habsburg ruler. However, the monarch only met with him fifteen minutes and rejected Stüve's request. The Hanoverian minister believed that Radowitz had arrived at the Palace first and arranged it so that his session with the King would be short.<sup>37</sup>

The strongest opposition to Radowitz's plan came from his powerful foes within his own country, especially among the Junker class. Since 1848, a group led by the Gerlach brothers had published a newspaper to combat the revolution. Their Neue Preussische Zeitung or "Kreuzzeitung," so-called from the large cross on its masthead, became the chief

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<sup>36</sup>"Erklärung der Königlich Württembergischen Regierung," "Erklärung der Landgräflich Hessen-Homburgischen Regierung," *ibid.*, pp. 7-72.

<sup>37</sup>Stüve to Pagenstecher, Hanover, June 20, 1849, Johann Stüve, Briefe Johann Carl Stüves, ed. by Walter Vogel (Göttingen, 1960), II, p. 667.

critic of the Plan of Union, denouncing its founder as an agent of the Revolution and a spy from the Paulskirche. This opposition ultimately reached Frederick William IV, who began to entertain serious doubts about Radowitz and his ideas. The nature of this hostility to the Union and its architect is a further demonstration that Radowitz was far from being an agent of reaction. Had he been so, the Junkers would have lent him their support, but as a major spokesman for those who realized that the old order had outlived its usefulness and had to be replaced by a new and united Germany, he was the very antithesis of the reaction.<sup>38</sup>

Junker animosity toward the Union had been expressed in the Prussian Diet even prior to the Austrian rejection of the plan in May. Although the Diet lacked the authority to enact or veto the program, its support was still important, because by winning its favor Radowitz could gain leverage in his fight with the reactionaries. On August 25, he presented his program in a speech before the assembly. Summoning all his talents as an orator, Radowitz pleaded for the delegates' approval, citing the growth of German nationalism during the War of Liberation and the need for a united German foreign policy. So effective was his impassioned speech that Bismarck, then a delegate to the Diet, reported scornfully that by its conclusion there was hardly a dry eye in the house.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Diary, May 19 and 31, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 100, 108.

<sup>39</sup>"Rede in der zweiten Kammer der preussischen Stände am 25sten August 1849," Gesammelte Schriften, II, pp. 388-420; F. Darmstaedter, Bismarck and the Creation of the Second Reich (London, 1948), p. 96.

Despite this enthusiastic reception of Radowitz's statement, the League still had many foes. Typical of the opposition was Bismarck himself, who delivered a speech vehemently denouncing the Union and its Constitution, which he believed would destroy the greatest pillar of German power, Prussia. He passionately invoked the old Prussian virtues of loyalty and military discipline as a guide for action rather than the despised Constitution, which he charged was a creation of the Revolution. He concluded his denunciation of Radowitz and his proposal with the words:

What is this Germany? The people, who have risen out of the army, whose true representative is this army...have no desire to see their Prussian Kingdom dissolved in the rotten fermentation of south German indiscipline. Their loyalty is not a paper presidency of a Reich; they cling to the free and living King of Prussia. I know that I express with these words the sentiment of the Prussian army and the majority of my fellow countrymen, and I hope to God that we will long remain Prussian, and that this piece of paper will be forgotten like a dry autumn leaf which falls to the ground.<sup>40</sup>

Still, as late as the fall of 1849, it seemed that Radowitz had at last achieved his goal despite such stubborn opposition. On June 18, the Administrative Council had begun to meet. On July 2, the Supreme Court of the League of Three Kings had taken up its work in Erfurt. Radowitz also found support from many liberals, who had accepted his ideas as a means to preserve the accomplishments of the Frankfurt National Assembly. After the unsuccessful conclusion of the meetings in the Paulskirche, Heinrich von Gagern, the former President of the Assembly, had invited his supporters to a meeting at Gotha to examine means by which the Frankfurt Constitution might be saved. On June 26,

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<sup>40</sup> "Ueber Preussen und die deutschen Kleinstaaten," Otto von Bismarck, Gesammelte Reden (Berlin, 1894), I, pp. 24-25.

1849, 130 men had assembled, including Georg Friedrich von Vincke, Eduard Simson, Hermann von Beckerath and other leading German liberals.<sup>41</sup>

Those attending the Gotha Congress quickly realized, however, that most states would reject the Constitution as adopted by the National Assembly, and after two days of discussion decided that the best chance for German unification would be through the Prussian Plan of Union and the work of Radowitz. Therefore, they adopted a resolution supporting the League of Three Kings and its Constitution and announced their decision to participate in the elections for the Reichstag.<sup>42</sup> In this way, Radowitz had found allies in the chief spokesmen of the moderate liberals.

Throughout the fall of 1849, the Union continued to gain support. By October, in addition to the three original members, twenty-two German states had announced their intentions to join the League. Prussia was no longer alone, but joined by the majority of the states in its first tentative steps toward an acceptable plan of union under a constitution with many liberal features. When viewed in this light, it is clear that 1849 was far from a year of unrelieved reaction: on the contrary, for the first time since 1815, there existed a strong possibility that many of the liberal hopes would achieve reality. The vehicle for this aspiration was not a weak parliament without any real power, but the second most powerful German state and its ruler. Radowitz could look to the future with considerable optimism.

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<sup>41</sup>Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, II, p. 5; Gustav Brunnert, Das Erfurter Unions Parlament im Jahre 1850 (Erfurt, 1913), p. 12.

<sup>42</sup>Neue Preussische Zeitung, July 1 and 3, 1849, pp. 1207-1217.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE ERFURT PARLIAMENT

In the late summer and fall of 1849, it appeared that German unification was at last on the verge of becoming a reality. The majority of the states had pledged themselves to create a unified nation and had endorsed a constitution which granted the people basic rights and the opportunity to participate in the national government. Although Austria had done its best to stultify the Prussian Union and had won the support of Bavaria, Württemberg and Hesse-Homburg in its efforts, Vienna's attempts to frustrate the Prussian Plan had thus far failed. Radowitz viewed the apparent success of his work with great satisfaction, for after almost two years of effort, at last it seemed that his labor would bear fruit. However, his high hopes would soon turn to despair, for by November it would appear that the Habsburg Empire had succeeded in her endeavor to kill the new Germany at its birth.

On June 18, the Administrative Council of the League had been established, but it did not begin its important work until October 5 when the representatives of the new member states joined the proceedings. By this date, in addition to the original three members, Baden, Anhalt-Bernberg, Saxe-Weimar, Nassau, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Hesse-Kassel, Brunswick, Saxe-Altenburg, Hamburg, Bremen, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Reuss, (Older Line), Oldenburg, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Anhalt-Dessau, Anhalt-Cöthen, Schwarzenburg-Rudolstadt, Schwarzenburg-Sondershausen,



Saxe-Meiningen-Hildburgshausen, Lippe, Hesse-Darmstadt and Reuss, (Younger Line) had joined the alliance. Frankfurt, Lübeck, Schaumburg-Lippe and Waldeck had not yet declared their intentions. Thus twenty-five out of thirty-seven German states had thrown their support to Prussia.<sup>1</sup>

The first issue before the expanded body was that of planning the election for the lower house of the Reichstag. Vollpract, the representative of the Duchy of Nassau, opened the session with a proposal that the Council make all arrangements necessary for the election of the House of the People. After the smaller states had spoken on the issue, Hanover and Saxony objected to holding the elections until agreement had been reached with Austria.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the following month the two kingdoms continued to obstruct the proceedings of the Administrative Council by this demand. For example, on October 17, the representative of the Guelph monarchy declared that without Austrian approval any attempt to unify Germany would end in failure. Two days later, the Saxon delegate informed the members of the Council that his country had decided to withdraw from the electoral commission. Finally, on October 23, the two kingdoms informed the Administrative Council of their refusal to participate in any further sessions and recalled their ministers from Berlin the following day. Saxony further declared that it had participated in the formation of the League with the understanding that agreement would be reached with Austria and the south German states. However, since this

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<sup>1</sup> Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, II, pp. 1-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 10-21.

had failed to materialize, the situation had changed drastically; the Saxon government objected to plans to call the Reichstag into session as long as this condition had not been met. Since Dresden considered it impossible to create a united Germany without the support of Vienna, Munich and Stuttgart, there was no alternative but to withdraw from the League until the obstacle of Habsburg objections was removed.<sup>3</sup>

Although Radowitz did not participate in the sessions of the Administrative Council, he watched its progress very closely. When the two largest members of the League besides Prussia refused to cooperate, Radowitz was forced to make a decision on his next steps. He could have given up his fight for German unification, but with the admission of Lübeck on October 12, the League still had twenty-four members. His support in Berlin was still strong, so he attempted to salvage his work.

The day that Hanover and Saxony withdrew their Ministers from Berlin, Radowitz rushed to the Prussian Diet with a program designed to preserve the Union. Speaking for the government, he reaffirmed its dedication to the success of the Union. Radowitz admitted that his earlier efforts had met with initial failure and that a new approach was necessary. He now proposed that Germany consist of two unions: the Confederation of 1815 and a smaller organization within this body. This limited confederation would adopt the Constitution of the League of Three Kings but would not separate itself from the larger German union. He concluded this important speech by claiming that this proposal was in agreement with the terms of the Federal Act and that every attempt would be made to gain the approval of Vienna. As the dedicated worker for

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 21-86, 113-122; "Prussia," The Times (London), October 29, 1849, p. 6.

German unification spoke, the hall was silent, but when he announced his new program, the delegates shouted their enthusiastic approval.<sup>4</sup>

Radowitz's "new" plan was really a recasting of his original proposal for the revision of the German Confederation first brought forth in 1847. It nevertheless represented a serious attempt to avoid antagonizing Austria by allowing it to remain in a position of authority in Germany. Also calculated to please the Habsburgs was his appeal to the Federal Act, for the Austrians based their opposition to the League on the grounds that it violated this agreement. In his arguments, Radowitz cited precedents to bolster his case. Saxe-Coburg had united with Saxe-Gotha to form Saxe-Coburg-Gotha; Saxe-Meiningen had joined Saxe-Hildburghausen to form Saxe-Meiningen-Hildburghausen; and Anhalt-Dessau and Anhalt-Köthen had merged into Anhalt-Dessau-Köthen since 1815. If the smaller states could unite without violating the Federal Act, then other German states could form a larger union without violating it either.

The response of the two former members of the League to Radowitz's new plan was not favorable. On November 1, 1849, Hanover denounced the proposal as a violation of the spirit of the League of Three Kings. The Hanoverian government contended that Radowitz's idea would only widen the split in the German Confederation and thus betray the hopes of the German people. However, the Guelph kingdom did not carry its opposition to the extent of rejecting the Constitution, which it would support provided Austria withdrew her objections.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>"Prussia," The Times (London), October 30, 1849; "Kammerbericht," Neue Preussische Zeitung, October 25, 1849.

<sup>5</sup>"Die Denkschrift der Königlich Hannoverschen Regierung," Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, II, pp. 134-142.

Four days later Saxony formally objected to the domination of the League by Berlin and the failure to win the support of the south German states and Austria. Dresden charged that the smaller union, which would consist almost entirely of north German states, would only intensify the disunity of Germany. Saxony was also concerned about the difficulty of differentiating between the authority of the wider and narrower union in such issues as the maintenance of federal fortresses. But in spite of the opposition of their king and his ministers to Radowitz's program, many in Saxony still favored the Union. A group in Dresden supported the Prussian Plan of Union had distributed a flyer throughout the kingdom criticizing the government for its obstructionism.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the withdrawal of Saxony and Hanover, the meeting of the Administrative Council on November 17 was well attended by the representatives of eighteen states, and this provided a sufficient majority to override Hanoverian and Saxon opposition to the calling of elections. The Council decided to conduct the voting on January 31, 1850. It also agreed that the Reichstag would meet in Erfurt at a time to be announced. The withdrawal of the two kingdoms had not led to a mass exodus from the League as had been feared, and the remaining members at last agreed to take the first step toward making the Constitution more than just a piece of paper. The announcement of the election brought angry protests from the two former members of the League as well as from Austria. To these the Prussian ministry replied that the proposed smaller confederation was only a beginning and not the final solution

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<sup>6</sup>"Der Erlass des Königlich Sachsischen Ministers für die auswärtigen Angelegenheiten," *ibid.*, pp. 142-148; Neue Preussische Zeitung, November 20, 1849.

to the German problem. It justified the calling of the parliament on the grounds that the movement for German unification must continue.<sup>7</sup>

Although the new Prussian Plan of Union represented an attempt at compromise with the Austrian demands, the Danubian Monarchy continued to object. On December 12, 1849, the Habsburg Court agreed that the decision of Prussia and her allies to call the parliament was in violation of the Federal Act--the same law cited by Radowitz to justify his program. Vienna also protested in advance to any action taken by the Reichstag and challenged the right of Prussia to create a union of states without prior consultation with the Emperor and his ministers. Austria hinted at the possibility of armed intervention should Prussia continue its efforts to unite Germany under its leadership. The Prussian reply defended the legality of its actions as being in full accord with the provisions of the Federal Act and charged that by its combination with non-German territories, Austria had vacated its position as the leader of Germany. As evidence for this contention, the Prussian statement cited the decision of the Frankfurt National Assembly to place the Hohenzollern sovereign rather than his Habsburg counterpart at the head of Germany.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time that Prussia was trying to form the smaller union, it was involved in negotiations with Austria concerning the fate of the larger German Confederation over which Archduke John still governed as Imperial Vicar. On September 15, 1849, Prokesch, the Austrian Minister

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<sup>7</sup>Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, II, pp. 160-162; "Prussia," The Illustrated London News, November 24, 1849, p. 338; "Prussia," The Times (London), November 24 and 26, 1849.

<sup>8</sup>"Prussia and Austria," The Times (London), December 24, 1849, p. 6.

to Berlin, had proposed that the two great German powers form a joint commission to govern Germany until May 1, 1850, after which a more definitive decision regarding the organization of the German Confederation could be made. This authority was to consist of two Austrians and two Prussians and would take office as soon as the Archduke resigned his post. The Prussian government had welcomed the Austrian proposal with enthusiasm and instructed its Minister to Vienna, Count Albrecht von Bernstorff, to begin negotiations on the issue. Finally on September 30, 1849, the two powers had signed an agreement providing for the implementation of the Austrian proposal.<sup>9</sup>

Frederick William IV named Radowitz as one of the Prussian members of the commission, and he left Berlin for Frankfurt in December to assume his new position. On December 20, Archduke John handed over his office to the commission, which agreed to meet daily to discuss the German problem. However, it accomplished nothing toward solving the conflict between the two powers; all it could do was establish two committees to deal with military and naval matters, commercial concerns, foreign relations, and financial problems. While in Frankfurt, Radowitz was second only to the Austrian Minister in rank but was unable to win support for his program. Finally, on January 28, 1850, Radowitz's superiors recalled him to Berlin to participate in the preparations for

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<sup>9</sup>"Note des Kaiserliche Königlische Gesandten, Berlin, 15 September 1849," "Entwurf des Kaiserliche Königlische Oesterreichischen Kabinets," "Vertrauliche Instruktion an den Königlischen Gesandten in Wien," "Ratificirte Konvention," Aktenstücke betreffend das Bündniss, I, 2nd. Ed., pp. 3, 4-5.

the opening of the Reichstag.<sup>10</sup>

In his absence, the ultraconservatives had been actively campaigning against the Union. On January 6, 1850, Ludwig von Gerlach published a pamphlet stating that the real issue was "law or revolution, true German freedom or the March Revolution, and a kingdom by the grace of God or the sovereignty of the masses." Like Bismarck, Gerlach emphasized the importance of Prussian traditions and loyalty to the King, charging that the concepts embodied in the Constitution were the products of revolutionary ideas from France. He called for a defeat of the Revolution and the Constitution it had produced. He contended that in order for Germany to remain strong, Austria and Prussia must work together; the smaller states and the division of the nation which they perpetuated, he declared, should not be considered an evil, for they had grown out of German history.<sup>11</sup>

Discussions concerning the Austrian objections to the Union reached a highpoint in February, 1850. Realizing the strength of his opponents, Radowitz wrote Foreign Minister Schleinitz a letter on February 14 requesting his support in the fight to save the Union. Two days later, the King, very concerned about the possibility of war with the Habsburg Empire, informed Radowitz of his doubt concerning the wisdom of continuing to attempt German unification on the basis of the Union and its

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<sup>10</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Berlin, December 11, 1849, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 144; "Prussia and Austria," and "Germany," The Times (London), December 24, 1849 and January 12, 1850, p. 6; Neue Preussische Zeitung, December 22 and 29, 1849.

<sup>11</sup>"Die Erfurter Wahlen," in Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutscher Bund. Politik und Ideengut der preussischer Hochkonservativen 1848-1866. Aus dem Nachlass von Ernst Ludwig von Gerlach, ed. by Helmut Ditwalk (Göttingen, 1970), II, pp. 646-648.

Constitution. Radowitz, realizing the importance of maintaining the King's support, responded with a reply repeating his customary arguments in favor of the Plan. He also corresponded with Count Brandenburg and discounted the possibility of war on the grounds that the guarantees of other European states to Berlin would act as a deterrent to any aggressive intent on the part of Vienna. Influenced by Radowitz's pleas, the King decided to instruct Schleinitz to send a note to his Austrian counterpart defending the Union.<sup>12</sup>

Radowitz realized that the Habsburg Empire would never voluntarily vacate its position as the leader of Germany but hoped that his proposal for a "wider and narrower union" would provide a middle ground between unification without Austria and continued disunity. He also knew that the Frankfurt Constitution would never gain the approval of Vienna and thus sought to effect a compromise between its advocates and Austria.<sup>13</sup> However, Radowitz did not fully appreciate the strength of his ultra-conservative opponents or their unwillingness to compromise with what they considered the spirit of the Revolution.

At this point, Austria tried a new strategy against Prussia, as Schwarzenberg used his influence to persuade the south German states to form a rival to the League. On February 27, Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony formed their own alliance, naming it the "League of Four

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<sup>12</sup>Radowitz to Schleinitz, Frankfurt, February 14, 1850, Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Charlottenburg, February 16, 1850, Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Frankfurt, February 18, 1850, and Radowitz to Brandenburg, Frankfurt, February 20, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 161, 165, 167, and 170; "Prussia," The Times (London), March 5, 1850, p. 6.

<sup>13</sup>Private Notes of Radowitz, March 2, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 174.



Kings" in the hope that Hanover would join. The members of the new alliance proposed to build a German government consisting of a council of seven members named by Austria, Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, Württemberg, Hesse-Darmstadt and Hesse-Kassel to act as the executive branch. The members of the council would not be independent delegates, but would be bound by instructions from member states. The legislative branch of the confederation would be a representative body of 300 members; 100 from Prussia, 100 from Austria and 100 from the other states. The delegates to the representative body would be elected by the state diets rather than the people.<sup>14</sup>

The south German Union would have given considerably less power to the national government than the Constitution of the Prussian Union. It envisioned central control over declarations of war and diplomatic affairs, the customs and measurements and coinage, but all other powers were to be reserved to the states. A very important difference between the two plans was the lack of a bill of rights in the south German program.<sup>15</sup> Thus, Bavaria, Saxony and Württemberg had agreed to oppose the League of Three Kings with a rival organization of their own, which eliminated many of the liberal elements of the Prussian program, including the right of the German people to participate in their national government.

In March, King William I of Württemberg removed any doubts of the intentions of his state and its allies through remarks delivered during

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<sup>14</sup>"Uebereinkunft zwischen Bayern, Sachsen und Württemberg über die Hauptgrundsätze für ein Revision der Bundesverfassung," Huber, Dokumente, I, pp. 444-446.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

his annual speech from the throne. The Swabian monarch condemned the League of Three Kings in very strong terms, calling the attempts to create a united German state a project of dreamers and the most dangerous proposal yet produced to solve the problem of German unity. Berlin reacted sharply to this rhetoric by recalling its Minister to Stuttgart.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, the elections for the House of the People were held in all states still adhering to the League, and the Prussian government made plans for the opening of the Reichstag. Although the liberals at Gotha had decided to participate in the elections and the parliament, the democrats had declared their intention to boycott both the elections and the meeting of the Reichstag because their objections to the Union, which they saw as a betrayal of the principle of popular sovereignty. The Erfurt Parliament opened on March 20, 1850, amid the ringing of church bells and a festive procession through the city led by the Erfurt Choral Society singing Mülling's "Deutsches Wort dich hör ich wieder." At 10:00 the celebrants of German unity arrived at St. Augustine's Church, which had been decorated appropriately to resemble the Paulskirche in Frankfurt. At the church, the members of the Parliament and their guests joined in an opening worship service, and the Erfurt Reichstag began its work.<sup>17</sup>

The Parliament consisted of 195 delegates, of which 138 represented Prussia. Radowitz had been elected to a seat by the voters of Erfurt

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<sup>16</sup>Brünnert, Unions Parliament, pp. 6-7; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 417.

<sup>17</sup>"Prussia," The Illustrated London News, February 2, 1850, p. 66; "Prussia," The Times (London), January 12 and February 9, 1850, p. 6; Brünnert, Unions Parliament, p. 8.

itself. Besides the Hohenzollern Kingdom, twenty-five states sent delegates to the Reichstag. The formation of the rival alliance by the south German states had not yet undermined the Prussian League. Even the Saxony duchies refused to follow the lead of the Kingdom of Saxony because of the strong pro-unification sentiment to be found there. The membership of the Erfurt Parliament represented a clear majority of the German states.<sup>18</sup>

Radowitz formally opened the Parliament with a somewhat dry legalistic statement in which he quoted Article IV of the treaty establishing the League of Three Kings. After this, the two houses divided for their organizational sessions. The House of States elected Alfred von Auerswald of Prussia as its President by a vote of sixty-three to fifty and then adopted a set of rules. Radowitz himself presided over the opening of the House of the People, which elected Eduard Simson, a leading liberal, President, and Otto von Bismarck, Secretary. The next day, the lower house busied itself with the report of the credentials committee.<sup>19</sup>

As at Frankfurt, the membership of the Erfurt Parliament divided into political factions or embryonic parties. The Right was led by the Gerlach brothers, Friedrich Julius Stahl, the leading conservative political theorist, Bismarck and Hans von Kleist Retzow. This group was ultra-royalist and favored the formation of a federation of German

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<sup>18</sup>Stenographische Bericht über die Verhandlungen des deutschen Parlaments zu Erfurt von der Eröffnungssitzung am 29 März bis zum Schluss am 29 April 1850 (Erfurt, 1850), pp. 331-324.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 1; Brunnert, Unions Parliament, p. 11; "Deutschland," Die deutsche Zeitung, March 22, 1850, p. 2-4; "Prussia," The Times (London), March 26, 1850, p. 6.

states rather than the union advocated by Radowitz. The Catholic-Conservative Party, led by Franz Joseph Buss and August Reichensperger, took a similar position to that of the Right. Radowitz and his supporters, including Count Brandenburg, Otto von Manteuffel and Ernst Bodelschwingh, formed the State Conservative Party.<sup>20</sup>

The Left at Erfurt was known by the collective name of Bahnhofspartei, because they dined together at the railway station. This group was further divided into the Liberal-Conservative Party, led by Alfred and Rudolf von Auerswald and Georg Vincke, and the National Liberals, led by Eduard Simson, Ludolf Camphausen, Friedrich Dahlmann, Heinrich and Max von Gagern and Heinrich von Sybel. The chief difference between the two factions of the Left lay in the participation of the National Liberals in the Gotha Conference. The first demonstration of the relative strength of these groups was the election of Simson as President of the House of the People with a vote of ninety-eight against a combined total of fifty-four for his opponents.<sup>21</sup>

The delegates had two important matters before them; the ratification of the Constitution and the drafting of a new law to provide for the elections of the House of the People. On March 26, Radowitz addressed the assembly in behalf of the Executive Council, of which he was President. Pleading his case on the basis of constitutional law, he stated that Prussia was completely within its rights in seeking unification on the basis of a closer union of states within the confines

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<sup>20</sup>Ludwig von Gerlach, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutscher Bund, I, p. 258; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, pp. 895.

<sup>21</sup>"Prussia," The Times (London), March 29 and April 13, 1850, p. 6; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, pp. 895-896.

of the Confederation of 1815. Radowitz ended this speech with an appeal for reconciliation between the two leading German powers. After he finished, the Parliament voted to recess for Easter.<sup>22</sup>

The reaction to Radowitz's appeal was enthusiastic. Even the Neue Preussische Zeitung, normally Radowitz's chief critic, was overwhelming in its praise. It called him the "Father of the Union" and stated that he had become the leader of the moderate forces in Germany against the extremes of the Left and Right. Radowitz was pictured as a friend of justice and honor and his program was portrayed as a rational solution to the German problem. Other newspapers, such as the National Zeitung took a somewhat different position. The editors of this organ of the moderate democrats charged that the Prussian Plan of Union merely added to the already existing confusion in Germany and declared that the Erfurt Parliament lacked the support of the German people. The liberal Deutsche Zeitung praised the abilities of the father of the Parliament, but wondered if he had not burned his ship out from under him by his moderation. Upon hearing of the address, Frederick William IV wrote his friend a letter of praise and thanked him for his work.<sup>23</sup>

Despite the enthusiastic reception of Radowitz's speech, the power of the opposition continued to grow. The representative of Hesse-Kassel on the Executive Council informed his fellow ministers that his state considered any actions taken by the Parliament to be but tentative and

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<sup>22</sup>"Rede in dem Parlaments zu Erfurt am 26sten März 1850," Gesammelte Schriften, II, pp. 433-449; "Prussia," The Times (London), March 29, 1850, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup>"Prussia," The Times (London), March 29, 1850, p. 6; "Erfurt," Deutsche Zeitung, March 29, 1850, p. 2; Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Potsdam, March 27, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 189.

refused to commit either himself or his state to their support. These reservations as well as the rival League of Four Kings raised increasing doubts in the mind of Frederick William IV as to the future of Radowitz's program. On March 26, he warned his friend that the decision reached at Erfurt could only take effect through the agreement of the German princes. The father of the Erfurt Parliament reacted to the King's letter with anger and resolved to fight for his work.<sup>24</sup>

Many in Berlin still worried about the opposition of Austria and her allies to the Union and the possibility of the development of a serious split in the Parliament were a dispute to arise during the discussions on the Constitution. Some members of the ministry feared that such an occurrence would seriously weaken the fabric of the League and cause still more states to withdraw. In an effort to minimize controversy, the ministry at first decided to lay the document before the Parliament for adoption as a whole rather than article by article. But under the influence of Radowitz's persuasion, the ministry reversed their decision and on March 30 resolved to present the Constitution article by article to the members of the Reichstag for revision. The results were then to be submitted to the representatives of the princes on the Executive Council for review. The procedure, the ministry held, would avoid antagonizing any member states.<sup>25</sup>

The new plans of the ministry were certain to meet with serious

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<sup>24</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, pp. 408, 417; Radowitz to Schleinitz, Erfurt, March 27, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 186-187.

<sup>25</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 410; Leopold von Gerlach to his Brother Ludwig, Berlin, March 31, 1850, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutscher Bund, II, p. 665.

opposition from the liberals, for it meant that the popularly-elected representatives in the Erfurt Parliament would be denied the final authority to adopt a constitution: this was to be reserved for the princes. With this, one of the central and as yet unresolved issues of the Revolution intruded itself into St. Augustine's Church: In whom did sovereignty reside, the elected representatives of the people or the princes? When the Erfurt Parliament reconvened after Easter, its liberal majority refused to accept the recommendations of the ministry and forced the adoption of the complete and unamended Constitution on April 14, 1850. As Leopold von Gerlach observed at the time, the liberals had taken a position "a la Paulskirche," by their insistence of the authority of the Reichstag to revise the Constitution and force its adoption by the member states. A week later, the Parliament voted a recess of two days to allow time for consultations between Radowitz and the ministry.<sup>26</sup>

The course of events in Erfurt had placed Radowitz in a difficult position. He had written the Constitution adopted by the League and now ratified by the Reichstag, but as a member of the King's circle, he was forced to disavow it because of the way it had been adopted. He was realistic enough to know that without the support of Berlin he could accomplish nothing. The Parliament could take any action it wished, but it lacked the power to put that action into effect. Radowitz also knew that the conservative ministers had enough influence over the King to cause him to seriously consider the abandonment of the whole project.

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<sup>26</sup>"The German Parliament," and "Prussia and the German Parliament," The Times (London), April 18 and 26, 1850, p. 6; Leopold von Gerlach, Denkwürdigkeiten, VI, p. 463.

At the same time that opposition was gaining strength at home, the protests of Austria were becoming ever more insistent.

After the recess, the members of the Parliament began amending the Constitution they had previously adopted. Many believed that the Prussian ministry would support the Parliament. This assumption was reinforced by a declaration by the ministry on April 23 which endorsed the proceedings of the meeting at Erfurt. But after gaining victory in the forced adoption of the Constitution, the liberals split among themselves and thereby allowed Radowitz and the Prussian ministry to dominate the remaining meetings of the Parliament. Though as a member of the Executive Council, Radowitz did not take an active part in the debates of the Reichstag, his influence was crucial. On April 26, for example, during a debate on a proposal to force the member states to adopt the national election law for local elections, Carl von Manteuffel opposed the provision. After Radowitz agreed with him, the delegates rejected this requirement. In fact The Times of London reported that on every controversial question, a stand by Radowitz was enough to sway the membership to support his position.<sup>27</sup>

The Parliament continued its revision of the Constitution to fit the requirements of Radowitz's wider and narrower Union and hopefully remove the major causes of Austrian opposition. For example, the first change in the text of the Constitution was a proposal by Otto von Bismarck to substitute the word "Union" for "Reich" everytime it appeared in the document. Bismarck had the support of the ministry, and after a

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<sup>27</sup>"Prussia," "Prussia and the German Parliament," and "Prussia," The Times (London), April 18, 20 and 26, 1850, p. 6.



short debate the Reichstag accepted this change.<sup>28</sup> This alteration of the Constitution was intended to remove a major Austrian objection to the Prussian Union, for use of the word "Reich" carried with it the connotation that the member states composed the entire German nation. The revised Constitution reaffirmed the loyalty of the member states to the German Confederation of 1815 and their obligations for the common defense and welfare. Finally, on April 30, the Executive Council adjourned the assembly, but not before it had promised to submit the Constitution to the governments of the member states for consideration.<sup>29</sup> Thus the liberals were thwarted: the final decision on the Constitution remained in the hands of the member states, and the Erfurt Parliament was unable to force the states to agree to adopt the results of its labor.

Both the Frankfurt National Assembly and the Erfurt Parliament had met to solve the problem of German unity; both drew up constitutions and developed party structures. And both ended without seeing their objectives realized because neither had the power to force the states to accept their recommendations. The major difference between the two bodies was the presence of the Executive Council at Erfurt, a body with official power to propose legislation. Another difference was the presentation of a previously written draft constitution to the assembly at Erfurt. At Frankfurt, no one had enjoyed this authority, and the result was a full discussion of every aspect of the German question in all its

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<sup>28</sup> Ludwig von Gerlach, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutscher Bund, I, p. 263; Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, p. 897.

<sup>29</sup> "The Prorogation of the Erfurt Parliament," The Times (London), May 4, 1850, p. 6.

many facets, a feature which was absent from the deliberations at Erfurt. Still another difference between the two meetings was the domination of a representative of one German state over the proceedings at Erfurt. While it is true that Heinrich von Gagern played a very important role in the deliberations at Frankfurt, he did not exercise the influence enjoyed by Radowitz at the Erfurt Parliament.

Finally, the political factions present at each were different. At Frankfurt, the ultra-conservatives were hardly represented at all. At Erfurt, the reactionary Right was present, but the radical Left refused to participate. In conclusion, although the Constitution as amended at Erfurt did not go into effect immediately as the liberals had hoped, the Reichstag was a success because the second most powerful German state had pledged that the Union created by the Constitution would become a reality. Throughout the meetings of the Erfurt Parliament, Radowitz had fought for its success and after its adjournment would not cease his work but would continue his fight for German unification through every possible channel.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE CONGRESS OF PRINCES

Even as the debates continued at the Erfurt Parliament, Radowitz was exploring another means for achieving his goal. The inspiration for these efforts was Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, who had championed German unification and constitutionalism throughout 1848 and 1849. It was to his residence city, Gotha, that the liberals had gone in 1849 to plan further action after the failure of the Frankfurt National Assembly. He was a strong supporter of the Prussian Plan of Union and followed the developments in Erfurt closely. On April 12, 1850, while the Parliament was debating the proposal to adopt the Constitution as a whole, Duke Ernest traveled to Erfurt to present his plan to save the Union. After attending a session of the Reichstag, he met with Radowitz to propose that a Congress of Princes would be the only way to insure the success of the League. The Duke proposed to invite the rulers of all member states to assemble in Gotha to discuss the Constitution. He suggested his capital city because of its proximity to Erfurt and the enthusiasm for unification among the people to the Saxon duchies. Radowitz at first expressed doubts about the idea, but finally agreed and sent a letter to Frederick William IV informing him of the proposal. Radowitz hoped that the princes would be able to cope with both the Austrian opposition to the Union and the objections of the

south German states which had joined the League of Four Kings.<sup>1</sup>

However, once again the King began to vacillate. Having become concerned about the Habsburg attitude, he instructed his Foreign Minister, Alexander von Schleinitz, to inform Radowitz that he saw no value in the proposed Congress of Princes. Radowitz replied that the princes would be able to revise the Constitution in such a fashion as to make it acceptable to all member states and thus provide a basis for true unity. In his efforts to win the King's approval for the Congress, Radowitz found a valuable ally in Duke Ernest. On April 29, 1850, the Saxon ruler sent Seebach, his chief minister, to Berlin with a proposal that the rulers of the member states and their ministers assemble in Gotha to discuss the salvation of the League. Frederick William IV met with the Saxon representative at Bellevue Palace on May 1, 1850, but refused to commit himself on the suggestion. The next day, Seebach met with Schleinitz, who was more encouraging than the King, but insisted that Congress meet in Berlin because the Prussian ruler was unable to take the time to travel to Gotha. Persuaded by Radowitz and Duke Ernest, the King at last gave his formal approval and, citing the Austrian threat of war against the League as justification, formally invited the rulers of the member states and their ministers to assemble on May 16 for the meeting. Frederick William IV emphasized the importance of swift action to save the Union and requested all princes to inform him of their decision within a week. But despite his decision to host the Congress of Princes in Berlin, the Prussian monarch did not cease to

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<sup>1</sup>Ernest II, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Aus Meinem Leben und Aus Meiner Zeit (Berlin, 1892), p. 158.

entertain serious doubts about the wisdom of the path down which his friend had led him. On May 5, he told Radowitz of his pervasive fear of the possibility of war with Austria over the Prussian Union, and his attitude appeared to be generally indecisive and without faith in the undertaking.<sup>2</sup>

Before the crucial Congress could meet, Radowitz's preparations were interrupted by a profound personal tragedy: his youngest daughter, Veronika, died on May 4, 1850. Overcome by grief, he wrote that he felt as if he had buried all his hopes with the young girl. Two days later, he asked to be relieved of his official duties in order to care for his sick wife, but Frederick William responded immediately with a letter expressing his personal distress that his friend would leave his side at such an important time. It indicates a great deal about Radowitz's dedication to the cause of unity and his loyalty to his sovereign that he yielded to the King's request and returned to Berlin. To his diary he confided that he considered it a matter of honor and obligation that he continue his work.<sup>3</sup>

The Congress duly opened on May 9. After a festive worship service in the Berlin Cathedral, Frederick William IV officially opened the Congress. In his remarks, the Prussian King thanked Duke Ernest for

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<sup>2</sup>Radowitz to Schleinitz, April 22, 1850, Schleinitz to Radowitz, Berlin, April 24, 1850, Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Erfurt, April 26 and 28, 1850, Telegraphic Dispatch of Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Charlottenburg, May 5, 1850, Nachgelassen Briefe, pp. 213, 218-220, 222, 223; Ernest II, Aus Meinem Leben, pp. 160-166; Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 422.

<sup>3</sup>Radowitz's Notes on the Congress of Princes, Berlin, May 2-16, Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Erfurt, May 6, 1850, and Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Bellevue, May 7, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 236, 237, 240.

suggesting the Congress and pledged himself to continue the work for German unification. The monarch also declared his intention to retain the friendship of Austria as long as this did not mean that Prussia and her allies were subservient to Vienna. Duke Ernest replied in the name of the assembled princes with an expression of thanks to the Hohenzollern monarch for his efforts toward unification. The actual work of the Congress was undertaken by the ministers of the princes, who began their sessions the next day. With the exception of the city of Frankfurt, all the states represented at the Erfurt Parliament attended the Congress of Princes; the majority of the German states still sided with Prussia. As was the case of both the Frankfurt National Assembly and the Erfurt Parliament, political factions emerged even among the princes. Hesse-Kassel and Mecklenburg-Strelitz formed the Right, Mecklenburg-Schwerin led the Right Center, while the Saxon duchies joined together to form the Left Center.<sup>4</sup>

Count Friedrich Wilhelm von Brandenburg, the Prussian Minister President, opened the session of ministers by reaffirming the loyalty of the Prussian government to the League and introducing the chief Prussian representative at the Congress, Radowitz. The leader of the Hohenzollern delegation informed his colleagues that they had two important matters to consider: the position of the Union and the reaction of the Alliance to the Austrian invitation to a meeting of states in Frankfurt to discuss the reinstatement of the old Federal Diet to its former

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<sup>4</sup>Der deutschen Fürstenkongress zu Berlin im Mai 1850, Aktenstücke und Betrachtungen. Anlagen: Die Konferenz-Protokolle (Berlin, 1850), pp. 12-17, 45-56, 21; Leopold von Gerlach to Ludwig von Gerlach, Berlin, May 12, 1850, Gerlach, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutschen Bund, II, p. 674.

position. Radowitz next reminded the ministers of the Treaty of Three Kings of May 26, 1849, and the work of the Erfurt Parliament. Finally, the two officials opened discussions by declaring Prussia's formal acceptance of the Constitution as revised by the Erfurt Parliament.<sup>5</sup>

The harmony of the opening session was short lived, for Hans Daniel Hassenpflug of Hesse-Kassel declared that he was only present as an observer and that his state refused to accept the decisions of the Congress as binding. Hassenpflug, who earlier had quarreled with Radowitz over the activities of his master, Elector Frederick William, was the chief spokesman of the reaction at the Congress of Princes, and indulged in repeated efforts to obstruct the proceedings. He and his ruler made no effort to hide their pro-Austrian sentiments. For example, Hassenpflug dined with Anton von Prokesch, the Austrian Minister to Berlin, and arrived conspicuously at the first session, an hour late. He then protested when complaints were made about his tardiness. On one occasion, he attended a formal party in sport dress. But only Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Saxe-Altenburg joined Hassenpflug in his objections, while the other delegates affirmed their acceptance of the Constitution and the Erfurt Parliament.<sup>6</sup>

After rejecting the Constitution, Hassenpflug next proposed that ministers answerable to local diets rather than princes be banned from participation in the deliberations of the Congress. This was an attempt to use the union as an instrument to crush constitutional forms. His proposal led to a stormy debate in which only the spokesman for

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<sup>5</sup>"Die Konferenz-Protokolle," Fürstenkongress, pp. 4-13.

<sup>6</sup>Leopold von Gerlach to Ludwig von Gerlach, Berlin, May 16, 1850, Gerlach, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutschen Bund, II, p. 675.

Schaumburg-Lippe sided with him. Finally, the delegates voted to allow all ministers to participate in the meetings without respect to the authority of their princes over their actions. Thus, Hassenpflug's first attempts to limit the liberal character of the alliance had met with failure.<sup>7</sup>

The next day the ministers assembled to continue their deliberations. At the beginning of the session Hassenpflug renewed his objections of the previous day, leading to further debate on the issue. Finally, Radowitz sought to terminate this unproductive digression by introducing a motion calling for the delegates to vote on whether or not to establish a provisional government for the League until the Constitution could take effect. Naturally, Hassenpflug objected on the grounds that it was too early for such a step. But only Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Schaumburg-Lippe and Bremen agreed with his position, while the majority of the delegates decided to form the provisional government.<sup>8</sup>

It may seem strange that Radowitz did not attempt to put the Constitution into effect immediately and thereby render the Union a reality. However, he always considered every possible alternative and wanted time to study the issue thoroughly. Since Hassenpflug was disrupting the conference and might destroy it completely should Radowitz attempt to move too fast, and since the Austrian objections were becoming more insistent, he chose the path of least resistance in the hope that by doing so he would gain time to win support for his program.

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<sup>7</sup>"Die Konferenz-Protokolle," Fürstenkongress, pp. 4-13.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., pp. 13-18.



Although the plan for a provisional government would delay the application of the Constitution, it would represent a major step forward and require that the Parliament would once again be called into session.

After deciding to form a provisional government, the delegates turned to the form this would take. Radowitz presented a plan for discussion which provided for a College of Princes as the governing body of the League. Each single state would have the right to send a delegate to this body, which would be divided into five curias in which each state would receive a number of votes corresponding to its size. The curias would vote on each issue separately, and then it would be submitted to the whole College of Princes. The provisional government would have the authority to represent the alliance in foreign affairs and in negotiations with the German Confederation. It would also be responsible for making arrangements for the next meeting of the Reichstag. Radowitz also proposed that Prussia undertake to carry on diplomatic negotiations in the name of the League and that the alliance name a minister to work with the Prussian government in the discussions with Austria and her allies.<sup>9</sup>

When he presented his plan to the delegates, Radowitz reminded them that it was only a proposal and that full discussion would take place. Several members suggested that since speed was important, they adopt the suggestion immediately, but Radowitz, as the presiding officer, postponed the vote until the next session. He did not want it to appear that Prussia was trying to pressure the Congress into adopting its program. The next day the ministers met to consider Radowitz's proposal.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 18-19.

During this session, the representative of Hesse-Darmstadt joined the deliberations, adding still another state to the Congress of Princes. After discussions on the matter, during which most of the delegates emphasized the need for swift action, the conference adopted the Prussian plan for a provisional government.<sup>10</sup>

Radowitz opened the fourth session of the Congress with a proposal that the members agree that the provisional government would remain in effect for but two months, or July 15, 1850. He argued that by fixing a date for its termination, the members would affirm to the German people their determination to put the Union into effect as soon as possible. After a short discussion, the members accepted Radowitz's proposal by a vote of twelve to eight. The session next turned to a discussion of the Austrian-sponsored meeting in Frankfurt and what to do about it. After considerable debate between Radowitz and Hassenpflug, all but Hesse-Kassel, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Bremen and Hamburg agreed that Prussia should negotiate with Austria and represent the interests of the League in regards to the conference at Frankfurt.<sup>11</sup>

The Congress adjourned on May 16, and Prussia issued an official announcement of its results. In this document, the Hohenzollern King explained that Prussia had accepted the Constitution of the Union and stated that majority of the states that had participated in the Congress of Princes were in agreement with its content. Since it would be impossible to put the provisions of the Constitution into effect immediately, however, a provisional government had been formed by the

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-31.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-43.

members of the League. The King further rejected in advance any attempt to reestablish the old German Confederation on the grounds that such a step would be against the best interests of the German states and people. That same day, Schleinitz sent a formal statement to Vienna reaffirming the Prussian desire to work with Austria to achieve a peaceful agreement on the solution of their differences. The Prussian minister stated, however, that any solution must recognize the right of the single German states to take any such action as they themselves deem in their best interests.<sup>12</sup> As the leader in the struggle for unification, Prussia had also emerged as the champion of the smaller states in their efforts to avoid Austrian domination. Through its acceptance of the Constitution, it had also become the chief spokesman for constitutional reform in Germany.

While Prussia and its allies were meeting in Berlin, Austria and its supporters had assembled in Frankfurt. Besides the Danubian monarchy, only Liechtenstein, Hesse-Kassel, Holstein, Hesse-Homburg, Luxembourg, Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover and Württemberg had sent delegates to the conference. Hesse-Kassel attempted to play both sides off against each other by sending delegates to both meetings, while the city of Frankfurt chose a policy of strict neutrality and declined to send representatives to either assembly. In a direct challenge to Prussia, the delegates at the Frankfurt Conference declared that the old German Confederation of 1815 had not been dissolved by the Revolution of 1848 and called upon all German states to follow the Federal Act. Such a return to the pre-Revolutionary organization would clearly mean a

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<sup>12</sup>"Die Verhandlungen," *ibid.*, pp. 26-37.

resumption of Austrian dominance in German affairs as well as the dissolution of the Prussian League. Thus Germany was divided into two camps: the Prussian and the Austrian.<sup>13</sup>

During the following weeks Radowitz was absent from Berlin, and the King was temporarily incapacitated. At the conclusion of the Congress of Princes, Radowitz requested a leave of absence to recover his health and left Berlin for Baden-Baden. On May 22, a would-be assassin shot Frederick William IV in the arm while the King was preparing to board a train for Potsdam.<sup>14</sup> These chance events had a dual effect on German history. The attempted murder of the Prussian monarch strengthened the reactionary forces in the Hohenzollern kingdom. These persons were also staunch foes of Radowitz and his program and in the end proved as important to his final defeat as Austria. Another consequence of the inability of both Radowitz and the King to act at this crucial juncture was the granting of time to the Habsburg Empire. Had they been able to move in a decisive manner to force a solution while Austria was still involved in internal problems, perhaps Radowitz's program would have succeeded.

For before he was incapacitated by the attacker's bullet, the King had made one important attempt to gain foreign support for the Prussian Union. The Prince of Prussia, the future Emperor William I, traveled to Warsaw to deliver a letter from the King to Tsar Nicholas I. In this communication, the Hohenzollern justified his actions by claiming that the smaller German states desired to be under his protection and

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<sup>13</sup>Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, pp. 900-901.

<sup>14</sup>"Prussia," The Times (London), June 3 and 27, 1850, p. 6.

condemned Austria for its attempts to revive the German Confederation. In his discussions with Prince William, the Tsar discounted the possibility of an Austro-Prussian war because of Austrian weakness. The Austrian chief minister, Prince Felix von Schwarzenberg, was also in the Polish capital and met with the Prussian emissary, who learned that Vienna had no objections to Prussia's forming a union with other German states but could never accept the Constitution produced by Radowitz. Schwarzenberg reiterated the peaceful intentions of his country and proposed that the differences between the two states be resolved by a joint agreement. On May 29, William reported to Berlin that neither Russia nor Austria would definitely commit themselves on the issue. He also claimed that the chances of Vienna carrying her objections to the Prussian Plan of Union to the point of armed conflict were remote. Finally, he informed his King that both countries would recognize the Union if Berlin would abandon the Constitution.<sup>15</sup> Although Schwarzenberg's statements left the door open for Austrian recognition of a Prussian Union, it would not be the Union agreed on by Berlin and its allies. If the Constitution were dropped, Berlin would lose the support of the liberals and moderates who favored the Union because of the Constitution. The loss of moderate and liberal influence would open the way for a victory for the reactionary forces, who wanted to restore the German Confederation. Another reason that Schwarzenberg's demand was unacceptable to Berlin lay in the belief that if Vienna could force Prussia to change radically the form of the Union, it could also force the Hohenzollern kingdom to once again accept Austrian domination. Thus, Berlin could

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<sup>15</sup> Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 446.

not yield to the Austrian demands for the abandonment of the Constitution in return for the right to form a Union.

Although far from Berlin, Radowitz did not cease to take an interest in his work. His representative in the Prussian capital, Baron Rudolf von Sydow, informed him of the day-to-day events there and also of the increasing doubts of the King regarding the alliance. On the other hand, Brandenburg, a man with great influence at court, still supported the Union and believed that Prussia should take advantage of Austria's weakness to force an immediate solution to the German problem. Radowitz asked Sydow to advise the King that even if it was necessary to postpone the application of the Constitution, the provisional government should continue to hold power. On July 14, he wrote a plea to Frederick William which repeated his arguments of the past two years and urged his friend not to discontinue his support of the Constitution. He proposed once again that Germany be divided into a wider union to include Austria and a narrow union which would form a middle European empire.<sup>16</sup>

In the meantime, the two contesting German powers continued to negotiate. Schwarzenberg informed the Prussian Minister to the Habsburg Court, Count Albrecht von Bernstorff, that his country was willing to recognize Prussian equality in Germany if it would abandon the Union and agree to form a new German Confederation at a series of meetings to be held in Frankfurt am Main. On July 8, he made his last offer, explaining to the Prussian Minister that the only difference between the two German powers was the Constitution and the claim of the Prussian alliance

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<sup>16</sup> Rudolf von Sydow to Radowitz, Berlin, June 5, 1850, Radowitz to Rudolf von Sydow, Baden, June 8, 1850, and Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Erfurt, June 14, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 250, 252, 258-261.

to represent the German Reich. He also stated that his country would accept the Union if the Constitution were dropped.<sup>17</sup>

While Radowitz remained away from the Prussian capital, events progressed at a rapid pace. On July 14, Frederick William IV sent Otto von Manteuffel to Vienna bearing a personal letter from the Prussian King to Emperor Francis Joseph. The King hoped that this letter, a pledge of Prussian friendship would conciliate the Austrians. From his conversations in the Habsburg capital, the Prussian emissary reported that Russian and Austrian objections to Radowitz and his plans were so great that they would refuse to negotiate seriously as long as the chief advocate of the Union were allowed to keep his position. But the King, refusing to harken to this advice, informed Radowitz of the failure of the negotiations and asked for his prompt return to Berlin.<sup>18</sup>

In the middle of July, Radowitz arrived in the Prussian capital to assume his duties as the President of the College of Princes, the executive body of the new provisional government of the League. Although the original agreement establishing the College of Princes had stipulated that the provisional government would only hold power until July 15, King Frederick William had extended its life indefinitely in response to Radowitz's arguments. By the time of Radowitz's return, all states represented at the Congress of Princes except Hesse-Kassel and Mecklenburg-Strelitz had declared their intentions to remain in the Alliance despite

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<sup>17</sup> Sydow to Radowitz, June 20, 1850, *ibid.*, p. 262; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 458.

<sup>18</sup> Frederick William IV to Francis Joseph, Sanssouci, June 14, 1850, Otto von Manteuffel to Radowitz, Vienna, June 20, 1850, Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Sanssouci, June 22, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 255, 263, 265.

the pressure from Austria. The College of Princes undertook a revision of the election law in order to satisfy some of the ultra-conservative criticism of the Union. The new statute granted adult males the right to vote but now required that they be self-supporting with an income of at least 200 thalers or 350 gulden a year. The democratic features of the franchise were restricted through the division of all voters into three classes according to taxation, wealth and profession to conform to the Prussian electoral law. To be elected to the House of the People, a candidate had to receive a majority of the upper classes much more power over elections and severely limited the voice of the majority.<sup>19</sup>

On July 16, the College of Princes turned to Bernstorff's report and decided to outline its position in a special note to Vienna. This reaffirmed the obligation of every German state to work for German unification and stated that the League had showed its willingness to negotiate with Austria, but the Habsburg Monarchy had insisted on unreasonable demands. The blame for the failure to reach agreement lay with Vienna and not the members of the Alliance. However, Prussia and its allies favored any reasonable solution to the conflict which would insure the rights of the German states and at the same time pave the way for German unification. Once again the member states argued their right to form a smaller union within the German Confederation. Prussia declared that it could not take part in the meeting of the Federal Diet called by Austria, as it would be a betrayal of its obligations to its allies. The College also questioned the right of one German state to

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<sup>19</sup>Neue Preussische Zeitung, July 20 and 22, 1850.



call the Federal Diet into session. In his reply, Schwarzenberg informed the College of Princes that Austria would never recognize the Prussian Union and its Constitution, nor would it agree to abandon plans to convene the Diet of the German Confederation. That same day, the Danubian monarchy issued a circular to the German courts calling for the meeting of the Diet at Frankfurt. Naturally, Berlin rejected this invitation.<sup>20</sup>

At the same time that Austrian protests were growing in strength, the Prussian ultra-conservatives continued to voice their criticism of the Plan of Union. On July 20, the Neue Preussische Zeitung published an editorial condemning the Erfurt Parliament as a reflection of the Frankfurt National Assembly. The newspaper called for the complete destruction of the Revolution and all that had connections with it. Two days later, the same paper published a scathing denunciation of Radowitz.<sup>21</sup>

The renewed ultraconservative criticism of the Plan of Union and the failure of negotiations with Vienna caused a major crisis in the Prussian ministry. On July 24, Manteuffel, the Minister of the Interior, presented a motion calling for the abandonment of the League and the Constitution. As compensation to the member states, he proposed that Prussia offer them a protective alliance. The acceptance of this proposal would mean that all the efforts of Radowitz had been in vain--that he had been defeated not by Austria directly but by his foes within his

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., July 14 and 18, 1850; "Prussia," The Times (London), July 15 and 20, 1850, p. 6; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, pp. 460-461.

<sup>21</sup> Neue Preussische Zeitung, July 20 and 22, 1850.

own country. He replied to this challenge with a long memorandum stating that it would represent a moral defeat if the Hohenzollern kingdom were to yield to the Habsburg demands. He claimed that by forming the League, Berlin had incurred an obligation both to the member states and to the whole German people to fight for the Plan of Union. He concluded with a plea that Prussia not allow the Austrians to destroy the edifice being built to replace the ineffective Confederation. On July 26, Frederick William IV met with the ministry and informed them that while the differences among them would delay the application of the Constitution, the principle upon which it stood must not be allowed to fail. After some debate, the ministers decided to wait for further action from Vienna before taking any drastic steps.<sup>22</sup>

During the summer of 1850, the conflict between the two German powers intensified, fed as it was by a series of increasingly bitter confrontations both within Germany and without. A serious crisis almost developed over the question of troop deployment. On May 26, the Grand Duke of Baden had requested that some of his soldiers receive Prussian training. At the end of July, Vienna ordered its commander at the Federal Fortress at Mainz to resist any attempt to transport troops from Baden to Prussia through his district. Munich lent its support to the Austrian protest by massing 16,700 Bavarian troops at Aschaffenburg and Nuremberg. In a letter to the King and before a session of the ministry, Radowitz suggested that Berlin answer this move by the mobilization of the three army corps stationed at Erfurt. His enemies within the

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<sup>22</sup> Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, pp. 462-463; "Aufzeichnung zum Ministerrat am 25 Juli, Sanssouci, 13 Juli 1850," Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 273-275; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, pp. 464-465.

ministry were quick with their responses. General August von Sackenhausen, the Minister of War, informed them that he could spare no troops at that time and advised against the mobilization of the militia, as the men were needed for the upcoming harvest. Radowitz continued to urge a strong reply to the Austrian challenge, until finally the King intervened, suggesting that both sides postpone further action on the matter pending an investigation.<sup>23</sup> Thus the Baden crisis was allowed to cool. But it did portend a final confrontation that would either spell victory for Prussia and her allies and the end of Austrian domination over Germany or a restoration of the old pre-Revolutionary system.

During the remainder of the summer, international affairs were dominated by a renewal of the Schleswig-Holstein question. Since there existed at this time no common German authority to negotiate with Denmark, it was impossible to reach an agreement binding upon all of Germany. Acting on its own behalf, Prussia signed a treaty on July 2 giving the duchies to the Danish King. Several small German states immediately objected that the Hohenzollern kingdom had no authority to take this step and that a peace with the Danes would only be negotiated through the auspices of the Diet of the German Confederation. This turn of events greatly upset Tsar Nicholas I, who desired the immediate end of all hostilities over the duchies and the destruction of all liberal elements therein. In an effort to persuade Austria to take action similar to that of Prussia, he sent Baron Peter von Meyendorff, his representative in Berlin, to Bad Ischl to communicate with the Emperor. Even before his arrival, however, the Habsburg ruler signed an agreement with

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<sup>23</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 466.

the Nordic kingdom similar to that signed by Berlin. Schwarzenberg informed the Tsar of his intentions to use the power of the Federal Diet to force the Germans in Holstein to accept Danish rule. This removed one source of difficulty between Austria and Russia and paved the way for the Tsar, who had hitherto followed a policy of strict neutrality in the conflict between the two German powers, to intervene in the German question on the side of Vienna.<sup>24</sup>

The already complex international situation was further complicated by the actions of Prince Louis Napoleon, the President of France, who saw in the dispute between the two German powers an opportunity to strengthen his country. Accordingly, he sent Jean de Persigny to confer with Radowitz and indicate that Paris was in sympathy with the Prussian cause, since France wanted to drive the Habsburgs from Italy. He further hinted that France would consider going to war on the side of Prussia with the provision that his country receive either Landau or Savoy as compensation for the costs of war. Radowitz politely listened to the Frenchman and just as politely refused to consider the offer. Napoleon next made a similar proposal to Austria, which also rejected it.<sup>25</sup>

Throughout the month of August, Radowitz continued to work for his program, encouraged by two very important allies, Count Brandenburg and William, the Prince of Prussia. At the same time, the tension between Austria and Prussia intensified. The Danubian monarchy persisted in its

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<sup>24</sup>Paul Wiegler, William the First, His Life and Times (New York, 1929), p. 146; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 472; W.E. Mosse, The European Powers and the German Question 1848-1871 (New York, 1969), pp. 32-33.

<sup>25</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, I, p. 452.

attempt to call a meeting of the Federal Diet, while Prussia replied to the Austrian effort with a note of protest on August 5.<sup>26</sup> It was only a matter of time until the tensions would lead to a serious dispute, the outcome of which would decide the fate of Germany and the Revolution of 1848. In September, the Hesse-Kassel affair precipitated such a crisis.

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<sup>26</sup>"Prussia and Austria," The Times (London), August 21, 1850, p. 6.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE ROAD TO OLMUTZ<sup>11</sup>

Though Radowitz had overcome many obstacles, he and his supporters had not been able to disarm their most potent enemies, the Prussian ultra-conservatives and Austria. To be sure, the majority of the thirty-six German states had chosen to throw their lot with Prussia rather than with its Habsburg rival, the Erfurt Parliament had met and the Congress of Princes had accepted its recommendations. But the final confrontation was yet to come. Before it was concluded, Radowitz would see the edifice which he had so carefully built crumble into dust and the dreams of 1848 forgotten amid the final victory of the reaction and the rebirth of the old and ineffective German Confederation.

It is ironic that the instrument for his final defeat would be Hesse-Kassel, the state which had expelled him twenty-seven years earlier. The Elector Frederick William had been trying for several months to force the Diet of his small state to vote taxes to pay for the expenses of his government. When the members of this body refused to yield, his chief minister, Hassenpflug, attempted to collect taxes illegally. Confronted by the united opposition of his entire civil service against this violation of the constitution, the Elector fled to Frankfurt. With his sovereign safe, Hassenpflug next tried to use the army to collect the taxes, but the vast majority of the officers corps resigned rather than violate their oaths to the constitution. Shortly

after his arrival in Frankfurt on September 12, the Elector appealed to the German Diet for help in suppressing the revolt. This body voted to send 10,000 Hanoverian and Württembergian troops to enforce the collection of taxes.<sup>1</sup>

These events placed the men in Berlin in a difficult position. Some officials such as Count Brandenburg believed that the real reason for the south German intervention in Hesse was a desire to embarrass Prussia. Radowitz, on the other hand, was alert to the strategic significance of this move. Since the invasion of Hesse-Kassel by pro-Austrian troops would endanger Prussian military roads running through the Electorate to the Rhine Province, he urged immediate military precautions. He suggested that the King order reinforcements from Kreuznach to Wetzlar and dispatch a detachment of 15,000 Thuringian troops to Fulda and Eisenach to be in a position to march on Hersfeld. He further urged that 2,000 men from Brunswick join the 10,000 Prussian troops at Paderborn. Frederick William IV approved these actions and on September 27 named Radowitz Minister of Foreign Affairs as an expression of his support of Radowitz and the Plan of Union.<sup>2</sup>

Prussia also protested the intervention in Electoral Hesse through a series of diplomatic notes. On September 12 and 21, Count Brandenburg informed Kassel that Berlin was very distressed by the decision of the Elector to depart from the path of constitutional government and called

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<sup>1</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, p. 481; "Electorial Hesse," The London Illustrated News, September 28, 1850, p. 254.

<sup>2</sup>Wiegler, William the First, p. 147; Radowitz to the Prince of Prussia, September 26, 1850, and "Privataufzeichnung von Radowitz, 27 September 1850," Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 318.

upon him to return to lawful methods. The dispatches also protested strongly the decision of the Diet to intervene in the crisis. On the first day in his new position, Radowitz reinforced Brandenburg's notes with one of his own. Schwarzenberg replied that Prussia had no right to interfere in the affair, since Hesse-Kassel had withdrawn from the League. The Prussian Foreign Minister responded that his country had no interest in territorial expansion at the expense of the smaller state, but was only concerned with protecting the security of its military roads. He later communicated to his Austrian counterpart the peaceful intentions of the Hohenzollern kingdom.<sup>3</sup>

The Prussian assurances did little to check the growing hostility on both sides, however. On October 11, Austria, Bavaria and Württemberg formed a defensive and offensive alliance aimed at Prussia and also agreed to raise an army of 200,000 men. On that same day, Prussia mobilized three additional regiments. As the crisis intensified, the backing given by Frederick William IV to his friend never wavered. However, the King did make efforts to avoid carrying things to the extremity of armed conflict, including a letter sent on October 9 to Emperor Francis Joseph expressing his desire to reach a peaceful settlement of the differences between them.<sup>4</sup>

Since neither German power had a decisive preponderance over the

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<sup>3</sup>"Prussia and Electoral Hesse," The Times (London), October 3, 1850, p. 6; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, pp. 487-488.

<sup>4</sup>Wiegler, William the First, p. 148; "Prussia," The Times (London), October 11, 1850, p. 6; Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Sanssouci, October 14, 1850 and Frederick William IV to Francis Joseph, Sanssouci, October 19, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 325-326.



other, the attitude of Russia was crucial. When the Tsar decided to back one side over the other, the scales would be tipped in favor of that country, and the other power would have to acquiesce. Throughout the summer of 1850, the Romanov ruler had refused to become involved in the conflict between Austria and Prussia because of his concern for the fate of Schleswig-Holstein. In this issue, the Tsar had applied great pressure to force the German powers to crush the revolutionaries and to help Denmark regain control over the Duchies. Although the Tsar was still unwilling to take sides in the dispute over the Union, he was very concerned about Radowitz and his program, and his sympathies lay with the Habsburg monarchy. As early as October, 1849, General Friedrich Wilhelm Rauch, the Prussian Adjutant General in St. Petersburg had reported that the Tsar believed that Prussia had no support from the other German states. The Prussian representative had also informed his superiors of the bitter opposition to the Erfurt Parliament within official Russian circles. The attitude of the Romanov ruler was reinforced by the reports of his Minister in Berlin, Peter von Meyendorff, who wrote many letters to his superiors expressing his alarm at the power of Radowitz. In one dispatch, he called the father of the Erfurt Parliament the "evil genius of Prussia." In another, he registered his distress at Radowitz's appointment to the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs.<sup>5</sup>

Nicholas, who had to quell a revolt upon his ascension to the

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<sup>5</sup> Report of Frederick William von Rauch, Gatchina and Tsarkoe Selo, October 27 and November 15, 1849, Hans Joachim Schoeps, ed., Neue Quellen zur Geschichte Preussens im 19. Jahrhundert (Berlin, 1968), pp. 442-446, 447-448; Meyendorff to Nesselrode, Berlin and Dresden, March 4 and October 6, 1850, Meyendorff, Ein russischer Diplomat, pp. 265-267.

the throne in 1825, was a violent foe of any form of liberalism and became quite concerned over the possible victory of the liberals in Hesse-Kassel. He was consequently very distressed to learn of Prussia's attitude toward the crisis and ordered Count Alexis Orlov to inform the Prussian Minister to St. Petersburg, Count Hugo zu Münster-Meinhold, of his alarm over the Prussian posture in the Hesse-Kassel crisis. Orlov told Münster that the Elector had a right to summon outside military help from whomever he wished and that the Tsar considered the Federal Act still in effect.<sup>6</sup>

In late October, it became known in the Prussian capital that Tsar Nicholas I had decided to visit Warsaw. Immediately Frederick William IV sent Count Brandenburg to the Polish city to deliver a message to the Russian monarch, stating that the Hohenzollern kingdom refused to recognize the authority of the Diet in Frankfurt. The King also instructed Brandenburg to propose to the Tsar that the crisis be settled by a conference of all German states in which Prussia would be granted equality with Austria. Nicholas replied that he had no intention of becoming involved in the dispute but that he did favor the efforts of the Frankfurt Diet to suppress liberal elements in Holstein and would even be willing to go to war in its support.<sup>7</sup>

On October 25, Emperor Francis Joseph also arrived in Warsaw. Brandenburg took this opportunity to hold a series of meetings with Schwarzenberg, who had accompanied his sovereign. The Austrian official rejected at the outset the Prussian demand for equality with the

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<sup>6</sup>Report of Münster, St. Petersburg, October 4, 1850, Schoeps, Neue Quellen, p. 453.

<sup>7</sup>Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 474.

Habsburg Empire and also restated his country's position that Prussia had no right to become involved in Hesse-Kassel. Brandenburg retorted that it was Austria and her allies who were intervening in affairs that did not concern them. He informed the Austrian minister that any problems in the Electorate could be handled by local troops and that Vienna was really only seeking a way to exert its powers. Finally, he was able to elicit from the Austrians as a basis for further negotiations a proposal by which the Danubian monarchy would alternate the presidency of the German central government with Prussia. Schwarzenberg also suggested that the two powers meet in Dresden to discuss their differences.<sup>8</sup>

In Berlin, events were developing at a rapid pace. On October 29, a meeting of the ministry adopted Radowitz's suggestion to mobilize the Ninth Army Corps in the event of a Bavarian invasion of Hesse-Kassel. Three days later, after Count Brandenburg had returned to the Prussian capital, he was informed that Austria had ordered the mobilization of 100,000 men on the Bohemian border. On November 1, the ministry convened to decide on a course of action in response to the new Austrian threats. Brandenburg opened the session by recommending that every effort should be made to continue negotiations with Vienna. Next, Radowitz rose to demand that the Hohenzollern kingdom order the immediate activation of all troops and, if necessary, prepare for war. He based his plea on Schwarzenberg's hostile attitude and his belief that if the Danubian Monarchy and her allies were allowed to intervene in Hesse-

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<sup>8</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, pp. 9-12; Neue Preussische Zeitung, November 1, 1850.

Kassel without active opposition, the authority of the Frankfurt Diet would be reestablished over Germany. Adalbert von Ladenberg and August von der Heydt supported Radowitz, but Otto von Manteuffel opposed him and went so far as to urge that Berlin lend its support to the Austrian action. At the close of the session, Brandenburg declared that if the ministry decided to disregard his advice to continue parleys with Vienna, he would resign his position.<sup>9</sup>

Almost immediately after the close of the meeting, the King and his ministers learned that 8,000 Bavarian troops under the command of Prince Maximilian, Karl of Thurn and Taxis had occupied Hanau in Hesse and were marching toward Gelnhausen. To counter the Bavarian action, Frederick William IV immediately ordered General Karl von Gröben to march his troops into Electoral territory.<sup>10</sup> Now it was no longer merely an issue of discussions and polite diplomatic notes. The decisive crisis had finally arrived, and Radowitz and his fellow Prussians were at a crossroads. They could either continue to support the Union and risk almost certain war with Austria and her allies, or they could back down and avoid an armed conflict, losing everything that had been accomplished. As long as there existed a possibility that the Habsburgs were only bluffing, it was possible to postpone the decision on just how far Berlin was willing to go to see the Union take effect. But by November 1, 1850, troops were marching, and a decision had to be made.

The Bavarian action prompted the King to call a Crown Council for

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<sup>9</sup>Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 483; "Privataufzeichnung von Radowitz," Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 344; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, pp. 26-27.

<sup>10</sup>"Prussia and Germany," and "The Entry of the Prussians into Hesse," The Times (London), November 6, 1850, p. 5.

that afternoon. At this meeting, Brandenburg insisted that Prussia should yield to the Austrian demands because of the friendly attitude of Schwarzenberg at Warsaw and his belief that in the event of war between Austria and Prussia, Russia would intervene on the side of Austria. Frederick William IV suggested that the Constitution of the League should be set aside for the moment and that the Bavarians be allowed to occupy the southern part of the Electorate, while his own troops would garrison the military roads in the north. He hoped that this would place his kingdom in a position to play a major role in the solution of the conflict. After the King had spoken, Radowitz took the floor. In a last effort to save his work, he argued that Prussian troops should occupy as much of Hesse-Kassel as possible, thus giving Berlin a strong position from which to begin negotiations. In answer to those who had expressed a fear of war, he maintained that there was an important distinction between mobilization and a declaration of war. Prince William supported Radowitz and urged that the Union not be sacrificed. However, Manteuffel stood firm in his objection that war was a certainty unless the Union were abandoned and the troops recalled. He took the position that his country had no right to become involved in what he saw as the internal affairs of another German state. Finally, August von Sackenhausen, the Minister of War, maintained that the general mobilization demanded by Radowitz would almost inevitably lead to war. He also reported that such an undertaking would cost seventeen million thalers. With the issue still undecided, the session closed. By this time, Austria had assembled 150,000 of her own troops and another 50,000 from

Bavaria and Württemberg at Bregenz.<sup>11</sup>

The next day, Radowitz lost the support of Frederick William IV, who had long entertained doubts about continuing down the path which his friend had led him. With troops in the field, it was no longer a matter of lending moral support to his friend as he had done earlier. He either had to give up the whole idea or be willing to lead his people into what could become a major war. Frederick William was no Frederick the Great; he was incapable of making such a fateful decision.

The ministry met at Bellevue Palace at 10:00 A.M. on November 2. After a few opening remarks on the dangers facing his kingdom, the King led his ministers into an adjoining room and left them to discuss the problem. Brandenburg continued to favor the withdrawal of the troops and a continuation of the negotiations begun at Warsaw. Faithful to his cause until the end, Radowitz refused to budge from his position of the day before. When the vote finally took place, only those men who had supported him the previous day sided with the aggressive policy of Radowitz. The majority opposed him. The ministry recommended to their monarch that all forward movement by Prussian troops in Hesse-Kassel be suspended and that a note be sent to Austria requesting postponement of all preparations for war. Faced with this decision, the King yielded to the advice of the majority of his ministers. But at the same time, he issued a statement in support of his friend and a warning that the ministry alone would be responsible for any criticism that would arise

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<sup>11</sup>Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 487-490; Neue Preussische Zeitung, November 2, 1850.

from their judgment.<sup>12</sup> Thus Radowitz had been deserted by both his fellow ministers and his King, who refused to take a stand on the issue.

His program rejected by the ministry, the man who had fought so long for his cause sent his ruler a letter of resignation immediately thereafter. He left the scene of his defeat on November 6 to join his family at Erfurt. Though the King thanked him for his faithful service and expressed regret at the outcome of events, it was clear that Radowitz would no longer enjoy influence at Berlin. On the day of Radowitz's departure, Count Brandenburg died, and the monarch named Otto von Manteuffel his new Minister President.<sup>13</sup>

Although the King had appointed Radowitz's chief critic his new Minister President, he had not completely rejected the Plan of Union. Throughout the next month, Frederick William IV would vacillate between support for the Union and acquiescence to the Austrian demands. He first attempted to save the Union by an alliance with Great Britain. He informed Radowitz that he was sending him to England on the pretext of studying new developments in artillery and the building of iron bridges. While there, Radowitz was to sound out the attitude of the British toward a possible alliance. Seeing in the proposal the chance to regain Prussian honor and perhaps even save the Union, Radowitz immediately agreed. Before approaching the British Government, Radowitz was instructed to find out its attitude toward German affairs through

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<sup>12</sup>"Privataufzeichnung von Radowitz," Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 344-345; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, p. 36.

<sup>13</sup>Radowitz to Frederick William IV, November 2, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, p. 342; Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 499-501; "Prussia," The Times (London), November 11, 1850, p. 3.

discussions with the Prussian Minister to the Court of St. James, Baron Christian von Bunsen. Radowitz believed that the British would be susceptible to a warning that if Austria won the struggle over Hesse-Kassel, Russian hegemony over Germany would become a possibility. He also proposed to hint to the British that an Austrian victory would open the way for French interference in German affairs.<sup>14</sup> Thus there was at least a slim possibility that he could save all the work of the last several years.

In the meantime, the Hessian crisis remained unresolved. General Gröben, finding himself face to face with the Prince of Thurn and Taxis and his men, suggested to his counterpart on the other side that a line of demarcation be drawn between Prussian-occupied territory and that to be held by the southern troops. The Prince communicated this proposal to the Austrian Minister to the Diet in Frankfurt, Count Leo Thun. After some discussion, the Diet voted to order the Prince to continue the occupation of all Prussian troops. The news of these demands caused Frederick William IV to order his army to prepare for war. At a meeting of the Ministry on November 20, he announced his decision to avoid any attempts at alliance with the French, who had been massing troops on the border. The next day the King delivered his address from the throne at the opening of the Prussian Diet. This speech was couched in very strong terms, and some interpreted it as a challenge for war. The Austrian Minister to Berlin, Prokesch, responded with a note pledging the

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<sup>14</sup>Frederick William IV to Radowitz, Sanssouci and Bellevue, November 9 and 12, 1850; Radowitz to Frederick William IV, Erfurt, November 10 and 13, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 354-357.



protection of the Prussian military roads running through the Electorate.<sup>15</sup>

This turn of events and the apparent inclination of Frederick William toward a warlike policy finally led the Russian Tsar to intervene openly in the conflict. He instructed Baron Andreas von Budenberg, the Prussian Ambassador in Berlin, to inform Frederick William IV that the Tsar had ordered the mobilization of the Cossacks for war in support of Austria if events should prove such a step necessary. On November 23, the Prussian ministry met to discuss the issue. As usual, Manteuffel urged reconciliation with the Danubian monarchy and received the support of Stockhausen and Simon. Ladenberg, whose resignation in support of Radowitz had been rejected, favored a more aggressive posture arguing that since Prussia had already lost face over the Erfurt Constitution and the Plan of Union, it should not suffer further humiliation on the matter of the military roads. Because the ministry was unable to reach an agreement, they decided to continue discussions with the King.<sup>16</sup>

While talks continued in Berlin, the Habsburgs decided to force the matter to a conclusion. On November 27, Austria and her allies ordered the Prince of Thurn and Taxis to march to Kassel and if necessary engage the Prussian troops if they blocked his way. Two days before the march, Prokesch delivered a demand that Prussia evacuate the Electorate by noon on the day of the planned movement. Manteuffel immediately transmitted this information to the King at Potsdam. Frederick

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<sup>15</sup>"The Intervention in Hesse," The Times (London), November 11, 1850, p. 3; Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, pp. 59-60.

<sup>16</sup>Sybel, The Founding of the German Empire, II, pp. 59-60.

William IV once again lost his courage and instructed his minister to telegraph Vienna that he was being sent to meet Schwarzenberg with a "friendly message." At a meeting of the ministry that day, the King ordered Manteuffel to communicate to the Austrian official that Prussia would consider no further concessions. He also proposed that a solution to the Hessian affair be reached at a general European congress. The Prussian Minister President was to attempt to persuade Schwarzenberg to agree to the withdrawal of all non-Hessian troops from the Electorate and gain Austrian acceptance to the points brought up in his meeting with the Tsar in Warsaw.<sup>17</sup>

Before these proposals could go into effect, the Prussian ministry received a telegram from Vienna stating that Schwarzenberg would agree to meet with Manteuffel as soon as he received confirmation of the Prussian decision to withdraw from Hesse-Kassel. At this same time, Gröben reported that the southern troops were advancing on his position. These new events prompted the King to call another meeting of the ministry. It was here decided that Manteuffel should go to the proposed meeting bearing personal letters from Frederick William to Emperor Francis Joseph and from the Queen to Archduchess Sophie, her sister and the mother of the Emperor. The King hoped that Schwarzenberg would not refuse to meet with a person carrying private correspondence to the Imperial family. That evening Bernstorff was told to inform the Austrian ministry that the Prussian representative was on his way to Olmütz, in eastern Bohemia. An hour later, Berlin received confirmation that the choice

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 61-64.

of the city was acceptable and the meeting would take place.<sup>18</sup>

At Olmütz, on November 29, Manteuffel and Schwarzenberg reached an agreement that the Hesse-Kassel crisis would be solved peacefully by joint Austro-Prussian action. The Prussian minister agreed that his government would permit passage by the southern troops through the area occupied by Gröben. As an assurance of Austrian good intentions, the north German power would be allowed to station one battalion in the Electorate. They also agreed that the German question would be solved at a conference to be held at Dresden in December.<sup>19</sup> Thus a war between the two German powers was averted.

Some historians have labeled the agreement at Olmütz a "humiliation,"<sup>20</sup> but such a designation is not justified by the facts. It is true that Prussia agreed not to put the Union and its constitution into effect, but that decision had already been made on November 2 with the repudiation of the Radowitz plan by the Prussian ministry. After that date, the Hohenzollern kingdom was interested merely in protecting its roads and maintaining its honor. At Olmütz, both conditions were met. Austria recognized the right of Prussia to remain in the Electorate and to garrison the roads. In so doing, the Habsburg Empire had backed down from its earlier demand that Prussia evacuate the area completely and provided an avenue of honorable withdrawal for the north German power. The so-called "humiliation" of Olmütz was in reality a compromise between two opposing sides. If a "humiliation" had occurred, it was in

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 64-67.

<sup>19</sup>"German States," The Illustrated London News, December 14, 1850, p. 446.

<sup>20</sup>Carr, History of Germany, p. 73; Craig, Prussian Army, p. 132.

Berlin on November 2, not at Olmütz.

Contemporary opinion did not interpret the Olmütz convention as a Prussian defeat. For example, Duke Ernest II of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, a dedicated champion of unification, considered the treaty a victory for Prussia because it meant that the German question would be submitted to the conference at Dresden. The Duke believed that this would give him an opportunity to gain recognition for the Prussian Union and its constitution. He even approached eighteen fellow rulers to persuade them to come to Dresden prepared to fight for the League. In his optimism he was not alone, for his brother, Prince Albert, the husband of Queen Victoria, wrote him a letter expressing hope that at last Austria would be forced to recognize the necessity of reform and the establishment of a unified Germany.<sup>21</sup>

Moreover, if Olmütz had represented a total defeat for Prussian policy, Radowitz's plan for a "wider and narrower union" would have been abandoned. This was not the case. For when the representatives of the states gathered in Dresden on December 3, 1850, Manteuffel himself revived this proposal: Prussia would agree to the admission of all the Habsburg lands to the German Confederation in return for Austrian recognition of the right of Prussia to form its own north German union. But Austria refused to accept the principle, and all attempts at compromise proved in vain. The Conference finally adjourned on May 15, 1851, after agreeing to the restoration of the German Confederation in its pre-revolutionary form. It was at Dresden that Prussian policy foundered, not at Olmütz.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Ernest II, Aus meinem Leben, pp. 217-218.

<sup>22</sup>Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, II, pp. 924-929.

It was not until years later when the conservatives under Bismarck had united Germany and felt a need to discredit Radowitz and his efforts that the term "humiliation" was applied to Olmütz. Though Bismarck condemned Radowitz at the time and argued for an agreement with Austria, he made no reference to the Treaty as a "humiliation." If the defeat of Radowitz's program led to a disillusionment of German liberals, this occurred as a result of the Conference of Dresden and the reinstatement of the German Confederation, not the Agreement at Olmütz.<sup>23</sup>

In the meantime, Radowitz had arrived in London on November 24. His hopes for gaining British support were not without foundation, for Prince Albert was in sympathy with his designs. On July 24, 1849, the Prince had written Prince William of Prussia to express his "delight" at the success of the Prussian Union and to emphasize his hopes that Frederick William IV would fight for its success. He also condemned in very strong terms the enemies of the League. In the summer of 1850, when Austrian protests against the Union and its constitution were at their height, he had written William again to urge Berlin to stand behind the Erfurt Constitution and not allow the Austrian threats to cause its abandonment.<sup>24</sup>

Albert was not alone in his pro-Prussian sympathies. At the height of the Hesse-Kassel crisis, Queen Victoria had proposed to her Foreign Secretary, Viscount Henry Palmerston, that since England had supported

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<sup>23</sup>"Ueber die deutsche Frage: Rede gehalten am 3. December 1850," Bismarck, Reden, I, pp. 50-58.

<sup>24</sup>Prince Albert to Prince William of Prussia, Osborne, July 24, 1849 and August 20, 1850, Albert, Prince Consort of Queen Victoria, Letters of the Prince Consort 1831-1861, ed. by Kurt Jagow, trans. by E.T.S. Dugdale (New York, 1938), pp. 150-151, 163-165.

constitutionalism in Italy, it should throw its weight behind Prussia in its advocacy of a constitutional reorganization of Germany. But Palmerston was cautious; though he supported Prussia, he did not consider active intervention to be in the best interests of England. As if he knew that Radowitz would later propose an alliance between the two nations, the Foreign Secretary wrote Earl Russell, the Prime Minister, that such an alliance would require the consent of Parliament, which he did not think would be given.<sup>25</sup>

So when Radowitz arrived in England, he found a friendly but cautious reception. He traveled to Windsor to confer with Prince Albert, who informed the Prussian emissary that in order to discuss an alliance between the two countries he would have to meet with the ministry. He expressed considerable doubt that it would accept the proposal. Before leaving the castle, Radowitz also had an audience with the Queen. Radowitz told her that Prussia must take the lead and redeem the pledges given in 1848; unless this were done, the popular dissatisfaction might lead to further troubles which could mean the fall of several German rulers. Victoria agreed with Radowitz, though she realized that because of Palmerston's foreign policy, England could not use her influence to assist Prussia.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Queen Victoria to Viscount Palmerston, Windsor Castle, November 18, 1850, Queen Victoria, The Letters of Queen Victoria, ed. by Arthur Benson and Viscount Esher (New York, 1907), II, p. 328; Palmerston to Russell, November 26, 1850, John Russell, The Later Correspondence of Lord John Russell, ed. by G. P. Gooch (London, 1952), II, pp. 35-36.

<sup>26</sup> Radowitz to Frederick William IV, London, November 28, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 365-368; Queen Victoria to the King of the Belgians, Windsor Castle, December 3, 1850, Letters of Queen Victoria, II, p. 333.

In short, no alliance was possible. On December 1, Albert wrote Frederick William IV to soften the blow. He explained that such an important matter as an alliance between the two countries must be handled by the ministry; an effort on his part in favor of such a proposal would be a violation of his constitutional position. The Prince, expressed his hope however that Prussia would become the champion of constitutional forms in Germany and by this method win the moral support of the German people. Radowitz himself reported to his King that the British Foreign Secretary favored Prussian interests and in the event of a war between Prussia and Austria would tend to side with Berlin. But all these attractive possibilities were nullified when news of the agreement of Olmütz arrived in London. Deeply disappointed, Radowitz wrote his wife that it would perhaps be better for king and country if he were to remain in voluntary exile in England until things cooled off. Nevertheless, he returned to his family at Erfurt on January 28, 1851.<sup>27</sup>

After the failure of the Prussian Union and the resurrection of the German Confederation in 1851, Radowitz faded from the scene just as swiftly as he had emerged. He remained interested in German politics, but never again played an active role, confining his activities to drafting occasional letters to Frederick William IV. After he completed his collected writings, the King appointed him General Inspector for Military Preparedness. In this sinecure, Radowitz occupied himself for a year until his health finally broke in the summer of 1853. Anticipating

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<sup>27</sup> Albert to Frederick William IV, Windsor Castle, December 1, 1850, Letters of the Prince Consort, pp. 168-170; Radowitz to Frederick William IV, London, December 3, 1850, Radowitz to his wife, London, December 6, 1850, Nachgelassene Briefe, pp. 371-373.

imminent death, Radowitz traveled with his son to the Harz Mountains to fulfill a wish to see his birthplace once more before his death. After his return to Berlin, the pain of his arthritis and its complications became so great that he was forced to spend his few remaining days in bed. On December 24, he spoke with his devoted wife about his plans to write a book concerning the poetry of marriage, which he intended to dedicate to her. On the next day, as the rest of Germany was celebrating Christmas, Radowitz died at the age of fifty-six. The funeral was held in the Berlin Garrison Church. In tears, Frederick William IV paused at the coffin to embrace his departed friend's two youngest sons. Radowitz was buried at Erfurt, the site of his greatest triumph.<sup>28</sup>

The reasons for Radowitz's defeat are complex. However, the single most important factor in his failure was the strong opposition he faced within his own country. Such men as Manteuffel, the Gerlach brothers, Bismarck, and in the end, Brandenburg refused to support his plans. One reason for this was the suspicion with which he was viewed by the Junkers. Despite his friendship with the King and his marriage to the Countess Voss, they still considered him a foreigner. He could not trace his ancestry back to Prussian origins: his forebears were not even German. Another factor that made him seem alien to the Junkers was his religion. Prussia and its ruling classes had strong Protestant traditions and looked upon Radowitz, a devout Roman Catholic, with deep distrust. Some even wondered if he were not really an agent of the Pope.

This suspicion had even deeper roots. The Junkers had lived on their estates for centuries and had a fear of anything that might

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<sup>28</sup> Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 524-547; Radowitz (son), Aufzeichnungen und Erinnerungen, pp. 5-10.



threaten their position. They considered anything non-Prussian to be inferior and a possible source of corruption. The unification of the Hohenzollern Kingdom with other German states could open the way for a breakdown of the sense of discipline so important to this class. Radowitz, as the champion of German unification, was advancing ideas considered dangerous by Prussian reactionaries.

Because of their reactionary attitude, the Junkers violently opposed the Revolution and anything that had any association with it. Radowitz had freely participated in the symbol of the Revolution, the Frankfurt National Assembly, and as such, they considered him a "fellow traveler" with the liberals. He also supported constitutional government for Prussia and other states. This increased his revolutionary taint and caused the reactionaries to consider him a dangerous subversive.

The opposition of the Junker class to Radowitz and his ideas was complicated by the weakness of Frederick William IV. The King had encouraged his friend to form the Union, but when effective leadership was needed, the King was unable to take the necessary action. He was willing to go along with the wishes of the ministry out of his own inability to reach a decision, not out of agreement with their position. When he regained his courage and sent Radowitz to London, events had progressed at such a pace that it was impossible to make up for lost time.

Another important reason for the failure of the Prussian Union and its designer was the attitude of Russia. Tsar Nicholas I was dedicated to the suppression of the revolution. Once again, the association of Radowitz with the Frankfurt National Assembly and constitutional forms of government made him suspect. In addition to these factors, the

posture assumed by the father of the Union toward the crisis over Hesse-Kassel intensified the Tsar's doubts concerning the Prussian leader. Schwarzenberg had posed as the champion of the restoration of the old order, a restoration which was endangered by the Prussian Union and the protests of the Hohenzollern kingdom against the unconstitutional actions of the Elector of Hesse-Kassel. This caused the Tsar to side with Austria.

On the other hand, Radowitz was no more popular with the democratic and liberal factions. Oddly enough, many of them viewed the father of the Erfurt Parliament as the exact opposite of the dangerous subversive feared by the Junkers. Thus, he was unable to appeal to the people for support when the ministry turned against him. Even if this had been possible, his political principles would have prevented him from taking such a step. Radowitz was no democrat; in reality he was a political moderate who avoided association with either extreme.

Radowitz's personality played a major role in his career. Though a romantic, he could be coldly practical. His letters are full of deeply analytical interpretations of events, and he often spent so much time studying the situation that he was incapable of the quick action necessary to put his plans in force. Postponing decisive action in the summer of 1849, when his foes were too weak to resist him, he preferred to wait in order to take the most practical course possible. Yet, he was nonetheless dedicated to his cause. Even though grief-stricken by his daughter's death and his wife's illness in 1850, he returned to Berlin to continue his work.

Whether his first loyalty was to Germany or to Prussia is a complex question. He was a strong supporter of the Prussian King and

wanted to see him the leader of Germany, but he was also dedicated to Germany. He worked long and hard in 1840 to prepare Germany for any possible French attack and later for German unification. His plan of union did not call for the annexation of the rest of Germany by the Hohenzollern Kingdom, but attempted a genuine federation, which would allow the other German states to take their rightful place in the new nation. At all times during his struggle, he remained loyal to his adopted land, but he was also concerned with the rest of Germany. In reality, it is impossible to separate the devotion held by Radowitz to Prussia from that toward Germany as a whole, because he himself never made any serious distinction between the two. To him the interests of the Hohenzollern kingdom were bound up with those of Germany, and since Prussia was the leading German power, he believed that the interests of the other German states were tied to those of the north German kingdom. He dismissed Austria from a leading role in Germany because it had decided to link its fortunes with those of non-German peoples. The majority of those living under the rule of Berlin were German: the same could not be said about those living under the rule of Vienna.

Although Radowitz's life ended in apparent failure, such was not really the case. Practically everything that he had fought to achieve eventually materialized. Even Leopold von Gerlach, one of his most dedicated foes, finally realized that Radowitz had at least been partially right.<sup>29</sup> Radowitz believed that Germany needed unity to assume a role in the modern world and that Germany's link with the Danubian monarchy

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<sup>29</sup> Leopold von Gerlach to his brother Ludwig, Berlin, December 3, 1858, Von der Revolution zum Norddeutschen Bund, II, p. 965.

hindered this unification. Both these ideas culminated in the proclamation of the new German Empire by William I on January 18, 1871. Emperor William, the man who as Prince of Prussia had supported Radowitz in the struggle of 1850, was to rule over a state with a structure very similar to that proposed by the father of the Erfurt Parliament. Ironically, this Empire was the creation of the very element in Prussia that had considered Radowitz such a dangerous person. Since such men adopted much of the thinking of Radowitz to achieve the unification of Germany, his goals and ideas did not fail. Indeed, they lived after him and in the end prevailed over the doubts of the sceptics.

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