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BY

WILLIAM ALEXANDER ROBERTSON, JR.

Norman, Oklahoma

1978

OFFICER SELECTION IN THE REICHSWEHR, 1918-1926

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DEDICATION

For Karen

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS AND GERMAN TITLES

Abt. - Abteilung(en) - division, section

A. H. Qu.- Armee Haupt-Quartier - Army (field) Headquarters

A. K. - Armee Korps - Army Corps

Akt. - Akten - document

BA/MA - Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv - Federal military archives, Freiburg im Breisgau

BHA - Bayerische Hauptstaatarchiv - Bavarian Central State Archives - Munich

Band - volume

Betr. - Betreff - subject, reference

Feldw. Lt. - Feldwebel-Leutnant - Sergeant-Lieutenant

Fwks. - Feuerwerke - Ordnance

GLAK - Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe - General State Archive Karlsruhe

Gr. Kdo. - Gruppenkommand - Group Command

H. V. Bl. - Heeresverordnungsblatter - Army Ordinance (Regulations) Gazette

MKR - Ministerium des Kreiges - War Ministry

Min. mil. Ang. - Ministeriun für militärische Angelegenheiten - Ministry of Military Affairs

Nachlass - memoirs, collected personal papers

Offz, stellv. Offizierstellvetreter - Deputy officer

P, Pers. - Personal - Personnel

PA	- Personalamt - Personnel Office
RH	- Reichsheer - Federal (National) Army
Stück	- part - as a division in a document series
TA	- Truppenamt - Troop Office
WK	- Wehrkreis - recruiting district

Note: Arabic numbers, Roman numbers, and letters indicate the origin of a document from a specific office or department.

OFFICER SELECTION IN THE REICHSWEHR, 1918-1926

INTRODUCTION

Few institutions have exerted greater influence on a society and culture than the military in Germany. As leaders of the army, the officer corps held an unequalled position in the nation. The officer corps determined its own rule in the state, and to a great extent affected the milieu within which it functioned. Officer selection was, therefore, a vital concern to both the military and to the civilian governments of the Weimar period.[1] To the civilians, it was the key to the democratization of the army; to the military, the selection process was a means with with to maintain their power and privileges in society. Ultimately, the military triumphed and retained an ideological homogeneity in the corps based upon conservatism and the traditions of the past. Because of its continued importance in German society, the officer corps of the Reichswehr has been of particular interest to many historians. Indeed, many scholars have pointed to the role of the army in the downfall of the Weimar Republic and have connected the demise of democracy in Germany with the selection of officers whose attitudes were hostile to a liberal parliamentary governmental system.

The interaction between the military and the civil government in Germany has been thoroughly investigated. Among the better known works detailing the political relations between the army and Weimar

governments are H. J. Gordon, The Reichswehr and the German Republic, 1919-1926, F. L. Carsten, The Reichswehr and Politics, Gordon Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945, and John Wheeler-Bennett, The Nemesis of Power. In dealing with officer selection in the Reichswehr, these authors all agreed that the selection process produced highly efficient leaders with regard to technical military matters; that the majority of officers hated the Republic; and, as F. L. Carsten wrote, that "the officer corps in its old form and with its old methods of selection . . . survived the crisis of revolution."[2] Since officer selection was a secondary concern to the primarily political interests of these studies, it consequently received insufficient attention.

Because of the attention devoted to political relations, other significant problems related to officer selection have lacked adequate analysis. In particular, prior studies have failed to examine the continuity in the attitudes and values of the officer corps from the past and failed to clarify what the highest military leaders, principally Hans von Seeckt and Walther Reinhardt, wanted for the army and the nation. In addition, the possibility of significant change in the officer selection system of the Reichswehr received scant consideration, although the contemporary suggestion of change caused grave disturbances throughout the leadership of the corps. Lastly, the political studies failed to demonstrate the effects that officer selection had in shaping the character of the Reichswehr in spite of the agreement that the attitude of the army had a distinct bearing on the demise of the Weimar Republic.

The Purposes and Objectives of This Study

The primary purpose of this study is to describe in detail how Reichswehr officers were selected during the 1918-1926 period. Corollary objectives were to determine who was responsible for the formulation of selection policies, and to clarify to what extent the procedures were instrumental in producing an anti-republican officer corps. To accomplish these ends, it was necessary to examine secondarily a number of other important problems. Included was the question of command authority in the hierarchy of the army as it related to training programs for officers and officer candidates, and a discussion of the military leadership's efforts to regain independence over their own affairs after the imposition of civilian controls in military affairs at the end of hostilities in 1918.

To arrive at meaningful conclusions, it was necessary to isolate the phases in the development of the officer corps in Weimar Germany. The evolution of past traditions, which still influenced officers in the 1918-1926 period, was vital to an understanding of the officer's attitude toward the nation, the profession of arms, and the republican form of government. Similarly, the selection, education, and training processes for officers also influenced the final product--the Reichswehr officer. The actual evolution fell into several stages: the November Revolution, November 1918 to January 1919 during which time the civilian government sought alternatives to the prior military system; the demobilization of the Imperial Army, January 1919 to June 1919 when internal disorder and external threats to Germany's borders required the survival of the officer corps to counter these disturbances; the forced

reductions of personnel after the acceptance of the Versailles Treaty from June 1919 to March 1920, resulting in the so-called Kapp Putsch and the resignations of Gustav Noske and Colonel Walther Reinhardt who heretofore worked to bring the army and nation closer together; and finally the period from March 1920 to 1926 which brought solutions to the problems of the officer corps under the leadership of General Hans von Seeckt. Within these stages occurred the conflicts and events which shaped the officer corps and the Reichswehr into the form and character they possessed until the end of the Republic in 1933.

The Officer Corps in the Weimar Republic

During the early years of the Weimar Republic, serious disputes arose within the highest ranks of the officer corps. These quarrels split the corps into several factions which competed with each other over control of officer selection, the legitimate succession to the former regime in the military command structure, and the future independence of the military from civilian control through the implementation of a unified and centralized command and administrative system for the Reichswehr. Many of the difficulties the officer corps endured came from the manner in which the first World War terminated. The oft-maligned attitude of the majority of the officers that the war was not over contained a grain of truth.[3] It did not technically end with the armistice but with the acceptance of a permanent peace treaty. Thus doubts and uncertainties relating to the continuation of careers and to the political position of the army in the new state magnified the problems within the corps. The intra-corps conflicts and the retention of a contingent organization composed of units with varying degrees of autonomy from Prussia, Bavaria,

Saxony, Württemberg, and Baden prevented the establishment of a common front within the military to press for their objectives.

While the army and officer corps remained divided even after March 1920, the civilian government also experienced deep divisions over military matters and policy. Although the majority of political parties in the Weimar system favored military reform, the internal disorders and external threats during the early months of the Republic turned the attention of the Reichstag from alterations in the military system to cooperation with the remnants of the Imperial Army. The civilian government regarded many of the problems of the army as internal matters to be handled by the experts in the army command. Democratization of the army and officer corps was a long-sought objective of many German political parties who believed a change in the philosophy of the military could be brought about by the democratic and non-discriminatory application of selection criteria to officer candidates of all social strata. Civilian politicians failed to realize that alterations in the attitude of the army and officer corps could not be obtained through the selection system alone, but also required a reorientation of officer education. Without substantial reform in the latter, the introduction of officer candidates into the corps from differing social groups meant little. The educational and training programs for officers and officer candidates in the Reichswehr moulded the future military leaders to fit the requirements of the establishment while teaching them the fundamentals of their profession. The ideals of a democratic and republican-minded army came to naught because tradition-oriented officers such as General von Seeckt directed the vital training and educational programs of the Reichswehr

in the spirit of the past. As a result, they produced officers who served the German state, not the German Republic.

NOTES FOR THE INTRODUCTION

[1]References to the importance of the officer corps in determining the attitudes of the army as a whole are common. Among the most notable are F. C. Endres, "The Social Structure and Corresponding Ideologies of the German Officer Corps before the World War," in Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozial Politik, vol. 58, 1927, pp. 282-319, translated by S. Ellison, (Washington, D.C.: Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Social Sciences, Columbia University, project no. 165-97-6999-6027, Works Progress Administration), p. 308; "Der Offizier macht die Truppe, und wie ist, so ist die Truppe," hereafter cited as Endres, "Social." See also Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, Das Heer und die Republik (Hannover/Frankfurt am Main: Norddeutsche Verlagsanstalt o. Goedel, 1958), p. 61, hereafter cited Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, and Ekart Kehr, Der Primat der Innenpolitik, ed. by Hans-Ulrich Wehler, Friedrich Meinecke Institut, Der Freien Universität Berlin (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter and Co., 1965), p. 236, hereafter cited Kehr, Primat. Such influence applied basically to higher ranking officers as shown by the comments of a former officer, Moriz Faber du Faur, who compared the role of a subaltern to that of a screw in a machine. Moritz Faber du Faur, Macht und Ohnmacht (Stuttgart: Hans E. Guenther Verlag, 1955), p. 89. "Auf den Gang das Diensts hatte man als subaltern Offizier keinen Einfluss. ... Die Rolle war nicht anders als die einer Schraube in einer Machine," hereafter cited Faber du Faur, Macht und Ohnmacht.

[2]Carsten, F. L., The Reichswehr and Politics, 1918-1933 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 33, hereafter cited Carsten, Reichswehr. See also Gordon Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1660-1945 (New York: The Oxford University Press, 1955), p. 380, hereafter cited Craig, Politics; H. J. Gordon, The Reichswehr and the German Republic, 1919-1926 (Port Washington, New York: The Kennikat Press, 1972 reprint), p. 193, hereafter cited Gordon, Reichwehr; and John Wheeler-Bennett, The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics 1918-1945 (New York: The Viking Press, 1967), p. 98, hereafter cited Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis.

[3]See Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, p. 19, from the Denkschrift of Major, i.G. von Bötticher, March 3, 1919, who wrote that in psychological terms, the war was not, and could not, be over if it ended in defeat for Germany.

CHAPTER I

THE PRUSSIAN ARMY

The Reichswehr of the Weimar Republic evolved from foundations laid nearly three-hundred years before in the Brandenburg-Prussian army. All the important features of the army's character, its traditions, its service ethos, its officer selection system, and the exclusive nature of its leadership were firmly rooted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Because an attachment to the ideas and institutions of the past continued to be strong throughout the history of the Prussian-German officer corps, the old methods of personnel recruitment and modes of thought endured almost intact into modern times. While the officer corps of the Reichswehr achieved a high technical proficiency, its orientation toward the past produced an atmosphere in the corps which did not correspond to the ideals of the Republic.

The Formation and Growth of the Prussian Army

The creation of a standing army in Prussia began in the mid-seventeenth century when the Hohenzollerns ruled over widely separated territories in East Prussia, Cleves-Mark, and Brandenburg.[1] The Elector of Brandenburg, George William (1619-1940), relied upon the army of the Holy Roman Emperor and his own diplomatic adroitness for the protection of his possessions. In a time of general European war and

civil strife in the Germanies, this was an error of nearly fatal consequences for the Hohenzollern dynasty. George William was unable to keep the lands of the Electorate from being invaded, crossed, or occupied by foreign armies, and his domain became a primary battleground during the Thirty Years War.[2] As a result of the dynasty's experiences during the Thirty Years War, the Great Elector, Frederick William (1640-1688), sought to build a standing army of his own to protect his lands from domestic disorder and foreign invasion.[3] Frederick William concluded that alliances were good, but an army of his own was even better because it was more reliable. Besides, as the Great Elector wrote, "a lord is of no consequence if he does not have means and troops of his own."[4]

The basic problem facing George William in securing an army responsive to his wishes had been the refusal of the Estates of his lands to grant money for raising troops except in their own provinces under the command of their own officers.[5] Furthermore, he tried to recruit an army in Brandenburg, but failed as few of his subjects volunteered to fight. In their stead, the Elector secured mercenaries, but these troops, called Soldatesca or Landesknechte, were rabble from the gutters of Europe, undisciplined and incapable of effective combat.[6] Worse yet, these forces regularly pillaged and terrorized the lands they had been hired to protect. By 1640, when Frederick William inherited the Electorate, it was clear beyond any doubt that his father's methods had cost the Hohenzollerns dearly in subjects, prestige, and security. For these reasons, the Great Elector sought to insure that the dynasty would never again be without a reliable army of its own.

A major step in securing a royal Prussian army was Frederick William's agreement with the Brandenburg aristocracy entitled the "Recess of 1653" (Landtagsabscheid). The Recess provided the Elector with the resources to build an army while in return the nobility secured greater control over the tenants on their lands. By this arrangement the landed gentry encouraged their younger sons, the Junkers, to join the army of the Elector as officers. To many of the untrained and uneducated nobility, this appeared attractive as the inheritance system in the Electorate provided nothing for the younger sons. Many simply remained on family lands, reduced to the indignity of being supported by those more fortunate in order of birth. Unlike other lands where positions in the officialdom and clergy were unavailable to young aristocrats, the Protestant church in Brandenburg had few ministers and the royal administration was small and local in nature.[7] The Recess of 1653 thus offered the opportunity of a career with honor and dignity to persons who thereafter owed their place in society directly to the monarch. In subsequent years, the same arrangement included all of the Elector's domain and in East Prussia provided monetary subsidies for the landed estates. Thus a process evolved by which the monarch ensured personal control over his army, its finances, and its officer personnel. It was not, however, completed during the lifetime of the Great Elector. The army still had many foreign officers and the king continued to employ mercenary colonels contracted to raise regiments.[8] The process begun by Frederick William proved to be only the beginning of a more lengthy development by which his successors built a royal army without Condottieri forces.[9]

Frederick William I (1713-1740), the first soldier-king, continued the centralization of the administrative, fiscal, and officer selection processes under the personal direction of the crown. In the development of the Prussian officer corps, his principal contribution lay in the establishment of a common bond between the throne and military aristocracy which in time became virtually indissoluable. Frederick William I accomplished this when he became the first Prussian monarch to wear military dress on a regular basis and by functioning actively as the army's highest ranking officer.[10] The king personally designed a plain, light-blue uniform jacket, thereafter called the "King's Coat" (Königsrock), and adopted a lifestyle of service to the state for his officers to emulate.[11]

With the monarch's example, service in the army evolved into an obligation for the nobility (Standespflicht) and gradually assumed a hereditary nature.[12] The concept was further strengthened by the notion held by both the nobility and the monarch that the upper class was the only part of society qualified to become army officers. Increasingly, the aristocrats sought membership in the officer corps as a profession which in time they came to dominate.[13]

The centralization of power over the army and the state reached completion during the reign of Frederick II (1740-1786). Autocracy attained its zenith in the Hohenzollern domain as Frederick personally became the final arbiter of all questions in the nation, serving as the first officer in the army and as the first servant of the state. Building on the precedent established by his father, he gave the aristocrats exclusive right to become officers during this period. In Frederick's

words, the Prussian aristocracy was a "race so good that it deserves to be protected in every way."[14] He purged the officer corps of most commoners, preferring to employ foreign aristocrats rather than members of the Prussian middle class to whom he allotted the task of building the state's economic and financial strength.[15] These non-noble elements in society, he felt, did not possess the proper temperament to lead men into battle.

Prussian society under Frederick the Great remained relatively static and semi-feudal. His success on the battlefield, however, fostered an admiration of military force as a means to further state aims that was accepted by Prussian society in general.[16] Prussia was a "Soldier's and Bureaucrat's State (Soldaten und Beamten staat)"; a Machtstaat, in which administrative and military efficiency became united with traditional notions of political obedience to the divinely ordained ruler.[17]

The Prussian Reform Era, 1807-1819

The Frederickian system, however, lasted only twenty years before its destruction in the Prussian military debacles at Jena and Auerstadt in 1806. The aristocratic officer corps in which Frederick placed his undying confidence failed utterly on the battlefield as many nobles fled or surrendered without a fight. Because of the disgraceful performance of the bulk of the officer corps, Frederick William III (1797-1840) began to adopt policies which permitted non-nobles, and particularly the middle class, to become officers.[18] The King empowered a royal commission to investigate the records of officers suspected of dishonorable conduct during the war and cashiered those deemed culpable

in the defeat.[19] Directed by Scharnhorst, with assistance from Gneisenau, Grolmann, Clausewitz, and von Boyen, the commission suggested far-reaching changes in policy to the King regarding the officer corps. It sought to break the monopoly held by aristocrats on entry into the officer corps and to establish education (Bildung) and performance (Leistung) rather than birth as the criteria for officer selection.[20]

The King, who still recalled with disgust the behavior of his officer corps in 1806, accepted the new regulations proposed by the commission and ordered them implemented throughout the military establishment. The reforms, however, did not alter the attitude of the majority of aristocratic officers who conceded that while problems did exist, there was nothing wrong with the system as a whole. They bitterly resented the new regulations which they saw as a threat to their traditional prerogatives and to the social structure of the nation.

The era of the Napoleonic Wars witnessed other important developments in the officer corps. In view of Prussia's ever widening role in opposition to the French, continued demands for additional personnel outstripped the number of officers available from the aristocracy alone. After Christmas of 1813, in the period known in Germany as the War of Liberation (1813-1815), liability for military service in Prussia became universal and positions in the officer corps were theoretically open to all citizens. Beginning at the time of the French retreat from Russia, the Prussian Landtag created a territorial militia, the Landwehr, to augment the regular army in its effort to expel Napoleon's forces from Prussia. On December 30, 1813, the Prussian General Yorck, on his own authority and without royal consent, separated his forces from the

French and proclaimed their neutrality by the Convention of Tauroggen. Shortly thereafter, the East Prussian Landtag ordered the mobilization of all able-bodied men from eighteen to forty-five years of age to serve in the Landwehr to protect the province from French reprisals.[21] In February, 1814, the Prussian government appealed to classes formerly excluded from military service to form volunteer Jäger detachments and in March extended the call throughout the kindgom.[22] For the first time in Prussian military history, volunteers fought beside regulars, and to the chagrin of the aristocrats proved their worth in battle. The Landwehr permitted Prussia to maintain a large army in the field throughout the remainder of the war. Field Marshal Blücher later commented that "With the Landwehr battalions, it went in the beginning only so-so; but once they had tasted plenty of powder, they did as well as the battalions of the Line."[23] The Landwehr became an object of pride for the middle class and one of scorn for the officer corps of the regular army. Fearing competition from middle class Landwehr officers, the command echelon of the standing army made vigorous efforts in subsequent years to dissolve or to alter substantially the form of the Landwehr. It was far too democratic in nature for the traditionalists who considered the liberal views of many Landwehr members as a threat to the status quo in Prussia. After the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, the King of Prussia showed less interest toward additional reforms in either the political or military spheres. The reform era ended in 1819 with the resignation of War Minister von Boyen, a member of that royal commission which had played such a vital role in the rebuilding of the Prussian army.

Between 1820 and 1848 the old military aristocracy returned to prominence and abrogated much of the work of the reformers in favor of the system which had existed before 1806. The officer corps became predominantly noble again, and the military elite made stringent efforts to make the corps safe from corrupting ideas by reverting to selection methods designed to preserve the social and ideological homogeneity of the past. The traditionalists recognized a real threat to their position in the rise of liberalism in Germany because the middle class now demanded a share in the decision-making processes of the government. However, the monarchy backed the old elites in the army and bureaucracy, resolutely opposing political reform of any kind.

The Challenge of Revolution

The first substantive external threat to the sinecure of the officer corps came with the revolution of 1848. Liberal members of the Frankfurt Parliament demanded reforms of far-reaching consequence in the army and officer corps. They wanted the corps opened to talent, the abolition of exclusive cadet schools and academies, as well as the establishment of parliamentary control over the army by the "introduction of soldier's councils, election of officers, [and] the abolition of saluting."[24] These programs proved impossible to realize, but the threat of the liberal-sponsored reforms increased the opposition of most officers to liberalism and heightened their distrust of politics in general.

For conservative Prussians, the revolution lent credence to the idea that the officer corps was the only reliable bulwark in the nation against social upheaval and increased the determination of the government and military hierarchy to shield the corps from outside influences. This

attitude affected officer selection policy by limiting candidates to those of proven "character"; if not nobles by birth, then "Nobles of Conviction" (Adels der Gesinnung).[25] Officers who entertained liberal opinions found promotion slow and complained bitterly about the constant surveillance and thought control in the regiments.[26] More important still, the 1848 episode turned many educated, middle-class youth away from possible careers in the army or politics and toward other pursuits in business, the professions, or the academic world. The source for future officer candidates were thereby limited mainly to the nobility who tightened their grip on officer selection to ensure that no challenge to their supremacy arose again. Prussian conservatives, especially East Elbians, reacted to the liberal challenge with the attitude that there existed innate conflict between rural and urban segments of society. They associated the rural background with a conservative character and spirit; the urban with liberalism, industrialization and intellectualism.[27] It was a classic encounter of good and evil to the nobility, a struggle by the divinely ordained triad of throne, altar, and sword against forces bent on their destruction.

This point of view persisted among conservatives and aristocrats throughout the 1850s and 1860s even though the rapid increase in the size of the Prussian army necessitated recruitment of officers from classes heretofore excluded from regular service. The nobility as a class could no longer meet the ever-increasing demands for officer personnel.[28] Various innovations, such as enlisting young men directly out of the senior classes at cadet schools, proved ineffective in solving the problem.[29] Persons likely to be of conservative character, sons of

the clergy, teachers with university degrees, lawyers, and doctors gained admission to the ranks of the officer corps because their entry was not considered to be a disadvantage to the corps.[30] Yet the social prejudices of the aristocratic officers remained unchanged. They believed the officer corps attracted the sons of merchants by the prospect of rapid promotion and the lack of a more promising career elsewhere, rather than from a sense of duty or "calling." Conservatives such as Edwin von Manteuffel, head of the Military Cabinet in the 1850s, objected to the middle-class officers because he felt such men probably held liberal notions and because he believed in the Frederickian tenet that the middle class lacked the proper military spirit.[31]

GROWTH OF THE PRUSSIAN ARMY[32]

Year	Size
1678	45,000
1740	81,000
1763	149,000
1805	180,000
1815	391,000[a]
1859	151,000
1862	210,000
1868	313,000

[a]187,500 Landwehr.

Problems relating to officer personnel grew even more acute in the mid-1860s because of losses incurred in the Danish and Austrian wars. The absorption of Landwehr officers into the regular army did not suffice to produce the officers necessary for the expanding army. The only solution to the persistent lack of officers was the withdrawal of barriers

to commissions for middle-class candidates. Because of the spectacular military victories of the Prussian army and the rising prestige of the officer corps in the eyes of the middle class, much of the Prussian bourgeoisie, rather than opposing the ideas of the nobility in uniform, considered the officer the first citizen of the state. Prussian burghers tried to become "the faithful image of the regular officer, if not in origin, then in manners, political attitude, and social outlook. To enter the privileged corps became the ambition of the sons of the middle class who would aspire to at least the dignity of a commission in the reserve."[33] Now the Prussian middle class joined the aristocracy in viewing military service in the officer corps as a highly respected and desirable profession.

The Officer Corps as a Profession

The Prussian officer corps retained many characteristics of its feudal heritage, being corporate and based upon a small, socially homogeneous and cohesive group in society. In the beginning, individual knights composed the majority of its members. These persons were autonomous rulers within the bounds of their landed estates and became hereditary nobles by the terms of the Recess of 1653 under the suzerainty of the Elector of Brandenburg.[34] Cementing this relationship was an emerging bond of service to the king on the part of the Junkers and a common interest in maintaining the established social order. As a result of this commitment, a group consciousness developed among the nobility concerning their role in society and that of a military officer in particular.

In structure, the officer corps showed "traces of the guild system inherited from the days of the Landsknechte: and the whole was combined with the no less essential chivalric concept of loyalty--loyalty owed by vassals."[35] These ties between the lord and vassal, monarch and officers, were firmly and permanently secured with the adoption of the Königsrock by Frederick William I, and thereafter by his officers, as an outward sign of common interest, appearance, and lifestyle. Homogeneity and solidarity were further evident in the fact that no officers, except the Generals, wore badges of rank or other marks of distinction to separate them from their colleagues. Each officer felt a sense of group identity that resembled membership in a large, but close-knit family. To seal the compact with the king, and his peers, the officer swore an oath on the monarch's flag (Fahneneid) binding him "for the rest of his life to be a faithful servant of His Majesty."[36]

The development of a professional ethos began with the medieval concept of an "organic society," created by divine ordinance in which each part has specific duties to perform. This doctrine, endorsed by the church and supported by temporal and secular rulers alike, became the philosophical basis for a stable social structure in which the upper strata maintained a permanent ascendancy. The central figure for the officer corps was the king, not a particular territory or national concept. Later, with the demise of the Emperor and Kaiserdom, the focal point became the "Fatherland and not the State."[37] Every officer, as a result of his personal oath of loyalty, and in accordance with his special position in the state and society, enjoyed a proximity to the center of power in the nation and possessed a direct link to the monarch in the

form of a personal audience (Immediatgesuch) regardless of his age or rank.[38] In every respect, the army belonged personally to the king, and his officers played the role of paladins.[39] They identified their interests with those of the monarch which made any challenge to his person or possessions an individual challenge to each officer as well. The officer corps began, thereafter, an evolutionary sequence which culminated in the establishment of the corps as a closed corporation and the general acknowledgment of its members as the first estate in the nation.[40] It existed within a special framework in Prussian society, in a world of its own. Yet its influence reached all other strata of society in a significant manner.

The emergence of a service-oriented ethos provided the foundation for the officer's life and a perspective toward his vocation. This played a vital part in establishing a common ideological base for those who entered the corps for a life-long career. The profession of arms was appropriate in dignity and honor for their station in society and was thus more than an occupation.[41] The French word Devoir, used earlier in reference to the rights and duties of medieval guildsmen also came to be used to describe the profession of arms in the eighteenth century.[42] In the latter case, the term denoted high moral duty, dynastic loyalty and social status, as well as the acknowledged rights and duties of those in the military profession.

The Germans employed the word Beruf for the same idea, but it also referred to the "calling" of a person to a specific profession. It imparted a more noble quality to the selection of a career and gave the Offizierberuf a higher station than a guildsman or artisan. Beruf also

possessed a religious character related to the "Lutheran emphasis of a divine 'calling' and upon reciprocal privileges among men."[43] Other interpretations likened it to a summons to the priesthood, or in Calvinist terms, to the vocation of the pre-determined elect.[44] The vocation of a military officer, and later that of war itself, became the ultimate objective of this elite group. It gave meaning to their existence (Daseins) and was the foundation of their reason for being (Soseins).[45] This, combined with the personal oath to the monarch formed the moral-ethical basis for the Prussian officer's philosophy of life.[46]

Another important concept lay in the German word Gesinnung. This referred to "character" or more specifically to the acceptance of the philosophy and behavioral patterns expected of the Prussian military officer. It was an integral part of the group norm of the professional officer and included proper personal bearing, social attitudes, reverence for tradition and, in later years, a conservative political outlook. The nobility considered such qualities inbred in their class--a contradiction, however, was the fact that these values were taught at the predominantly noble cadet schools as part of the educational curriculum--and these attributes served to maintain a homogeneous philosophy among the members of the officer corps. Gesinnung connoted particular sentiments, convictions, and a way of thinking which encompassed as part of its meaning additional moral and ethical qualities. The concept also included consciousness of duty, prerogative and status, as well as an awareness of peer expectations which resembled the purity and purpose of a medieval knight embarking upon a holy quest. Acceptance of the

Offizierberuf and the adoption of the proper Gesinnung constituted a visible sign of the character required of professional officers. Character, in this sense, was a standard determining factor in officer selection throughout the history of the Prussian army.

Contributing to the exclusive nature of the officer corps was the idea of a "Noble comradeship" (Adelgenossenschaft) among its members who possessed a sense of honor derived from medieval times. The Officer's Code of Honor (Ehrenkodex) held the corps together as a cohesive unit. This self-regulating de facto common law preserved the exclusive position of the officer corps in the state by underlining the difference between the military and the civilian population and by claiming for the corps a higher sense of honor.[47] The Code of Honor became the focal point of the individual officer's spirit (Geist) and the personal honor of each member became an integral part of that of the corps.[48] In later years, honor achieved such importance that in 1860 Prince Frederick Karl of Prussia placed it above duty and even loyalty to the king.[49] Frederick the Great valued the maintenance of honor above all else in his officers and described honor as a "moral compulsion which forced them, out of respect for themselves and their calling, to bear hardship, danger, and death without flinching and without expectation of reward."[50] Such devotion, Frederick believed, could only be found in the feudal nobility and not in any other class. He expressly denied that these feelings were a part of the middle-class mentality. To the king, that class was driven by material, rather than moral, values and "were too rational, in moments of disaster, to regard sacrifice as either necessary or commendable."[51] It therefore became the primary goal of the officer selection process

prior to World War I to choose only candidates whose character assured the maintenance of the honor and philosophy of the corps.

Officer Selection to 1870

Prior to 1870 officer selection underwent constant revision in technique yet remained much the same in philosophy. After 1814, there was not one officer corps, but two--the active officer corps of the regular standing army and the reserve officer corps based upon the Landwehr. Initially, the two corps differed in character, philosophy, and selection procedures, but the army reforms of 1860-61 synthesized the bodies into one entity. Until that time two military elites existed in Prussia: being remarkably similar in philosophy after the 19th mid-century, while different in social composition.

The traditional method of selecting officers in the Prussian army was by regiment as it was in the Imperial army and later the Reichswehr. This paralleled the recruitment practices of the medieval Condottieri and survived with remarkable continuity until well into the twentieth century in Germany. In the system, each regimental commander, usually a Colonel, received a lump sum payment to raise a regiment which thereafter was considered his private property. The Colonels usually recruited only a small percentage of the contracted number of men and kept for himself what money was saved by not maintaining the unit at full strength.[52] Each Colonel selected the officers for his regiment, and those so chosen owed their primary allegiance to him rather than the person contracting the services of the unit. The Great Elector changed this by curtailing the mercenary leader's right to commission junior officers. He required new appointees to enter a contractual agreement

(Kapitulation) which assured their responsibility directly to his person.[53]

As the standing army grew, successive rulers brought the mercenary leadership under greater control, especially in the realm of officer selection. Frederick William I extended a royal veto over commissions by regimental commanders and introduced a system of ranks determined by seniority.[54] Ranking superiors still appointed subordinate officers, but the nomination of higher officers, principally of staff grade, the king reserved for himself.[55] The new seniority system, called the Ancientität, was a combination of tradition and new incentives to make the profession attractive as a lifelong career.[56] The Ancientität followed the concept of equality for each person of equivalent rank in the military hierarchy. In practice, it meant that the longer an officer served, the higher his rank. The system existed in lieu of promotion by merit so that the longest tenured candidate among those qualified invariably received advancement with the acquiescence of his comrades.[57] Thus evolved the importance of the Kapitulation or commission date which often determined the final consideration for promotions in the corps. This reliance upon seniority produced an overabundance of elderly officers in the Prussian army by the beginning of the nineteenth century and led to the commonly held notion in the corps that the oldest officer was the smartest and most capable.[58] However, in spite of the rising popularity of military service among the Prussian nobility, and the incentives introduced by the monarchs to recruit more personnel, the constantly expanding army required officers in a quantity which aristocratic volunteers could not fill.

During the reign of Federick William I, additional measures to enlist more native officers in the Prussian army brought positive results. Cadet schools were one source, but the aristocracy required the extreme course of initiating "lists of young nobles between 12 and 18 and he [the king] personally chose those to be admitted. . . ."[59] From this period emerged the procedures by which candidates became officers--either as cadets who served one year as ensigns after graduation (Fähnriche, or Kornets in the cavalry) before their permanent commissioning as second lieutenants or as regimental cadets (Fahnenjunker) whose military training took place while serving as special non-commissioned officers while serving in the regular army. For the latter course, the candidate had to achieve the rank of ensign in order to be promoted to second lieutenant.[60] The traditional assignment of the Fähnrich or Kornet during the period before their commission was as special subaltern officers who were flag and standard bearers in battle.[61] Each regiment, however, still initated the selection procedure. With the introduction of the Canton system, each unit received a recruiting district so that often officers or officer candidates enlisted on their own estates in order to oversee their own peasant-soldiers in the same manner they had as civilians.[62] The persistent lack of officers in the Prussian army led, as early as the Infantry Regulations of 1726, to the establishment of conditions under which non-commissioned personnel received promotion to subaltern positions.[63]

The first substantive changes in the technique and philosophy of officer selection came on August 6, 1808, when Frederick William III enacted new procedures entitled "Regulations for making Appointments to

Vacancies among Ensigns and for the Selection of Officers for the Infantry, Cavalry and Artillery." Noble birth declined in importance as a qualification for officer candidates. The new regulations recognized that those characteristics considered by the nobility to exist only in their estate were less vital than educational background and technical expertise. With the adoption of the new criteria came a struggle between conservative traditionalists and reformers, a struggle revolving around the primacy in officer selection of "mind" or "character."[64] The royal ordinance stated in part that

> Applications for commissions will in the future be considered only on the grounds of attainments and education in times of peace, and on grounds of outstanding bravery and general outlook in times of war. It follows that every Prussian who possesses these qualifications can aspire to the highest military posts of honor. All advantage hitherto enjoyed by the Estate in the army are hereby abolished and all men, regardless of their origins, shall have the same duties and rights.[65]

The selection process involved two major principles--that of the selection of officer candidates through personal application to the regiment of their choice, and on the basis of need with the Ancientität as a guide from which to select ensigns for promotion.[66] Selection was primarily through an evaluation of professional expertise, social position, and physical ability for persons with the proper educational background.[67] Candidates from the civilian sector of society applied as officer aspirants in their Canton and then underwent consideration by the regiments for possible election as Fahnenjunker.[68] The monarch still claimed, in theory, a free hand in the selection process, but in most instances he left the final decision to each regiment.

The reformers in 1808 intended basic alterations in the traditional selection procedures and in the philosophy supporting the

system. They wanted to end practices whereby Junkers in their early teens served as corporals until they could be commissioned.[69] In contrast, the officer aspirant now had to wait until age seventeen to enter the service, after, and only after, offering adequate proof of his proper educational background. He then spent not less than three months in the ranks before taking a regimental examination for admission to the officer corps as an ensign.[70] Limitations also existed in the numbers of positions open to new personnel. The allotment for each cavalry regiment per year was fourteen ensigns and eight each for the infantry. The new process required the successful completion of a second examination before the candidate's actual promotion to lieutenant. A special board in Berlin conducted the examinations and the reformers originally intended to subject all officers to testing before promotion to higher grades.[71] The military school system underwent a reorganization to complement the more rigorous requirements, providing basic courses to candidates for commissions, while the War Academy (Kriegsakademie) provided a more advanced curriculum.

In spite of these changes, the king still appointed a small percentage of officers to the corps based on the older concept of character.[72] Acceptance of the new selection criteria and philosophy varied considerably in the officer corps. Until mid-century the reforms aroused vehement opposition from many ultra-conservatives who saw in the changes the eventual destruction of the corps and of the close personal relationship between the king and his officers.[73] Still very much alive was the old Frederickian notion that the middle class was unsuited for the art of war.[74] Representative of this view was Frederick Ludwig von der Marwitz

who recorded his dismay over such alterations in tradition and argued that he

> would put more faith in wartime in the son of a poor landowner or officer, who suffers in want in his manor or garrison, than in the son of a rich man who owes his wealth to speculation or, indeed to bankruptcy.[75]

Such objections made little impression on the king who allowed further concessions in the heretofore sacrosanct realm of officer selection as the need for personnel grew rapidly during the War of Liberation. One of the major changes in the existing system occurred with the creation of the Landwehr which accepted middle-class volunteers without the restrictions that prevailed in the regular army. These units provided officer replacements after the battles of Gross-Görschen and Bautzen depleted the officer corps of the standing army. Eventually, the Landwehr included thirty-eight infantry and cavalry regiments.[76] The primary difference between the selection method for officers in the standing army and the Landwehr regiments was the election of officers up to the rank of Captain by the troops in the latter.[77] This created a second officer corps that operated under different procedures from the regular amry. It involved new methods of officer selection and a system of creating reserve officers which was not bound to the traditions dear to conservative aristocrats. The system which ultimately evolved allowed volunteer service for one year with a Landwehr regiment followed by a commission in the reserves.

Entering the service at their own expense, the one-year volunteers (Einjährige) provided their own uniforms, equipment, and cost of maintenance and lodging. To qualify required proof that the volunteer had completed the examination for the sixth year at a Gynmasium or

Realschule. Each individual chose his service branch and regiment, but they were not compelled to live in barracks, attend military lectures or drill as an ordinary recruit.[78] Einjährige normally spent their active service year as non-commissioned personnel, attended a war school and received their commission as a reserve officer upon completion of the course. Many Einjährige viewed this route as the initial step toward a commission in the regular army.[79] This process required completion of the officer's examination, and election by the officers of a regiment to the officer's mess. The former reserve officer then received a full commission in the regular army.[80] This system provided the majority of reserve officers in the Prussian army in the years between its inception and the merger of the officer corps of the Landwehr and the standing army in 1860-61.

The reforms of the early 1860s sought to produce a centralized, institutionalized reserve system and to assimilate many Landwehr officers into the ranks of the more socially elite regulars. After a few years, this proved successful and the former Landwehr identified with the regular army officer and resembled them in outlook on society, economics and politics.[81] The enhanced prestige and social rewards of the regular army also played a prominent role in the Landwehr officer adopting the values and attitudes of his new peer group. During this period, the criteria for officer selection became standardized as it appeared throughout the life of the Empire. If the candidate possessed the satisfactory educational requirements, he entered the corps as an ensign, or from outside the establishment as a regimental cadet. In either case, a request to be considered as an officer candidate went to the officer in charge of

recruiting for that particular regiment. There followed an investigation of the family's background and of the political activities of not only the applicant but his family and associates as well. The final consideration was the family's social position and the father's occupation. If all reports appeared satisfactory, a unanimous vote of the officers of the regiment elected the candidate to the officer's mess and began the process leading to a commission as a second lieutenant. Promotion to ensign still preceded appointment as a commissioned officer. To achieve this, the candidate had to be between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three, possess a diploma from a secondary school, a cadet school, or have successfully completed the ensign's examination. The military authorities also required a certificate of conduct, adaptability, and proficiency from the candidate's regiment after six months' service.

Appointment as a regular officer entailed attendance at a Kriegsschule unless the candidate was enrolled in, or graduated from, a university. Completion of the officer's examination was essential in either case. Each candidate needed to attain the classification of Selekta from cadet school, a favorable endorsement from his troop unit, and be elected to the officer's mess. At the time of commissioning, the candidate had to be twenty-three years of age, unmarried, a German by birth, and physically qualified for active service. Further examinations tested the candidate's proficiency in the German language and literature, three other languages--usually Latin, Greek, English, French or Russian--history, geography, and mathematics. Graduates of institutions of higher learning had the option of substituting physics and chemistry for one language.

Officers for the reserves now came from the regular army except in certain circumstances where Einjährige fulfilled additional requirements to enter the regular officer corps. This entailed obtaining a certificate (Obersekundareife) after six years at a secondary school and entitled the aspirant to one year of service instead of the normal two or three. At the end of the year, during which superior officers constantly monitored the candidate's performance, a decision on his qualifications to enter the reserve officer corps was made. Satisfactory progress during the time required promotion to lance-corporal (Gefreiter) and preferable to full corporal (Unteroffizier). Successful candidates then volunteered for a special officer training course. Upon completion, if the volunteer passed the examination administered at that time, he officially became an officer candidate (Offizieraspirant). Thereafter followed participation in two technical exercises, first as a non-commissioned officer and then as an officer. Election by the officers of the recruiting district (Kreis) completed the process and, upon the approval of the Military Cabinet, the person received a commission in the name of the king as a lieutenant.[82] The principal objective of this extremely arduous process was the protection of the homogeneity of the officer corps from corruption by the wrong social and political elements.[83]

Due to the failure of the Prussian Diet to pass increases in the army budget in the early 1860s, the army hierarchy sought to remove personnel matters from possible civilian interference by designating officer selection as part of the competency of the Military Cabinet. Since 1849-50 the War Minister had controlled the selection process, but could be questioned in certain military matters by parliament.[84] The Military

Cabinet was not subject to any such accountability or restrictions from any source other than the king. Officer selection, therefore, became an important sector of the Military Cabinet's activities and was tightly regulated according to the wishes of its perennially conservative members.

The reorganization of the army which began in 1860-61 produced other changes in the military establishment designed to meet persisting demands for trained personnel. The new regulations for commissions which came in October 1861 added further to the hue and cry of the conservatives who opposed any change whatsoever. By that ordinance, all candidates had to present a certificate to confirm that they had attained the Prima classification (senior status) in a Gymnasium or Realschule and were able to pass examinations in the subjects required in the upper classes of such institutions. Many officers protested that the order signified the beginning of an embourgeoisement of the army and, as a result, the edict was never executed as intended.[85] The military hierarchy recognized, however, that many cadets from the military school system performed far below the new standards set for officers. Subsequently, the military made efforts to upgrade the educational curriculum of cadet schools.[86] The basic criteria for officers remained constant until the wars in 1864, 1866, and 1860 created major officer shortages which could not be overcome other than by the admission of candidates with reliable social and political backgrounds from heretofore excluded middle-class elements.[87]

Sources of Personnel for the Officer Corps to 1870

Frederick the Great was the first King of Prussia to initiate a totally aristocratic officer corps in Prussia, allegedly on the French model.[88] The sociological composition of the corps thereafter remained

predominantly noble until the mid-nineteenth century when the process of industrialization brought changes to the social sphere in Germany which were incongruous with the remaining feudal aspects in the German political structure. The officer corps, in spite of its reactionary traditionalism, was not able to resist modification entirely because the social order and the military system in Prussia were so closely bound together that a change in the one had a profound effect on the other.[89] After 1850, the growth of the population in general far outstripped that of the nobility as a class and the percentage of aristocrats in the officer corps declined as more and more officers from the middle class entered the profession. The leadership of the officer corps, however, remained in the hands of the aristocracy.

Within the corps were different groups of the nobility which ranged from the East Elbians who differed considerably in philosophy and values from those of the western provinces, to aristocrats of foreign extraction and those raised to nobility from the lower classes.[90] East Prussians, for the most part, were uneducated and crude, possessing the austere qualities traditionally associated with the Prussian officer. The better educated westerner was more attuned to influences from other intellectual and philosophical sources, and consequently more flexible. The foreign-born officer most often resembled the westerner, but a number came from areas of eastern Europe more backward than Prussia. Officers raised to nobility were a heterogeneous lot, running the social and educational scale from former non-commissioned personnel to foreign-trained men such as Scharnhorst and Gneisenau.[91] By far, the East Elbian Junkers were the most influential because of their loyalty and close association

to the throne. However, all showed similar attitudes based upon their membership in the elite segment of society and were examples of a nobility of convictions regardless of their social origin. Despite its powerful position and great influence at court and notwithstanding the homogeneity of its present members, the officer corps could not prevent alteration of its social composition because of the nation's rapidly growing population and the constant pressure within the expanding military establishment for leadership personnel.

The reorganization and enlargement of the army in the 1860s began to erode the upper class' hold on the corps by widening its social base.[92] In 1861, according to Karl Demeter, bourgeois elements comprised 20 percent of the total officer corps, but less in the highest command positions (see following table).

Strongly represented in the Guards and cavalry regiments was the nobility of birth because such units held the greatest prestige. The choice of service branch was of great concern to aristocrats, especially the East Elbians. For example, the rank of Captain in the cavalry appealed to the nobility because in that branch officers bore the distinctive title of Rittmeister. This made it possible to tell from a glance at his calling card that he belonged to the "right" branch of the officer corps.[94] Many aristocrats did not want to be promoted to Major because as such the cavalry-man was not clearly recognizable.[95] A few nobles condescended to serve in the field artillery, but not in the heavy artillery due to the complicated calculations in gunnery or in the engineers due to its many technical problems. These were left to the middle-class officer.[96] Each regiment had its own social prestige and those held in highest esteem were

THE PRUSSIAN OFFICER CORPS IN 1861

	Total	Commoners	App. %
Generals of the highest command	33	0	0
Lieutenant-Generals	36	2	.056
Major-Generals	60	6	10
Colonels - Infantry	77	6	7.8
Cavalry	18	2	11
Artillery	14	8	57
Engineers	6	5	83
Quartermaster Corps	1	1	100
Lieutenant-Colonels - Infantry	85	9	11
Cavalry	21	0	0
Artillery	20	15	75
Engineers	7	6	86
Majors - Infantry	395	57	14
Cavalry	105	8	7.5
Artillery	67	42	63
Engineers	34	26	76
Quartermaster Corps	9	5	55
	997	198	20

Percentages for the subaltern ranks for 1861

	Nobles	Commoners	App. %
Infantry - Guards	95	5	7.6
Line	67	33	49
Cavalry - Guards	100	0	0
Line	95	5	7.6
Artillery- Guards	16	84	153
Line	16	84	153

sought by wealthy middle-class officers who often adopted an extravagant lifestyle and earned for their regiments the reputation "that only well-to-do men could afford to serve in them."[97]

In social composition, the Prussian officer corps exhibited a gradual change from the total dominance by the nobility in the eighteenth century to the increasing entry of the middle class in the 1860s. Many middle-class volunteers had their first military experience in the Landwehr during the War of Liberation and pointed with pride to the accomplishments of the many units of citizen-soldiers. With the end of the war, however, the aristocrats once again successfully pressed the king for a return to the pre-war system. This began in 1819 and continued throughout the following years until the early 1860s when an extensive enlargement and reorganization of the army began.

The social composition of the officer corps remained stable and predominantly aristocratic after the Napoleonic Wars because middle-class officers went into the reserves or Landwehr. Such a commission still assured the officer of more status than his non-military peers, but did not require full-time service and abandoning a civil career. Continued expansion in the army as a result of the army reforms of 1860-61 rendered it impossible to bar the middle class from the active officer corps indefinitely. While change in the social character of the corps slowly eroded away the solely aristocratic character of the institution, no perceptible difference in philosophy or ideology developed. For the future, however, the trend toward a larger participation in the officer corps for the middle class had been established. Equally important for the period before 1870 was the growth of Prussian military customs and

tradition which continued to be extolled during the Empire and on into the Reichswehr era. It was, more specifically, to the Frederickian example that the traditionalists in the officer corps turned during Weimar as a pattern for the future post-Republic authoritarian state.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER I

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[6] Ibid.

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[9] Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 28.

[10] Ibid., p. 47.

[11] Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 21; and Fay and Epstein, Brandenburg-Prussia, p. 98.

[12] Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 20.

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[14]Craig, Politics, p. 16 from Gerhard Ritter, Frederick der Grosse, ein historisches Profil (Leipzig, 1919), p. 198.

[15]Martin Kitchen, The German Officer Corps, 1890-1914 (Oxford: University Press, 1968), p. xiii, hereafter cited Kitchen, Officer Corps; and Craig, Politics, p. 17.

[16]Koppel Pinson, Modern Germany: Its History and Civilization (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1966), p. 8, hereafter cited Pinson, Modern Germany.

[17]Ibid.

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[19]Craig, Politics, p. 38; and Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 126.

[20]Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 128; and Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 44. For a further consideration of the period, see W. O. Shanahan, Prussian Military Reforms, 1786-1813 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), hereafter cited Shanahan, Reforms.

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[27]Jahrbuch II der Ranke-Gesellschaft, Kontinuität und Tradition in der deutschen Geschichte, Konferenz der Ranke-Gesellschaft Vereinigung für Geschichte in Öffentlichen Leben, "Führungsschicht und Eliteproblem" (Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bonn: Verlag Moritz Diesterweg, 1957), p. 105, hereafter cited Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht."

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[33]Curt Jany, Geschichte, vol. 1, p. 225, vol. II, p. 8, vol. III, p. 515, vol. IV, pps. 114, 213 and 254.

[34]F. L. Carsten, "Germany," in Michael Howard, ed., Soldiers and Governments, Nine Studies in Civil-Military Relations (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1957), p. 81. Carsten dates this development during the 1864-1871 years, hereafter cited Carsten, "Germany."

[35]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 159.

[36]Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 172; and Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 160.

[37]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 110; and Blummentritt, "Soldiers and Politics," p. 2.

[38]Jany, Geschichte, vol. 1, p. 729.

[39]Blummentritt, "Soldier and Politics," p. 2; and Horst Ehmke, "Militärische Oberbefehl und Parlementarische Kontrol," in Zeitschrift für Politik, December, 1954, p. 338. Other historians use the term "praetorians." See also Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, Das Heer und die Republik (Hannover/Frankfurt am Main: Norddeutsche Verlagsanstalt o. Goedel, 1958), p. 62, hereafter cited Schüddekopf, Das Heer und Republik.

[40]Mg.F.,"Offizierkorps," p. 55; and Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 107.

[41]Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1960), p. 175, hereafter cited Janowitz, Professional Soldier, where the author generalizes, on the basis of extensive research, that a professional group necessarily develops a special identity accompanied by a body of ethics and performance standards.

[42]Jany, Geschichte, vol. 1, p. 729, "Derjenige Offizier welchen sein devoir . . ."

[43]Walter Struve, Elites Against Democracy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 26, hereafter cited Struve, Elites; and Janowitz, Professional Soldier, pp. 104-107. The military career is referred to here in terms of a special mission and calling.

[44]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 125.

[45]Ibid., p. 108.

[46]Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 172.

[47]Ibid., p. 50; Craig, Politics, pp. 252-253; and Janowitz, Professional Soldier, p. 225 who state that honor was a fundamental value to aristocrats in the sense of placing it above life itself in many cases.

[48]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 108.

[49]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 259, Essay by Prince Frederick Karl of Prussia.

[50]Craig, Politics, p. 16. See also Max Lehmann, Scharnhorst (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1886-87), vol. II, pp. 58-59, hereafter cited Lehmann, Scharnhorst; and Jany, Geschichte, vol. I, p. 219.

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[52]Fay and Epstein, Brandenburg-Prussia, p. 45ff.

[53]Jany, Geschichte, vol. I, p. 157ff; and Gustav Schmoller, "Die Entstehung des preussischen Heeres von 1640-1887," in Deutsche Rundschau, Band XIII, Juli-August-September, 1887, p. 259, hereafter cited Schmoller, "Entstehung."

[54]Craig, Politics, p. 16.

[55]Leopold von Ranke, "The Army under Frederick William I," in David Ralston, ed., Soldiers and States, Civil-Military Relations in Modern Europe (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1966), p. 41.

[56]Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 27.

[57]Ibid., pp. 27-30.

[58]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 254, Essay by Prince Frederick Karl of Prussia who stated that the attitude in the corps was that ". . . der älteste ist der Klugeste."

[59]Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 44 and 254; and Craig, Politics, p. xiii, who states that not all the nobility were anxious to send their sons to cadet school and many of these youngsters were physically carried from their parent's estates by the king's dragoons.

[60]Ledebur, Unteroffiziers, p. 169.

[61]Jany, Geschichte, vol. I, p. 162; and Ledebur, Unteroffiziers, p. 168, who writes that these duties were first described in the army Reglements during the years 1754-1774.

[62]Rosinski, German Army, p. 17.

[63]Ibid., p. 40.

[64]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 92.

[65]Ibid., p. 13; and Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 45. For a slightly different translation, see Craig, Politics, p. 43.

[66]Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 24.

[67]Ibid., p. 51.

[68]Ibid., p. 25.

[69]Craig, Politics, p. 44; Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 45; Lehmann, Scharnhorst, pp. 55-67; and Shanahan, Reforms, pp. 131-133.

[70]Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 129.

[71]Craig, Politics, p. 44.

[72]Feuchtwanger, Prussia, p. 129.

[73]Mg.F.,"Offizierkorps," pp. 47-48.

[74]Lehmann, Scharnhorst, p. 60fn.

[75]Craig, Politics, p. 42 as quoted from Marwitz Nachlass, vol. I, p. 305ff.

[76]Rosinski, Germany Army, pp. 88-90. Rosinski asserts that Landwehr officers were drawn from classes which formed the backbone of the liberal movement in Prussia. Given the political outlook and ambitions of this segment of society, the fact that they quickly assumed the same posture as the aristocrats is not surprising.

[77]Shanahan, Reforms, pp. 219-221.

[78]Grover Platt, The Place of the Army in German Life, doctoral dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1941, p. 83, hereafter cited Platt, Army in German Life.

[79]Ernst Huber, Heer und Staat in der deutschen Geschichte (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlags-Anstalt, 1938), pp. 156-159; and Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 72.

[80]Rosinski, Germany Army, pp. 110-113.

[81]James Sheehan, "Conflict and Cohesion among German Elites in the Nineteenth Century," p. 77, in James Sheehan, ed., Imperial Germany (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), hereafter cited Sheehan, "Conflict."

[82]Werner Angress, "Prussia's Army and the Jewish Reserve Officer Controversy before World War I," pp. 101-102 in Sheehan, ed., Imperial Germany.

[83]Ibid.; p. 102. This was aimed primarily at Jews and Social Democrats. The process could be interrupted at any time thus nullifying the candidate's chance for completing the commissioning requirements.

[84]Jürgen Schmädeke, Militärische Kommandogewalt und Parlementarische Demokratic (Lübeck und Hamburg: Matthiesen Verlag, 1966), p. 16, hereafter cited Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt.

[85]Craig, War, p. 155; and Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 29.

[86]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 21.

[87]Sheehan, "Conflict," p. 76.

[88]Demeter, Officer Corps, pp. 264-265 gtom Rddsy by Prince Frederick Karl of Prussia.

[89]Martin Kitchen, A Military History of Germany from the Eighteenth Century to the Present Day (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 11, hereafter cited Kitchen, History.

[90]Günther Blummentritt, "Sociological Aspect of the former German Officer Corps," National Archives MS series, Index for MS # 351, Frankfurt, 15, January, 1951, hereafter cited Blummentritt, "Sociology."

[91]Feuchtwanger, Prussia, pp. 124-125. The author also mentions that Scharnhorst ". . . suffered many slights in the Prussian service on the account of his origin and humble birth. . . ."

[92]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 20.

[93]F. C. Endres, "The Social Structure and Corresponding Ideologies of the German Officer Corps Before the World War," in Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozial Politik, vol. 58, 1927, pp. 282-319, trans. by S. Ellison (Washington, D.C.: Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Social Sciences, Columbia University, project. no. 165-97-6999-6027, Works Progress Administration), pp. 11-12, hereafted cited Endres, "Social."

[94]Lysbeth Muncy, The Junker in the Prussian Administration under William II, 1888-1914 (Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1944), pp. 124-125, hereafter cited Muncy, Junker.

[95]Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 9.

[96]Endres, Social, pp. 18-23.

[97]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 28.

CHAPTER II

THE IMPERIAL ARMY

The Imperial army constituted a vital historical link between the Prussian army and the Reichswehr. Despite the addition of troops from other German states to those of Prussia in 1871 to create the Imperial army, the Prussian army retained its separate identity. The Imperial army became an extension of the army of the kind of Prussia. Because Prussia dominated the Empire politically, the new Kaiser's armed forces underwent a thorough Prussianization in many technical military aspects such as training and the standardization of weapons as well as in the administrative and command organs, officer selection techniques, and military philosophy. Structurally, the military system was federal, divided into contingents which possessed special rights and command relationships with the Prussian-dominated Reich authorities. Although Prussian aristocrats still held the majority of higher command positions in the army, the lower ranks of the officer corps continued to change in social composition due to a steady influx of middle-class officers. Yet the prestige of the military profession rose further and the ever expanding size of the army created additional positions which the middle class eagerly sought.

Notwithstanding the dominance of Prussia, the complete Prussianization of the army could not be accomplished. The south German

contingents in the Imperial system refused to discard their own traditions, fearing that in a process of assimilation they would lose their identities. This provided the basis for a continuing conflict over the special rights and prerogatives accorded to the Länder by the constitution of 1871. Southern particilarism persisted into the post-World War One years and played a considerable part in the retention of a contingent system for the Reichswehr in the Weimar constitution of 1920.

The Imperial period spawned other conflicts which served to split the officer corps of the Reichswehr. These dealt primarily with the internal command relationships in the officer corps, the nature of the officer selection process, and the authority of Reich military officials in administrative and command matters involving contingent members. For the civilian government, the most difficult problems came from attempts to establish controls over an institution whose traditions and historical place in German society accorded it a position responsible only to the king. The latter struggle continued throughout the days of the Empire and on into Weimar period breeding hatred and distrust between the military establishment and the civilian parliamentarians.

The Creation of the Imperial Army

The Imperial army was the product of a re-alignment of the political and military relations originally established by the Germanic Confederation. After 1848, the Confederation split into two military groups: those north of the Main River led by Prussia and those to the south led by Austria. Military contingents from the various states thereby came under the supervision of each of the major powers.[1] Prussia sought to cement relations with its northern neighbors through military

conventions and by the end of 1861 had agreements with six states.[2] Another six states adopted the Prussian educational system, which included military training in the Prussian method, and identified their interests closely with Prussia.[3] The Prussian military, in fact, dominated the forces of these states after 1867 and looked upon them as their own.

The approach of war in 1866 between Prussia and Austria destroyed the Confederation's military structure. Along with Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Saxony, many smaller states throughout Germany opposed Prussia. Nonetheless, the war ended in total disaster for the Hapsburgs and their allies. As the victor, Prussia had a free hand in determining new political relationships and used this power to secure complete hegemony in northern Germany.[4] Those states north of the Main River which had fought against Prussia were annexed outright as the Prussians asserted that the rights of these states were forthwith superseced by the right of Germans to unity and national self-determination.[5] The other states north of the Main River became members of a North German Confederation.

The defeat of Austria made Prussia the supreme power in central Europe.[6] Even though the vanquished states in the south could have been afforded the same treatment as those in the north, Bismarck declined to annex these areas for fear of provoking another war. Instead, the four major states were linked to Prussia by defensive alliances compelling the armed forces of those Länder to act in concert with Prussia's in case of war with a third party. Prussian leadership in the arrangement came through the king of Prussia being commander-in-chief of the combined forces which were in appearance a united German army.

During this period, the Prussian army augmented its forces with troops from the annexed states which now came under the direct control of the Prussian king and his military establishment. For the southern states, the facade of military conventions served to camouflage the reality of Prussian superiority. Such an agreement with Hesse-Darmstadt came in February, 1867, and resulted in the complete integration of Hessian troops into the Prussian army.[7] Hessian forces remained in a division of their own, however, under the direct command of the king of Prussia. Saxony signed a like accord the same month, but those with the other states--Bavaria, Württemburg, and Baden--resulted from the Franco-Prussian War.[8]

In 1871, Bismarck used the constitution of the North German Confederation as the basis for a new German constitution. It defined the powers of the Reich and its member states in military matters, and sought to unify the armies of the individual contingents by placing them under the command of a Reich authority.[9] Because the rights of the Reich superseded those of the states, the Länder were subordinated to the Prussian contingent which possessed the real decision-making and command power.[10] The constitutional arrangements attempted to assure compliance and to establish parity in weapons, training and officer qualifications among the contingents through the inspection authority of the Kaiser.[11] The duty of the Kaiser, according to the provisions of the constitution, was

> . . . to see to it that all formations of the German Army are complete in numbers and prepared for war, and that uniformity in organization, armament, command, and the training of men is maintained, as well as the qualifications for officers.[12]

Other articles in the 1871 constitution directed the formation of a federal army from state contingents under the command of the king of

Prussia as the Confederation Field Commander (Bundesfeldherr).[13] The constitution required the adoption of common armaments, command structure, training methods, and officer selection methods following the Prussian model. Prussian military officials, acting as representatives of the Confederation Field Commander and also as representatives of the Kaiser and Reich, ensured compliance by the inspection of other contingents at their pleasure.[14] Further, the Bundesfeldherr received the right to nominate the highest commanders of all contingents, officers and fortress commandants, and they in turn had to swear the Fahneneid to him. The commander-in-chief had the additional prerogative to select and place any officer in any of the forces under his control.[15] The constitution required the non-Prussian forces to act in concert with the Bundesfeldherr--always the king of Prussia--to protect the freedom of the Reich in military matters. To ensure complete control over the system, the Prussian War Minister also served as Reich War Minister during hostilities.[16] In war, this secured a united military effort under Prussian leadership as well as the implementation of a common policy, which in reality benefited Prussia. One of the primary reasons for the adoption of a contingent system, along with placating the south, was that it paralleled the pseudo-federated structure of the Reich itself. In reality, both the civil and military systems were heavily weighted in favor of Prussia.[17]

The enlarged scope of operations in the Reich resulted in an expansion of Prussian military offices. Serving the Kaiser directly, the Prussian War Minister was superior to the war ministers of the other states by terms of the constitution and the Reichmilitärgesetz of November 23, 1874.[18] The Prussian Military Cabinet assumed authority

over officer selection and assignments under the direct supervision of the Kaiser, and possessed the same responsibilities within the Imperial army as the Prussian War Minister and General Staff did for the Prussian contingent. The senior officer in the army also held at the same time the post of general adjutant to the Kaiser and influenced the head of state not only from an advisory standpoint, but also on a personal basis as part of the camerilla around the throne. It was obvious in spite of the outward appearance of a federated army that the Prussian contingent possessed a vastly superior position in the military establishment.[19]

The 1871 constitution granted certain military privileges to the south German states. These fell into three categories: superior rights (Hoheitsrechte), which the member states held at the time of unification and permitted each to have its own constitution and in many cases special military rights or authority; special membership rights (besonderen Mitgleidschaftrechte), which for Prussia included the institution of Kaiserdom (Kaisertum) for its monarch, and for Bavaria, Württemberg and Saxony, a permanent seat on the Bundesrat military committee; special superior rights (besonderen Hoheitsrechte, also called Reservatrechte), which denoted areas of special competence for the states. In the latter category, separate military agreements between Prussia and individual states delineated the specific terms of these rights.[20] Further constitutional concessions to the Länder permitted individual contingents to name officers under certain circumstances, although the nomination of generals and other high command personnel remained a prerogative of the Kaiser.[21] As one of his federal prerogatives, the Kaiser compelled the states withi the system to adopt Prussian military law while Württemberg and Saxony

were further required to publish and implement Prussian military ordinances as their own through the offices of state commandants.[22] Only Bavaria retained the right of independent initiative to issue military orders.[23] The Imperial army system was thus based upon constitutional and special contractual rights which fixed the structure, organization, and authority of the military establishment and its member contingents.

The special competence accorded by the constitution permitted each state to preserve certain distinguishing features of its pre-unification form. Each of the four major contingents, Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and Prussia, retained their national flag, cockade, rank markings and distinctive colors as well as exclusive recruiting privileges within the state.[24] Those states not provided with special rights--only Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg and Baden possessed these--were completely under the domination of Prussia and the Prussian War Minister in Berlin. Officers who commanded the contingents served the king of Prussia as commander of the Prussian contingent and the Kaiser as commander of the Imperial army. The former heads of state in the south retained only nominal commands, and these derived from the individual military conventions and the constitution.[25]

Each of the military conventions between the Reich and the southern states differed somewhat. The convention with Baden, concluded on November 25, 1870, gave that state the status of an independent unit within the Prussian contingent. A separate Badenese military structure and command authority remained, but only under the direction of Prussian officers and as part of a federal unit. In the agreement, the army of the Grand Duke of Baden became part of the Royal Prussian Army. Badenese

regimental numbers were changed to Bund numbers to eliminate conflict with traditional Prussian numbers and all officers, as well as officer candidates, military doctors, and administrative personnel swore the Fahreneid to the king of Prussia. The reserves took their oath to the Grand Duke of Baden, but in most military matters Baden was simply a contingent member of the Imperial army.[26]

The convention with Württemberg, dated November 25, 1870, made the Royal Württemberg Army part of the German Confederation (Deutsche Bund) with its own army corps. As Bundesfeldherr, the king of Prussia commanded the corps which retained its own flag and rank markings. A special oath for the contingent read

> I swear that during my service time as a soldier I will loyally serve His Majesty the King, obediently serve the Confederation Field Commander and war laws and will be a brave and honorable soldier. So help me God.

Officers served the Royal Württemberg Army Corps through the king of Württemberg who was a subordinate in military matters to the king of Prussia. Officer qualifications were the same as in Prussia, and Württemberg officers were required to serve up to two years in the Prussian army. The convention also provided for special inspection rights for the king of Prussia to certify that the agreement was properly implemented.[27] As a result of the foregoing stiplations, the Württemberg contingent, along with the Saxon, ultimately became more integrated into the Imperial system than did the Badenese or Bavarians.[28]

Bavaria entered into its pact with the North German Confederation on November 23, 1870. The accord had a dual character, the first part securing Bavarian adherence to the constitution of the confederation and the second regulating military relations between Bavaria and the Reich.[29]

Under the latter agreement, Bavaria maintained the right to initiate military law and ordinances: Bavarians served exclusively in their own contingent, and the Bavarian Army served the king of Bavaria in peacetime and the Confederation Field Commander in war.[30] Bavaria, for the most part, retained a greater autonomy than any other member of the federation in military terms and kept very much alive a special particularism which accentuated the differences between Bavaria and Prussia in other areas as well.

As a result of its federated nature, and the special rights accorded to member states in varying degrees, the Imperial German Army was far from being an integrated body. The federal system permitted the evolution of a dual arrangement whereby member states followed their own traditions and customs.[31] If the goal was to create a Prussian-dominated system, it succeeded, but the wounds suffered from the unification process were in no way healed. The Prussianization of parts of the Imperial Army was successful as young men from the other contingents did at times "imitate the speech, gait, and moustache of their Prussian counterparts," but it did not unite north and south in soul and spirit.[32] The differences between the two remained, though they were temporarily submerged during the years following unification when the prestige of the army soared to unprecedented heights.

The Officer Corps in Imperial Germany

With the unification of the nation, the militaristic spirit of the Prussian Junkers spread throughout the entire Reich until ultimately the military point of view became entrenched in the minds of many Germans. The pre-World War One period, however, also witnessed the rise of internal

army rivalries in the uppermost echelons of command which endured into the Weimar era. Conflicts developed because of the independent status of the War Ministry, the General Staff, and the Military Cabinet within the system. Many functions of these military offices overlapped in spite of the fact that the War Ministry theoretically controlled the others in peacetime. Each of the rivals sought to increase the power of their office at the expense of their opponents.

During these years, the military gained an increasing independence over its own affairs, freedom from civilian interference in military matters, and later from even having to explain military decisions or polity to parliament. After 1883, all personnel matters, which included officer selection, came under the jurisdiction of the Military Cabinet. This effectively removed matters of internal administration and policy which the command echelon did not want to become general knowledge from parliamentary discussion. Thereafter, the Prussian Minister of War, who was the only officer regularly appearing before parliament, simply brushed aside awkward questions concerning personnel and command policy stating that these were beyong his competence.[33] The military establishment increased during these years in both size and in influence in the state until it became Germany's most powerful institution.

Even as the officer corps and army grew, divisions in Germany society widened between the military and civilian sectors, between the lower middle class and workers on the one hand, and the merging nobility and upper middle class on the other. This occurred because upper bourgeois officers, themselves an elite of education and wealth, adopted the aristocratic concept of society rather than a middle-class view and

> . . . enthusiastically and even overzealously adopted the traditions of the nobility which dominated society. . . . They propagated the existing ideologies in the army of the Prussian nobility with the systematic thoroughness for which Germans are notorious.[34]

Intense efforts to maintain a maximum homogeneity of attitudes in the officer corps included a stringent exclusion of elements from the lower middle and working class considered to be dangerous to the social and political status quo. Following the trend which began in the pre-unification years, entry into the officer corps for the educated middle class was no longer difficult. With the adoption of the nobility's attitude toward society by the upper middle class, the military profession became attractive to many people of formerly moderate political views. They came over to the conservative camp and wholeheartedly supported the military establishment as well as the existing social and political order.

Throughout the Wilhelmine years, both the officer corps and the army underwent continuous change. In the last decades of the century, the recruiting base became more urban as many rural workers left the countryside for the new industrial centers and added to the rapidly swelling ranks of the proletariat. The industrial revolution transformed large segments of the agricultural work force--esteemed in conservative minds for its subservience--into an industrial work force whose subsequent demeanor was hostile and aggressive.[35] However, the aristocracy and officer corps still clung to their support of a static, feudal society which had no place for the industrial worker. In turn, the workers viewed the army as a tool of repression in the hands of an exploitative class and the majority of German society looked with fear and alarm at the growth of the socialist movement. Hostility between the workers and the military

became more pronounced after the legalization of the Social Democratic Party in 1890 and its growing success in the following years. Much of the ill-feeling of the army toward the SPD came in part from the anti-military rhetoric employed by the party, its pacifism, and its socialist program which called for a complete alteration of the present social system.

Throughout the pre-war years, the officer corps continued to view the worker as an alien in society, untrustworthy, and holding opinions dangerous to the state and status quo. The officer corps also continued to be estranged from the working class because most young workers seldom had the education required to enter its ranks.[36] Enrolling workers into the army became unavoidable later due to continuing military expansion, but the "officer corps was terrified by the spectre of a mass army consisting of Social Democrats who would disobey and turn their weapons against the existing state."[37] As a result of the unwillingness of the upper classes to concede a valid place in German society to the working class, the conservatives and military establishment gave their adversaries no hope of redressing their grievances toward the state as long as the Imperial system endured. The result was continuing criticism of the existing order by the workers and continuing efforts by the establishment to secure its position from the threat of the lower classes.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the influence of the army on German politics and society increased to the point where critical questions in the Reich's domestic and foreign affairs required at least a consideration of the wishes of the military. The Prussian officer corps, around which the whole system revolved, again became exclusive in social

composition and ideology and, according to a former German general, Prussia was a "State of military functionaries. . . ."[38] The military establishment grew so powerful and influential in Imperial Germany that it rivaled the power of the Kaiser who complained in 1914 that

> If people think that I am the Supreme Commander, they are grossly mistaken. The General Staff tells me nothing and never asks my advice. I drink tea, go for walks and saw wood which pleases my suite. The only one who is a bit kind to me is the Chief of the Railway Department [Gröner] who tells me all he does and intends to do.[39]

By the third year of the war, however, even the Kaiser had been eclipsed by the power of the military as the High Command under Hindenburg and Ludendorff became the head of the Imperial government.

Officer Selection in the Imperial Army

After the creation of the Empire, the addition of officers from the state contingents failed to solve the chronic personnel shortage of the officer corps. Many of the problems became more acute as the Prussians attempted to coordinate the activities of the five other officers corps which were under the control of the Kaiser and Prussian War Minister. Each had varying customs and traditions, separate officer selection criteria, and different degrees of particularist sentiments. At the end of the century, officer selection changed slightly in philosophy and to a significant degree in its social limits to the detriment of the social and cultural homogeneity of the pre-unification period. The attitude of many officers regarding the necessary qualifications to enter the corps changed perceptibly. General von Loë wrote that "neither title nor riches can give one the right to hope to become an officer, but an innate feeling for duty, education, and the aristocracy of character."[40] An Erlass of

William II on March 29, 1890, expounded further on this theme and stated that

> The rise in the people's level of education makes it possible to widen the social circles from which recruitment to the corps of officers can be considered. It is no longer nobility of birth alone that can claim the privilege of furnishing the Army with its officers: Nobility of character has at all times inspired the corps of officers and must be maintained without dimunition. But this will only be possible if officer-cadets are drawn from quarters in which the nobility of character is the unquestioned ideal. As I see it, the future of My Army lies in the hands not only of the offspring of the country's noble families and the sons of My worthy officers and civil servants, but also in the hands of the sons in whom respectable bourgeois families have planted and cultivated a love for their King and Country, a warm feeling toward the profession of arms and a sense of Christian morality.[41]

The controversy over whether or not to admit middle-class candidates into the officer corps was rather muted by this time as the expanding army required all the officers it could find. There existed no other source to meet the demands other than the educated middle class whose conservative-minded sons possessed "nobility of character." This segment of society was far from homogeneous as the upper strata contained wealthy bankers, merchants, and industrialists. Along with a number of persons from the professions, and a number of government civil servants, this group constituted the upper middle class or Grossbürgertum who stood closer to the nobility in philosophy regarding society, politics, and the military, than did the lower middle class (Kleinbürgertum). The interests of the aristocracy and the upper middle class coalesced in efforts to maintain the monarchy, to obtain economic protection for their estates and businesses, and to shield the established social order from the rising power of the working class. Therefore, in the words of Karl Born, the upper strata of the middle class provided acceptable candidates for commissions in the officer corps, and encouraged the nobility and

Grossbürgertum to merge into a single elite.[42] Even the reserve officer corps appealed to the middle class which saw in a reserve commission a substitute for ennoblement. The real significance of the wider social participation in the officer corps lay in the consequent penetration of military values into civilian life and particularly the militarization of the middle class. The strong bourgeois aspiration to enter the ranks of the social elite also resulted in an ignominious aping and exaggeration of the modes of thought, the manners, and even the vices of their aristocratic brothers in arms.

Despite the increased enlistments from the middle class, various branches of the services, notably the infantry, suffered from an acute shortage of officers. In 1902 no less than fifty-six Prussian infantry regiments failed to attract a single officer aspirant.[43] In spite of the desperate need for leadership personnel, the War Minister feared that too large an increase in the size of the army would lead to a democratization of the officer corps due to the necessity of admitting "'unreliable' bourgeois elements, thus weakening an institution whose self-appointed role was the preservation of a monarchical and conservative state."[44] Thus, on the eve of the First World War, the officer corps of the Imperial German Army did not possess sufficient officer personnel to withstand the losses of a protracted war and, at the same time, to retain its pre-war character. The bourgeois officers who entered the corps were never a threat to the social and political status quo in any way, yet the social composition and character of the corps changed during World War One when it became necessary to admit substantial numbers of hastily-trained secondary school graduates from the lower middle class. The criteria by

which these officers qualified for commissions bore little relation to the standards of the past because the situation simply precluded adherence to traditional principles. Losses suffered during the early months of the war seriously accentuated personal problems, particularly among pre-war commissioned officers in combat leadership positions.[45] An aristocratic nucleus, however, still held the key decision-making positions and determined policy on the basis of traditional concepts. By 1916, many of the pre-war commissioned officers received transfers from front-line combat duty to staff duties where a shortage of personnel also existed. Most of the replacements for these officers were young, war-commissioned men, not thoroughly imbued with traditional attitudes.[46] The corps thereater lacked its former close-knit character and the Imperial army fought most of the war with reserve and Landwehr officers. These were augmented by officers who knew only the front and developed there quite a different mentality from the professional soldier.[47]

Throughout the 1870-1914 period, officer selection criteria for the Imperial army--adopted virtually in toto from the Prussian army--changed little from that of the reform era of 1807-1819. The basic requirements still focused on education and performance, and would remain so throughout the Reichswehr years. Procedures of entry also remained constant, being through individual regiments as a Fähnriche or Fahnenjunker. Despite the ever-growing demand for officer personnel, the military hierarchy persisted in maintaining overt discrimination against various social and economic groups. Prior to the First World War, much of the lower class could not enter the corps due to prejudices against certain occupations. Jews were excluded on religious-racial grounds and

Social Democratic workers for political reasons. Even the bulk of middle-class candidates who earned commissions found that social inequality in the corps remained strong. The aristocratic members expected and still received deference.

The Social Composition of the Imperial Army

Prior to 1914, educational and social barriers prevented entry into the officer corps of persons outside the nobility or the middle class of an "aristocratic character."[48] While commoners served in certain branches of the service from as early as the eighteenth century, only the nobility of birth were considered suitable for the cavalry or guards infantry regiments. The hussars, artillery and engineers were exceptions, being deemed only "half soldiers by the old Prussians and therefore, also common men were admitted to their ranks."[49] The military establishment despised civilians as petty and made no distinctions between scholars, professional men, or less talented members of the middle class. The majority of professional soldiers vastly underestimated the potential and aspirations of the bourgeoisie in the military service and did not understand them.[50] For the middle class in Imperial Germany, the officer corps was the subject of envy and adoration. "To be a 'knight' was for the middle class German . . . the zenith of happiness."[51] Military rank and achievement tended to become obsessions with the bourgeoisie as a whole and the "absolute standards for judging a man."[52]

Many noble officers, however, preferred "stagnation in the size of the army to the acceptance of officers with 'inferior' family background."[53] The officer corps in practice excluded persons of humble occupation: the professions of a candidate and his father were a vital

concern and those whose duties required any personal contact with clients or customers could not become even reserve officers.[54] Likewise, political affiliation was important, as were the activities of relatives and friends. Persons with undesirable opinions, or connections--free thinkers, most liberals, and especially Social Democrats--found themselves disqualified under the guise of not possessing the proper moral qualifications.[55] Racial qualifications, according to some former officers, did not exist in the Imperial army, yet it was expected that each officer aspirant "had received the Protestant or Catholic baptism."[56] Both the regular and reserve officer corps excluded Jews by simply not electing them to regimental mess or refusing them entry into officer training programs.[57] If a Jewish candidate remained adamant about a career in the army, one of the easiest ways "to show 'character' and therefore stand a good chance of selection was to get baptised."[58]

In the contingent elements of the Imperial army, the noble character of the officers corps ended much earlier than in Prussia. In Saxony, which was closely associated with and under the control of Prussia, a bourgeois predominance evolved as follows:

THE SAXON OFFICER CORPS, 1808-1908

Year	Noble	Bourgeois
1808	863	347
1818	415	344
1888	450	576
1898	600	2,497
1908	572	3,284

Many officers in southern Germany were less dogmatic about social and exclusiveness than those from parts of Prussia. Differences between men in rural and urban districts were simply not as pronounced.[60] The local aristocracy preferred, in the cases of Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden, to study law and enter the state administration rather than to pursue a military career. As a result, the contingents from these Länder possessed a larger number of officers from lower social origins than did the Prussian corps.[61] Bavaria in particular had many officers from the middle class because the nobility showed little inclination for military service.[62] About one-half of the total number of officers in the Royal Bavarian Army were sons of officers and higher civil servants, followed by sons of professionals such as doctors, lawyers, clergymen, landowners, and factory owners.[63] Higher command positions, from the time of the Thirty Years War contained many noblemen, many being foreign-born from France and Italy.[64] The subaltern ranks, lieutenants, ensigns, and cornets, did not come from an exclusive military aristocracy as in Prussia, but in many cases were veteran non-commissioned officers, originally pikemen and halbardiers.[65] By the late 1860s, the social composition of the Bavarian officer corps was already predominantly middle class and did not change over the years of the existence of the Imperial army.[66]

THE BAVARIAN OFFICER CORPS, 1799-1893

Year	Noble	Bourgeois
1799	260	279
1811	902	1,341
1883	959	5,310
1893	1,122	7,390

In the neighboring state of Württemberg, the composition of the Royal Württemberg Army officer was similar to Bavaria with only a slight predominance of nobles after 1871, possibly due to its less autonomous position under the constitution and as a result of its military agreements with Prussia.[67]

The trend toward more middle-class commissions which began in the nineteenth century in the majority of German states continued in the immediate pre-World War One years. Although the rate of change in Prussia was slower than in the other armies during the Imperial period, by 1914 the bourgeoisis dominated there also. Even though the non-noble predominance in the army was established beyond a doubt, the control of the army remained in traditional hands. Further, the militarization of the middle class, particularly in Prussia, meant that the values and outlook held by professional officers did not change substantially with the altered social composition. The traditions of the Prussian army became those of the bulk of the Imperial army and as such survived into the Weimar era. Thus, a strong thread of continuity existed between the armies of the kings of Prussia through the Kaiser's army and ultimately to the Reichswehr where it significantly affected the attitude of the officer corps toward the state, the military profession, and the governmental system.

The Officer Corps and World War One: A General Overview

By 1914, the army and officer corps had become the most powerful institution in Germany. Scarcely any facet of domestic or foreign relations lay beyond the influence of the military establishment and a large part of the nation's resources were geared to support the army or

military-connected projects. From the turn of the century onward many officers privately believed that a general European war was inevitable. The result of this calculation was the Schlieffen plan developed from 1890 to 1905, the General Staff's preoccupation with a preventive war, and the notion that Germany had to fight for world power or be destroyed. Because the ideas of the military had become generally accepted by a majority of Germans, and had combined with a growing nationalistic spirit, society as a whole readily accepted the outbreak of war with little thought of the carnage or other results which could ensue. To the bulk of the nation, the army represented the elite of their society and the officer corps stood as a warrior caste, superior to other men, whose values and judgments were accepted without question.

The officer corps stood at the apex of its influence in German society during the pre-war years, but the war brought additional authority to its leaders exceeding even that of the Kaiser. William II, little by little, became "the prisoner of his paladins. . ." and in August, 1916, conceded governing power to the military represented by Hindenburg and Ludendorff.[68] However, the policies of these military leaders led to unrestricted submarine warfare, provoked America's entry into the war, made far-reaching claims on France and Belgium, precluded a peace settlement with Tsarist Russia, and forced the Bolsheviks to accept the annexationist treaty of Brest-Litovsk. The military's actions did not improve Germany's chances for victory, but increased both the sacrifices required to support the war effort and the resolution of the Allies to deal harshly with Germany at the end of hostilities.

The officer corps entered the war supremely confident that the conflict would be short and victorious, a fitting tribute to a military machine which had not lost a war since 1806. Yet, when it became obvious Germany could not win the war, the military leadership sought a way out for themselves. In September, 1918, the Supreme Command informed the government that the army was "no longer in a position to conclude the war in a positive sense by a feat of arms."[69] Germany tottered on the brink of total destruction, and for the military the spectre of defeat brought desperation, particularly when confronted with the Allied refusal to negotiate with the Imperial regime. The Allies' policy actually saved the officer corps' public image and self-esteem by preventing the participation of the military establishment in the signing of the armistice or the acknowledgment of defeat. This fell to the civilians who played little part in bringing about the debacle, but bore the brunt of the blame after the war. As General Gröner later wrote, the High Command "deliberately adopted the position of refusing responsibility for the armistice and all later steps. In a strict legal sense, it did so without justification, but to me and my associates, it was vital to keep the armor shining and the General Staff free of burdens for the future. . ."[70]

All of Germany was stunned by an armistice request after four years of news about nothing but victories, and thus "the truth and reality of German military defeat was a bitter pill to swallow for a people that had been educated to look upon the soldier as the highest ideal in society."[71] Their hopes of glory dashed, the officer corps felt its very existence threatened by the possibility of the creation of a government whose ideas were diametrically opposed to the traditions and ethos of the

corps. The officer corps desperately cast about for some way to secure their position in the midst of the chaos and disillusionment of November, 1918. Little did they expect that their old opponents, the Social Democrats, would contribute materially to survival of the corps virtually intact in tradition and spirit.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER II

[1]Ernst Huber, Deutsche Verfassungsgeschichte, seit 1789, Band III, "Bismarch und das Reich" (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1963), p. 401, hereafter cited Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte.

[2]Ibid., p. 562.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 581.

[5]Ibid., p. 583.

[6]Ibid., p. 563.

[7]Ibid., p. 986.

[8]Ibid., p. 993.

[9]Ibid., pp. 796-797, from the Bundes Reichsverfassung, Article 2.

[10]Grover Platt, The Place of the Army in German Life, doctoral dissertation, State University of Iowa, 1941, p. 48, hereafter cited Platt, Army in German Life.

[11]Rudolf Morsey, Die Obereste Reichsverwaltung unter Bismarck, 1876-1890, Band III (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1957), pp. 230-232 and p. 237, hereafter cited Morsey, Reichsverwaltung.

[12]Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, p. 818.

[13]Ernst Huber, Dokumente zur deutschen Verfassungsgeschichte, Band II, "1851-1918" (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1964), p. 238, hereafter cited Huber, Dokumente. See also Morsey, Reichsverwaltung, p. 226.

[14]Huber, Dokumente, p. 238.

[15]Morsey, Reichsverwaltung, pp. 227-228.

[16]Huber, Dokumente, p. 264.

[17]Ibid., pp. 352-346. The author states here in his commentary that in this case, the Wehrgesetz of November 9, 1867, became the Reichsgesetz in 1871, augmented by military conventions with the individual south German states.

[18]Ibid., p. 995 contends that the Kaiser's command authority as well as the unity of military law, penal codes, jurisdiction, training, and service liabilities created a unified army. However, he fails to consider the attitudes of the contingents toward the system which so favored Prussia and above all the circumstances of the creation of the Empire which meant that Prussia, in fact, imposed its conditions upon the other states as a victor in war, not as an equal bargaining or negotiating such an arrangement.

[19]Huber, Dokumente, p. 997.

[20]Ibid., p. 994.

[21]Ibid., p. 995.

[22]Jacques Benoist-Mèchin, Histoire de l'Armee Allemande, I, de la Reichswehr a l'Armee Nationale (1918-1919) (Paris XIVe: Editions Albin Michel, 1936), pp. 195-196, hereafter cited Benoist-Mèchin, Histoirie I.

[23]Ibid., p. 195; and Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, p. 908, where the Prussian contingent composed of troops from twenty-three states and a number of free cities are listed.

[24]Huber, Dokumente, pp. 261-264.

[25]Ibid., pp. 261-264.

[26]Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, p. 999.

[27]Huber, Dokumente, p. 264ff.

[28]Ibid., p. 264.

[29]Huber, Verfassungsgeschichte, p. 995.

[30]Ibid., pp. 994-995.

[31]Otto Pflanze, Bismarck and the Development of Germany (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 409.

[32]Vagts, Militarism, p. 12.

[33]Craig, War, p. 125.

[34]Endres, "Social," p. 10. See also Ralf Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany (Garden City, New York: Anchor Books, 1965), p. 211 from Wolfgang Zapf, Wandlungen der deutscher Elite, 1919-1961 (Munich: publisher unknown, 1965), p. 43; Sheehan, "Conflict," p. 79 from Robert Michels, "Zum Problem der Zeitlichen Widerstandfähigkeit des Adels," Probleme der Sozialphilosophie (Leipzig: publisher unknown, 1914), p. 151; and Karl Born, "Structural Changes in German Social and Economic Development at the End of the Nineteenth Century," in Sheehan, ed., Imperial Germany, p. 25 who writes that "This upper Bürgertum was gradually "feudalized" at the end of the nineteenth century. In its attempt to climb to the top of the social pyramid, the upper Bürgertum searched for a way of life that would confirm its membership in the elite, and thought that this was to be found in the tradition-rich life-style of the nobility. . . . A further indication of this feudalization is to be seen in the fact that more and more sons of factory owners and merchants chose an army officer's career. . . . The feudalization of the Grossbürgertum did not come merely from social ambition but also from a shared political interest," hereafter cited Born, "Structural Changes."

[35]Walter Struve, Elites Against Democracy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 63, hereafter cited Struve, Elites.

[36]Ulrich Czisnik, Gustav Noske: Ein Sozialdemokratischer Staatsmann (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1969), p. 81.

[37]V. R. Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War in 1914 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), p. 16, hereafter cited Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War.

[38]Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 10.

[39]Michael Balfour, The Kaiser and His Times (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1972), p. 357, hereafter cited Balfour, Kaiser. See also Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 18 where the author agrees that the Kaiser had no real influence in military matters.

[40]Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 50.

[41]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 25. Slightly different versions of this same Erlass are found in Craig, Politics, p. 235 and Struve, Elites, p. 64.

[42]Born, "Structural Changes," p. 26.

[43]Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War, p. 8.

[44]Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 36.

[45]Friedrich Rau, Personalpolitik und Organisation in der vorläfigan Reichswehr., Die Verhältnisse im Bereich des Gruppenkommandos 4 bis zur Bildung des Übergangsheeres (200 000 Mann-Heer). Inaugural Dissertation, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, München, 1970, p. 122, hereafter cited Rau, Übergangsheeres.

[46]Generalleutnant a.D. Schwatlo-Gesterding, "Das Reichswehr," in Franz von Gaertner, ed., Die Reichswehr in der Weimarer Republik (Darmstadt: Fundus Verlag, 1969), pp. 105-106, hereafter cited Schwatlo-Gesterding, "Reichswehr."

[47]Ibid., p. 106.

[48]Ibid., p. 107; and Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 47.

[49]Platt, Army in German Life, pp. 73-76.

[50]See Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 5.

[51]Endress, "Social," p. 45a. See also Kehr, Primat, p. 61. Kehr states here that academics were considered second class soldiers and could only attain reserve non-commissioned officer status.

[52]Endress, "Social," p. 8.

[53]Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 119.

[54]Berghahn, Germany and the Approach of War, pp. 7-8.

[55]Endres, "Social," pp. 18-20. See also Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 5 where he recalled from his own experience that only documents relating to the father and mother were required and not on the grandparents as before.

[56]Kehr, Primat, p. 62; and Kitchen, Officer Corps, p. 40.

[57]Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 11.

[58]Kitchen, Officer Corps, pp. 41-42.

[59]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 34.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Endres, "Social," pp. 16-17; and Blummentritt, "Sociology," p. 5 where the author wrote that south Germans were considered more liberal and democratic than Prussians and the social circles their officers represented much broader.

[62]Rosinski, German Army, p. 15.

[63]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 34.

[64]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 103.

[65]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 34.

[66]Ibid., p. 40.

[67]Ibid., p. 44.

[68]Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 12. SEe also Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 318 who described Ludendorff as the real ruler, especially in domestic affairs during the latter war years.

[69]Hans Fried, The Guilt of the Germany Army (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943), p. 35, hereafter cited Fried, Guilt.

[70]Wilhelm Gröner, Lebenserinnerungen (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1957), p. 466. See also Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 6.

[71]Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 345.

CHAPTER III

THE NOVEMBER REVOLUTION

In the autumn of 1918 changes in the Imperial German government converted the nation into a temporary constitutional monarchy for the purpose of securing more favorable terms in the forthcoming peace settlement. General Wilhelm Gröner replaced General Ludendorff as First Quartermaster General, while Prince Max of Baden became the new Chancellor. The Reichstag also lessened the prerogatives of the Kaiser considerably in military affairs and made the War Minister responsible to the civilian government. This meant that the minister now reported to the Reichstag on such matters as officer selection which the military establishment heretofore controlled.[1]

The new civilian government faced monumental problems. A restoration of domestic peace and order became the first priority for the government, followed by the establishment and maintenance of civilian control over the military. In both spheres, the socialist-led government had initial success because the leaders of the army cooperated. The command hierarchy did so to prevent radical revolution in which the army might be substantially altered as an institution, and because the officer corps itself suffered from internal divisions regarding the command structure of the peacetime army. The size and composition of the future

army and officer corps also remained in doubt, and questions regarding both produced contention within the corps during the immediate post-war years.

With the end of the war came a period of uncertainty for the military and civilian leaders of Germany. Each group expected changes, but the form the army and government would ultimately assume and the persons who would determine the choice of alternatives were not clear at the time. Many officers feared for the continued existence of the corps in the new state and lamented the fact that the destiny of the military establishment was in the hands of a republican, civilian regime. The officer corps did survive, but not without serious disputes regarding political control over the army, both between the military commanders and the civilian government, and among factions within the military itself. Much of the concern of the army leadership stemmed from the mutual hostility between the Social Democratic Party and the military, and from the fact that the SPD-led government now appeared to have the power to make whatever changes it desired. The outlook for the continuation of the military in its traditional form seemed doubtful indeed.

In spite of the foreboding atmosphere for the army during the immediate post-war months, no substantive changes resulted from proposals for reconstructing the military establishment. There existed no consensus particularly among the socialist parties, on military policies. The army, consequently, remained basically intact in structure and retained a large degree of control over its own affairs.

Much of the conflict which plagued the government at the end of 1918 stemmed from the chaos accompanying the collapse of the old regime.

In this period, the violence-prone radical socialists and Spartacists sought to initiate a complete overturning of the German political system. Worker's and Soldier's Councils, many in existence since early November, multiplied rapidly and challenged government authority. By the time of the abdication of the Kaiser on November 9, 1918, a smooth transition to a new regime was impossible. It was, in fact, the army which brought an end to the Empire by withdrawing its support of William II. Nevertheless, the armistice, the military defeat, and the creation of the Weimar Republic merged in the minds of the majority of the officer corps as acts of treachery by civilian politicians.

In Munich, the Independent Socialist Kurt Eisner declared the creation of the Bavarian Democratic and Social Republic on November 8, 1918. Eisner did not attempt to socialize Bavaria, but awaited support in the Bavarian Diet which did not materialize. Rule by the Independent Socialist faction (USPD) ended with Eisner's murder on February 21, 1919, but the success of the "Reds" there appeared to threaten the entire nation. Much of Germany seemed to be in chaos at the instigation of the radical left which earned all socialist parties the undeserved reputation among rightists as revolutionaries destroying the nation on orders from Moscow. For the Majority Socialists, this was far from the case, but the identification of the party with attempts to destroy the Fatherland tarnished the SPD image. Further, the chaotic situation led many Germans to view the army and officer corps as the only force able to restore order and protect the nation from dissolution.

The proclamation of a Bavarian Republic and the readiness of the Spartacists to form a radical socialist republic forced the Majority

Socialists to proclaim a German Republic prematurely. Most Social Democratic Party leaders wanted to place the question of the form of government for Germany before a constituent assembly, but the chaotic situation and the threat of the Spartacists to form a government of their own caused the SPD to seek an alliance with the Independents before matters got out of hand. On November 9, 1918, Friedrich Ebert organized a new cabinet of socialists, the Council of People's Representatives, with three Majority Socialists and three Independents. This government later received the approval of the National Congress of Worker's and Soldier's Councils, which was elected in December 1918, but it was at best an uneasy coalitiion. Majority Socialists supported the remaining structures of the old regime and desired a legitimate succession through a National Assembly and new constitution. The Independents, however, wanted to govern through the Worker's and Soldier's Councils. Cooperation between the two factions lasted briefly under the co-chairmanship of Ebert and Haase, but serious disagreements, in particular over the government's relations with the old Imperial army, soon ended the partnership and produced lingering animosities in each camp. After the split with the Independents, the SPD joined with the German Democratic Party and the Catholic Center Party to form the Weimar Coalition. The national government thereafter adopted a moderate political course and no single party ever possessed the power to govern unilaterally until the National Socialist period.

Political Parties and Military Affairs in the Weimar Republic

In terms of influence on military affairs, none of the political parties in Imperial Germany ever had a strong position because the Reich

did not possess a true parliamentary system which would permit civilians to impose their will on the military-bureaucratic establishment. Further, most Germans regarded military affairs as the concern of experts--the General Staff and Military Cabinet. Thus, the officer corps experienced little difficulty in retaining its traditional position with the acquiescence of the great majority of Germans until the collapse of the Empire in 1918.

The events of November 1918 brought the Social Democrats to power in Germany before the party could develop a program for dealing with the military establishment. For the SPD in the Empire, the army was an internal enemy (inneren Feindes) which should be eliminated in favor of a militia system.[2] References to this notion appeared regularly in the party's programs; for example, at Gotha in 1875, point three called for the creation of a Volkswehr to replace the standing army and it appeared again in the Erfurt Program of 1891.[3] At the same time, however, in the Lassallean tradition the SPD wished to preserve the structure of the state for its own use rather than to destroy and rebuild it. The expanding power of the party seemed to indicate this might be possible in the early decades of the twentieth century.[4] In these years the SPD sought also to demonstrate by its patriotism and willingness to defend the Fatherland if attacked that it had a place in German society. The results of this effort were clearly illustrated by its vote to support war on August 4, 1914.[5]

The years of waiting and planning were of little practical value for the situation in which the SPD leadership found itself in November 1918. Many of the problems which emerged after the fall of the monarchy

were not foreseen. Heretofore, socialist politicans assumed that the creation of a republic would bring recognition of their authority from the military in the manner of any other governmental change--for example, a change of ministries or the appointment of a new chancellor. The party expected continuing political divisions, but not the violence which occurred. The German historian, Friedrich Meinecke wrote in November, 1918, that "The Republic is the form of government which divides us least," but the trend in the Weimar Republic was one of lasting and deepening divisions.[6] With the exception of a few years, crisis was the rule from 1918 to the end of 1923, and the nation witnessed the passing of ten governments. Under these conditions, it proved impossible to achieve the stability necessary to implement changes in the relations between the military and civilian spheres of society.

Since the Republic was constantly assailed from within and outside its borders, the parties supporting a parliamentary form of government were diverted from reconstructing the military establishment to a frantic search for peace and order. Weimar political parties also suffered from their own timidity, a legacy of the old regime, which encouraged the growth of parties and political mentalities more attuned to opposition than governing.[7] The lack of experience in the daily management of governmental affairs further limited the effectiveness of many republican parties and politicians.

The democratic forces in Germany were without a clear conception of how to organize civil-military political relations.[8] They believed that the military had a place in society, but what required alteration was the inequality of opportunity for entry into the army and officer

corps. Thus the complete destruction of the military establishment and the officer corps was not considered feasible during the Weimar years. Instead most democratic parties preferred an opening of the ranks of both to all German citizens and the democratization of the military's value system.

In assessing the military attitude of the Social Democrats, the Austrian socialist, Julius Deutsch, once wrote that "Nothing seems plainer than the position of the Social Democratic Party toward militarism."[9] The delusion that the party had a concrete military policy survived in the rhetorical demand for the destruction of the standing army and its replacement by a militia system, when in fact the party no longer regarded this as possible.[10] The SPD's attitude toward the military, therefore, was contradictory between word and action, and contrary to the party's historical opposition to the standing army.

Notwithstanding the cooperation between the Majority Socialists and the officer corps during the early Weimar period, the bulk of the army still considered the Social Democratic Party an anathema and "another Jewish Plot" because of the party's espoused doctrines of Marxism, internationalism, pacifism, and atheism.[11] The army felt that since the members of the Council of People's Representatives and lawmakers were pacifists and the sworn enemies of militarism, the leaders of the Republic "would have with joy destroyed the army and replaced it with a militia or 'Red People's Army.'"[12] The Majority Socialists did not wish to do so, as the High Command of the army well realized, but it proved to be a very effective means with which to arouse anti-government sympathies in the officer corps. The loyalty of the army in a crisis remained in doubt and

this effectively intimidated the civil authorities into softening their stand on military affairs. Many SPD leaders recognized the tenuous position of the government early in the contest. Philipp Scheidemann's comment to the National Assembly on October 7, 1919, referred not only to the military, but to the political right in general. "The enemy," Scheidemann stated, "stands [on the] right."[13]

The SPD in the beginning sought to preserve the throne and monarchy in favor of a legislated socialism and did its utmost to prevent revolutionary violence.[14] The moderate Majority Socialists feared a "second revolution" on the Bolshevik example[15] and Friedrich Ebert resolved from the outset not to become the "Kerensky of the German Revolution."[16] The leaders of the Majority Socialists considered the government of November 1918 to be transitional until the election of a national assembly to determine the nation's future. They argued that the mandate of November 9, 1918, was "for peace and democracy, not proletarian dictatorship."[17]

The Majority Socialist position on the revolution caused the radicals of the Independent Socialist Party (USPD) and the Spartacists to accuse the SPD leadership of betraying the revolution and to prepare for an armed insurrection. These groups opposed the military establishment in its entirely, particularly the officer corps, and wanted to follow the example of the Russians and create a class army of the proletariat.[18] The future Freikorps commander, Colonel Wilhelm Reinhard, reported a conversation with the USPD representative Baake who told him on December 16, 1918, "The Prussian officer corps belongs on Golgotha, then things will be better!"[19] The official party program of the USPD, drawn up in March

1919, reflected this attitude and called for:

1. The complete destruction of the old army
2. The destruction of the Freikorps
3. The disarming of the middle class
4. The creation of a Volkswehr (a working class militia)
5. The election of officers by the troops of that army[20]

The more radical Sparticist faction went even further. They demanded a complete restructuring of German society and especially the army. Their program of 1918, devised primarily by Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, called for the disarming of the police, military officers, and non-proletarian soldiers whom they classified as representatives of the nobility in the class struggle. The Spartacists supported the creation of a worker's militia and an elite force of Red Guards to provide a new military system and prevent counter-revolution. Further, they sought to revoke the command authority of Imperial officers, permit the troops to elect their own officers, and end servile obedience on the part of the German soldier.[21] The official party newspaper, Die Rote Fahne (The Red Flag) accused Ebert, Schiedemann, and Hoske as early as February 5, 1919, of being enemies and "wanting to put their feet on the proletariat's neck."[22]

Within the moderate parties, confusion reigned supreme. The Berman Democratic Party (DDP), an outgrowth of the older Progressive Party in the nineteenth century, followed a traditional liberal stand and favored a republic and parliamentary, constitutional government. Their party program of 1919 called for the adoption of a militia system to replace the standing army, but they questioned the possibility of creating new armed forces considering the present political situation. The DDP was suspicious of both the Left and the Right which reduced the effectiveness of the party in the Reichstag.[23]

The German People's Party (DVP), which formed in December 1918 from part of the old National Liberal Party, was committed to parliamentary government though it was not yet a strong supporter of the new regime. Through the Kölnische Zeitung, the DVP accused the SPD of repeating errors from the past in cooperating and making concessions to the military to secure their own position.[24] The DVP supported the efforts of Gustav Noske to restore order in Germany and although it favored army reform, the party believed, however, that this could not be accomplished overnight and as a result accepted much of the old army as the only solution until the crisis years passed.[25]

During the Weimar period, the Catholic Center Party (Zentrum) had the support of a majority of Catholics from all over Germany and a close connection with the particularist Bavarian People's Party (BVP).[26] Officially, the party supported the government in the name of freedom, but always remained flexible. The Zentrum concluded alliances to the right or left to secure religious freedom for its members.[27] This earned the party the reputation of being opportunistic and caused it to be labelled the "Chameleon" of Weimar politics.[28] The non-divisive nature of the Center Party's major ideals, in fact, held its voters together as a cohesive group and the Zentrum consequently returned a large number of deputies to the Reichstag with regularity. Through the party newspaper, Germania, the Zentrum identified with democracy, Christianity, and proposed that a militia be created to ensure that the army did not become an instrument of religious oppression. They further demanded that party literature be permitted in army barracks, especially in Bavaria, which conflicted with the orders of the Reichswehr leadership who forbade such during most of the period.[29]

On the right of the political spectrum was the German National People's Party (DNVP), whose roots lay in the old German Conservative Party and the Prussian Conservative Party.[30] The Weimar party was a conglomeration of groups from the right who officially joined together to form the DNVP on November 24, 1918.[31] Geographically, their strength came from the agrarian East Elbian provinces--East Prussia, Pommerania and Brandenburg--and the Evangelical parts of West Prussia and Silesia.[32] Socially they were the great landowners, civil servants, farmers, academics, jurists, financiers, clergy, conservative middle-class workers and employers.[33] The party as a whole was monarchist and oriented toward a restoration of some kind. Its counterpart in the south was the Bavarian Middle Party (BMP) and after the war both contained large numbers of discharged officers and soldiers whose complaints found an outlet through conservative politicians.[34] The DNVP favored retention of the old military system and close connections between conservatism, the Evangelical church and old Prussia, all of whom supported the officer corps. These factors made the DNVP an opponent of any change in the military establishment. During the Weimar period, the party favored conscription and the continuation of the traditional Prussian military framework.[35] The DNVP was militantly anti-democratic and anti-republican as evidenced by the comments in a Party Day Speech in May 1919 where the new governmental system was referred to as the "God accursed and damned Republic" (gottesverfluchten und Verdammten Republik).[36] Even as late as February 1921, the party newspaper, Kreuzzeitung, wrote in terms of the old expression "Forward with God and King and Fatherland."[37]

From the USPD to the DNVP, therefore, the relationship between the political parties and the army during the Weimar Republic varied from cooperation to open hostility. However, only the DNVP and Zentrum, according to the military, served any useful function because they supported conservatism and the traditional values of the past. The army regarded the parties on the left with open hostility even though its leaders often worked with the Majority Socialists to defeat more radical revolutionaries. Politics and politicians still had no place in the family of the elite of the nation and the professional military officer believed, as had his nineteenth century counterpart, that parliament's concern with military affairs, was "a presumptuous interference with his own particular province--with his own private affairs, as it were."[38] In reality, the parties could do little toward reforming the army in the early years because no single group held a majority in the parliament which would allow it to carry out such a program unilaterally. Until 1920, all parties felt a need for the military's protection against the radical left although there was considerable interest in a militia system in Germany. However, after the June 1920 election in which the Majority Socialists lost heavily, a coalition government emerged with the parties still too fragmented and too distrustful of each other to cooperate effectively on military reform. By that time, given the general political conditions, particularly the government's relations with the new military hierarchy, significant reform was virtually out of the question. The real question for the officer corps, that of continuity or change under the new governmental system, had been answered almost at the birth of the Republic by the Gröner-Ebert Pact of November 10, 1918. This agreement guaranteed the survival of a large part of the

Imperial officer corps, but the degree of independent power the military hierarchy might retain was yet to be determined.

The Gröner-Ebert Pact

The gravity of the domestic situation in November 1918 paved the way for an accord between the Majority Socialists and the officer corps. Friedrich Ebert hoped to get the assistance of the Imperial High Command in restoring order to the domestic scene in Germany. On November 10, 1918, Ebert concluded an agreement with General Gröner, representing the High Command, because the Chancellor felt he had no choice but to enlist the help of the officer corps to secure the National Assembly.[39] The High Command decided to cooperate with the government in the fight against radicalism and on the evening of November 10, Gröner telephoned the Reich Chancellory to advise Ebert that the army would stand by the government. In return, the High Command and officer corps expected the support of the government in dealing with the extreme left. Ebert accepted Gröner's offer of an alliance. In view of the strained relations between the Majority Socialists, Independent Socialists, and Spartacists, he hoped to gain the upper hand for the government in the event of a civil war. Gröner later wrote that the pact allowed the officer corps, as bearers of the German military tradition, "to find its feet in the new situation. The moral and spiritual power which had collected in the Prussian-German officer corps over the centuries had to be preserved, in this instance, for the army of the future."[40] The collapse of Kaiserdom, he continued, deprived the officers of the basis of their existence, their loyalties, and their sense of direction. They had to be given an objective for which to strive in order to restore their self-confidence.

The motive for the High Command's concluding the accord was to gain a share of power in the new state for the officer corps and the army. If the plan succeeded, Gröner believed, "then we would have rescued into the new Germany the best and strongest element of old Prussia, despite the revolution."[41] Initially, concessions were necessary because developments in the army and in the German domestic scene made the command authority of the army tenuous. The real task of the High Command, according to Gröner, was to contain the revolutionary movement and render it harmless to the military establishment.

On December 8, 1918, Chancellor Ebert received a statement from Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg on the army's view of the domestic situation. It outlined the demands of the High Command and began

> If I address myself to you as follows, I am doing so because I have been told that you are a loyal German and love your Fatherland more than anything else. . . . In this sense I have allied myself with you to save the nation from threatening disaster.[42]

The letter stated that if the army was to remain a usable instrument of power in the hands of the government, the authority of its officers would have to be restored and politics eliminated from its ranks. This necessitated a decree from the government which clearly stipulated that the right to issue military orders rested solely with the commanding authorities (Kommandobehörden) and that for the maintenance of discipline the duty to salute was of decisive importance. Hindenburg further demanded that the Soldier's Councils be completely eliminated and replaced by councils of trusted men (Vertrauensräte) to perform liaison duties between commanding officers and other ranks in order to make known any wishes or complaints of the troops. Hindenburg also made a number of political demands including the convening of a national assembly at the earliest possible date and

On December 12, Chancellor Ebert and Deputy Haase, the co-chairmen of the Council of People's Representatives, signed the "Law for the Creation of a Volunteer Volkswehr" to raise troops for the defense of the Republic.[49] The law, which resulted from one of the few instances of cooperation between Independent and Majority Socialist factions, attempted to implement a long-time dream of the socialists, a popular militia. The creation of such a force was a basic part of the anti-military ideology of the German socialists and appeared in all their party platforms as a replacement for the standing army. The law read as follows:

1. For the maintenance of public order and security a volunteer People's Militia is created.

2. The authority of these detachments is derived from the Council of People's Representatives.

3. The Volkswehr is under the command of the Council of People's Representatives.

4. Only volunteers will be enlisted.

5. The members will select their own officers and non-commissioned officers.

6. Each volunteer will be obedient to the elected officers.

7. Volunteers must be at least 24 years of age, in good physical health and have long, irreproachable front-line service.

8. Each has a probation time of twenty-one days; if qualified, the volunteer can serve six months.[50]

Execution of the law fell to the Prussian War Minister General Scheüch, who published it the next day as a War Ministry directive countersigned by the Undersecretary of the Army Göhre.[51] It proved difficult, however, to find republican officers for the Volkswehr. By February 1919, only some 600 men had enlisted while other volunteer formations such as the Freikorps, privately recruited by former monarchist officers, flourished.[52]

Noske tried unsuccessfully to recruit reliable workers to serve in the Volkswehr. Not only were the workers themselves uninterested, but their leaders overtly opposed the plan and the SPD newspaper Vorwärts refused to publish recruiting advertisements. The Majority Socialist press throughout Germany also adopted this position, undermining the program at its inception.[53] Surprisingly enough, even with this handicap, republican troops did exist, although not as part of the Volkswehr. At the beginning of 1919, the government recruited two regiments, called Liebe and Reichstag in Berlin. The Eiserne Brigade (Iron Brigade) of 1,200 men fought under Noske's command at Kiel, and in Württemberg, Landwehr Lieutenant Paul Hahn formed a number of security companies to protect the state from disorder.[54] These proved to be exceptions to the lack of interest among workers or liberal-minded soldiers in republican armed forces.

Recruitment for the Volkswehr continued to languish during the next months. On July 17, 1919, Defense Minister Noske in desperation issued an edict creating a new government sponsored association designed to select non-political officers for the army according to strict military qualifications. The edict also stated that while in the past a Social Democrat could not become an NCO or occupy any leadership position without renouncing republican ideals, now this would no longer be the case.[55] The purpose of the Republikanischer Führerbund was to embue the armed forces, and the officer corps in particular, with a republican spirit. In this manner, Noske hoped eventually to democratize the army and the military establishment in general.[56] However, his plan to create a Republican Officer's League also failed. Noske admitted that the League was no help

in securing officer appointments because among those candidates of republican sympathies few were really able officers according to the performance standards of the Defense Ministry, civilian government, or the military itself.[57] The former Undersecretary for the Army, Albert Grzesinski, wrote of the failure to create a republican army that two major obstacles prevented the realization of plans to democratize the military: the revolutionary provisional government and the mentality of the working class. Neither the leaders of the revolution nor the rank and file of organized labor were able to conceive of an army radically different in spirit and organization from that of the Imperial army. This criticism Grzesinski also applied to Defense Minister Noske although the minister tried without success to initiate the drafting of young socialist workers into the Reichswehr. According to Grzesinski,

> Organized labor resolutely refused to lend its support in the reconstruction of the army. The workers were weary of playing soldiers. . . . Very few realized the importance of the Reichswehr in the new state, and that it was their duty to assist in laying the foundations of a people's state. The workers neglected this parliamentary duty. As a result, the life of the young republic was foredoomed at its inception.[58]

Grzesinski believed also that Gustav Noske, as Defense Minister, bore a part of the responsibility for the failure to secure republican forces. Noske's culpability, the former Undersecretary wrote, was in "his unwillingness to adopt an organizational pattern basically different from that of the past [which] proved to be of far-reaching consequences and finally the undoing of the democratic regime."[59]

One of the primary reasons for the lack of concrete programs to reorganize the army in the early Republic was the existence of Worker's and Soldier's Councils which challenged the authority of Imperial officers

and sought a reconstruction of the army on their own terms. Radical members of the lower ranks formed Soldier's Councils in the east as early as 1917 and in the west, many councils appeared in rear command areas during the withdrawal from occupied territory. With the urging of far-left propaganda, the Soldier's Councils took command of some formations, elected their own officers, and issued orders to the troops. Their presence threatened the command authority of the regular officers to the extent that the military hierarchy considered the councils a serious challenge to the survival of the army.

Due to the interference of the Soldier's Councils, control of returning units from the front proved more difficult than either the government or High Command anticipated. The majority of soldiers simply wanted to go home and have nothing further to do with the army.[60] General Gröner reported to the government on December 14, 1918, that the situation had become serious enough that

> the influence of local Worker's and Soldier's Councils induces whole units to enforce their departure out of turn. All authority of the officers and non-commissioned officers is being undermined by the propaganda of the Independents and Spartacists. The High Command is powerless as the government does not counteract this. If the authority of the state is not established, the army must disintegrate.[61]

The Worker's and Soldier's Councils ultimately controlled enough areas to convene a general congress in Berlin from December 16 to 21, 1918. This Congress, as well as the numerous councils which already existed across Germany, was a source of great concern to both the Majority Socialists and the High Command. The Majority Socialists distrusted the councils and feared that they might get out of hand following the Russian example.[62] At the Congress, the common front of the Majority Socialists and the

Independent Socialists collapsed. The Majority Socialists dominated the Congress and decisively defeated the proposal to implement a council form of government for the nation. Most of the members of the Congress supported a national constituent assembly instead, and the date for its election was set for January 19, 1919. With this defeat, the radicals walked out.[63] The Congress then went further by passing a resolution delegating power to the existing government ministers until the national assembly met. In the interim, a central council, the Zentralrat, would carry out the work of the councils and act as the supreme executive and policy-making body in Germany.[64] From this point forward, council government on the Soviet style was a dead issue because the Majority Socialists controlled the government apparatus and soon had the support of the army to maintain themselves in power.[65]

For the military, the most important act of the Congress was the passage of a list of demands known as the "Hamburg Points." Inspired by the socialist deputy from Hamburg, Walter Lampl, they sought far-reaching changes in the military which, if implemented, would have destroyed the old, traditional system. They read as follows:

1. The power of command over the army and navy rests with the government under the control of the Executive Council (Zentralrat). In the garrisons the power of military command is exercied by the local Worker's and Soldier's Councils in constant cooperation with with [those exercising] the highest power of command. . . .

2. As a symbol of the destruction of militarism and the abolition of servile discipline it is decreed that all badges of rank be removed and no weapons carried off duty.

3. The Soldier's Councils are responsible for the reliability of the units and the maintenance of discipline. . . .

4. The removal of former epaulettes, N.C.O. stripes, etc., cockades, shoulder straps, and bayonets falls exclusively within the competence of the Soldier's Councils and not of individuals. . . .

The Congress demands the abolition of all decorations and insignia of honor of the nobility.

5. The soldiers elect their own leaders. Former officers, who enjoy the confidence of the majority of their unit, can be re-elected.

6. Officers of the military administration and officials with the rank of officer may remain in their positions, in the interest of demobilization, if they declare they will not undertake anything against the Revolution.

7. The abolition of the standing army and the formation of a People's Militia (Volkswehr) are to be speeded up.[66]

The command hierarchy of the army viewed not only the Hamburg Points with alarm, but also the fact that the Majority Socialists, with whom they had made a pact of cooperation, participated in the Congress and did not repudiate the radical's demands.

Predictably, the military High Command and officer corps reacted negatively to the Hamburg Points. The whole affair, in the eyes of the corps, resembled Order Number One which began the dissolution of the Russian army in 1917 by transferring officer's authority to councils.[67] General von Seeckt sent an official protest to the government on December 19, 1918, from the High Command stating that the officer corps would not remain loyal if the demands were accepted.[68] Hindenburg also issued a complaint, reminding the government of their pact by stating "Now as before, the Army supports the Government and expects it to carry out its promise to preserve the army."[69] With the support of the army at stake, the Majority Socialists had no intention of implementing a program which would have exposed them to the threat of the radicals in the council movement. They wanted to end the interference of the councils, but had to proceed carefully. Although the Hamburg Points were never disclaimed by the SPD, they received no real consideration. The Majority Socialists

had no other plans to secure the manpower needed for the defense of the Republic. The first challenge by the radicals to their control materialized soon after the defeat at the December Congress.

The Independents and Spartacists, already embittered by the moderation of the revolution, took to the streets to win by force what they had not accomplished by political means.[70] Continued disagreement with the Majority Socialists over the nature of the revolution resulted on December 28, 1918, in the resignation of Independent Socialists from positions within the revolutionary government. This left the field open to the Majority Socialists who formed a second Council of People's Representatives composed entirely of its own faction and publicly indicated their willingness to protect themselves from extremists by any means necessary.[71] The means in this case were the remnants of the Imperial army under the direction of the old officer corps with whom Ebert had concluded an alliance on November 10, 1918.

The episode of radical control in Bavaria combined with continuing disorder throughout the nation made it seem that the alternatives in the situation were national existence or radical revolution.[72] The armistice itself contributed to the problem by providing for an immediate evacuation of German occupied territory within fifteen days which gave the government little time to arrange the orderly return and demobilization of the army.[73] As a result, the Majority Socialists were forced to modify their position on a number of measures.[74]

The Volunteer and Freikorps System

To meet the threat of continuing civil violence, the government initiated the use of paramilitary volunteer units in late 1918. The most

common of these organizations was the Freikorps, raised independently by military leaders of varying ranks from the troops of the Imperial army. This process began with an Erlass on November 15, 1918, from Prussian War Minister General Scheüch creating a new army command area (Armee Oberkommando) "Homeland East" (Heimat Ost) to help maintain peace and order internally but more importantly to protect Germany's borders with Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Russia.[75] The number of paramilitary formations expanded rapidly and eventually grew larger than the Reichswehr. Most numerous were the border guards (Grenzschutz) in the eastern and later the western provinces which came under the direction of the High Command.[76] Active officers, known as Kreiskommissare, raised these units on orders from the High Command to protect specified areas. Another system, the so-called "time-volunteers" (Zeitfreiwilligen), evolved in late 1918 and contained many former soldiers and Hochschule students under the control of the local military recruiting district. The Kreiskommissare also had access to weapons for distribution to all the Verbände of their area. These units included the Grenzschutz East and West, Heimatschutz, Landschutz and many similar organizations, all under a central authority (Zentralstelle) controlled by the High Command.[77]

The second of the paramilitary systems was that of a civil guard (Einwohnerwehr, termed E-Wehr) based upon Noske's Erlass of September 11, 1919, to strengthen Reichswehr formations through civilian volunteers attached to regular army units. These originally had police functions and were to maintain law and order under the direction of the Kreiskommissare or district military councils (Kreisräte).[78] The government created a central office to control the E-Wehr units who were

theoretically subordinated to the Minister of the Interior, but in practice took their orders from military authorities.[79] The E-Wehr was strictly a civilian defensive organization while the Zeitfreiwilligen were Soldats exerces (drilled soldiers) contracted for three-month periods and specifically intended to reinforce the Reichswehr in case of trouble by absorption directly into regular army regiments.[80] A smaller, but distinct group within the conglomerate of paramilitary formations was the Technische Nothilfe; technical assistants such as engineers, chemists, students and other volunteer workers under the command of the Corps of Engineers who maintained indispensable services--water, gas, electricity, and transportation--during internal disorders.[81] The existence of these units was the subject of great alarm to the Interallied Control Commission. The Commission's protest in September 1919 concerning organizations of a paramilitary nature resulted in their apparent dissolution after the formation of the 100,000-man army in 1920. The volunteer units, however, were re-constructed during the Ruhr crisis of 1923 by General von Seeckt who proposed that the system be used to mobilize twenty-one additional Reichswehr divisions in case of war with France.[82]

Another military-oriented organization of importance, although supposedly outside the realm of direct military control, was the Stahlhelm, founded by Franz Seldte on December 25, 1918. The Stahlhelm was closely connected with the ultrarightist German National People's Party. In the organization were many former officers and soldiers in paramilitary units who maintained links with the old army and its traditions under an anti-democratic, monarchist philosophy. Within the Stahlhelm itself were subsidiary groups of the far Right who followed the general lead of the

parent organization and the DNVP. In time, these associated groups had a membership larger than the Reichswehr. They were all hostile to the Republic and supported efforts to return the army and officer corps to its previous status in the nation.

The Majority Socialists ultimately formed a paramilitary organization of their own in February of 1924. At its peak, the Reichsbanner-Schwarz-Rot-Geld had some three million members, but was four years too late in providing an alternative to dependence on the old army for the defense of the Republic.[83] It was clear to many Social Democrats by 1920 that the government-sponsored program to recruit democrats for the army was a failure. The SPD had by far the largest single following in the early days of the Weimar Republic, but most workers had no interest in further fighting or in the army which they considered alien in a socialist state. Many working-class persons believed that since the government was in the hands of the Majority Socialists, the army simply had to acknowledge and obey the new administration. The more astute among the former opponents of the military establishment realized that the new regime was totally without the means to force compliance with their wishes and thus sought to create a military force from the working class. Since that proved impossible, as was the rapid recruitment and training of such a force to the level of effectiveness of the standing army, the Majority Socialists felt no alternative existed but to enlist the old army to protect the government and nation in a situation which required immediate attention.[84]

In spite of the government's dependence on the old army for protection, the civilian leaders of the Republic did possess a modicum of

power in their ability to appoint officers or officials to certain positions within the command echelon of the army, in particular, the important post of Prussian War Minister. It was precisely such an appointment which provided the government with an opportunity to improve civil-military relations in the early Weimar years, and even to obtain the cooperation in military affairs of the army's new senior officer, Colonel Walther Reinhardt.

The Inner-Military Disputes

The inner-military conflicts which developed after the First World War stemmed from a combination of immediate and long-range questions vital to the future of the army and officer corps. Because these problems remained unsolved during the November Revolution, the following months produced an atmosphere of impermanence involving both the civilian government and the military. A number of temporary measures adopted by the government servec only to protract the problems. The major difficulties within the army itself appeared in the form of a three-sided factional dispute for control of the nation's military forces among the Imperial High Command led by General Gröner, the General Staff under the influence of General von Seeckt, and the new Prussian War Minister Colonel Reinhardt. At this crucial moment, the leaders of the High Command and General Staff sought not only to retain their traditional powers, but also to meet the challenge posed to their command authority by the Soldiers' Councils, and to deal with the efforts of the new government to secure parliamentary control over the military establishment. It was the dispute over command authority, however, that remained the most troublesome to the military,

particularly when the High Command, General Staff, and Prussian War Minister all contrived differing plans for the reorganization of the army.

A sharp conflict erupted because there were no plans or policies established to deal with the situation of a lost war and major reorganization, other than a return to the peace time status provided in the Imperial constitution. The lack of clear-cut alternatives or concrete directions meant that the transitional period would be a stormy one for the army, particularly since the command structure of the Imperial army remained intact. This produced an overlapping of authority and functions between the war time and peace time military hierarchies. Complicating the situation was the fact that none of the factions--the High Command, the General Staff, and the Prussian War Minister--would voluntarily relinquish their powers.

A second major problem faced by the military hierarchy was that of parliamentary control over the army. Such control lasted briefly during Reinhardt's tenure as Prussian War Minister and Chef der Heeresleitung, but Seeckt later returned the army to its former independence in the state structure. The objectives of the officers representing the High Command and General Staff factions coincided in attempts to direct the reorganization of the army themselves, to preserve the traditional philosophy of the officer corps, and to secure an independent position for the military within the decision-making apparatus of the new government. It was a contest in which the personalities of the two major contenders, Reinhardt and Seeckt, were of significance because of their differing conceptions of the role of the army in the new Germany.

Reinhardt's selection for the post of Prussian War Minister was controversial in the army from the outset. His activities from January 1919 to March 1920 in the formation of policy for the War Ministry and later as the head of the army leadership (Chef der Heeresleitung) produced further conflict within the officer corps. The sequence of events which brought Reinhardt into office began with the battle on December 24/25, 1919, at the Marstall in Berlin between the government troops of General Lequis and the radical Volksmarine Division assisted by civilian revolutionaries. In this contest, the failure of government forces demonstrated clearly that the far left posed an immediate threat which the new regime wa s hard pressed to counter. The Prussian War Minister, General Scheüch, resigned as a result of the battle and, as was customary, nominated a successor. But to the shock and chagrin of the old guard in the High Command and General Staff, the choice was not the man senior in rank and length of service as required by the traditional criteria of the Ancientität. Instead, Scheüch chose an outsider and non-Prussian, the Württemberg Colonel Walther Reinhardt.[85] Confirmation, of course, still rested with the civilian government.

At the time of his nomination, Reinhardt was chief of the army demobilization department, and he was not personally known by most members of the Zentralrat under whose competence the final decision rested. The Council requested that Reinhardt meet with them in their regular session of December 31, 1918, to answer questions regarding his views on a number of subjects as one of several candidates under consideration. General Gröner, representing the interests of the former High Command, as well as his own, supported Colonel von Feldmann, and the Social Democrats

themselves discussed the possibility of appointing a man from their own ranks.[86]

Defense Minister Noske had worked with Reinhardt on demobilization problems and praised the Colonel's outstanding performance in the phases thus far completed. However, Noske raised the question of whether or not the position of War Minister should be occupied by a civilian rather than a military man. In his view, any future War Minister from the military had to give complete assurance of loyal cooperation with the civil authorities. Reinhardt, he continued, never tried to conceal the fact that he was not a Social Democrat and had, in fact, told Noske quite frankly that he considered himself a "convinced monarchist" who would, however, do his duty as War Minister without opposition to the government.[87] A letter from Reinhardt to the Zentralrat outlined the Colonel's terms for acceptance of the position and included:

1. The War Minister will be accountable solely to the Council of People's Representatives and not to the Central Committee of the Worker's and Soldier's Councils [as demanded by the Hamburg Points].

2. The highest command authority will rest with the Council of People's Representatives through the Prussian War Minister.

3. In regard to the Hamburg Points, rank badges, cockades, shoulder boards with numbers or stripes and war decorations were still considered indispensable to the army.

4. The fate of the standing army should be determined by the National Assembly.

5. Those officers who remain in service must swear loyalty to the government.

6. Under no circumstances was the election of officers through the Worker's and Soldier's Councils to be permitted.

7. The Worker's and Soldier's Councils were to assist with the maintenance of discipline and nothing else.[88]

Reinhardt entered the session after the presentation of his letter and informed the Zentralrat that he was of the opinion that the continuing crisis in the nation offered little time for deliberation. The Colonel then assured the Council that he wanted to be a loyal official. Ebert returned to the question of a civilian or military man for the post and, as the chairman of the Council, stated that he favored the latter along with the appointment of Colonel Reinhardt.[89] In the matter of administrative competence, Ebert continued, the manner in which Reinhardt handled the demobilization indicated proficiency and organizational acumen. In those areas, "Colonel Reinhardt is the acknowledged expert."[90] Ebert concluded that he believed the Colonel was the right man for the position and the fact "that he comes from south Germany is also an advantage for us."[91]

The Council also recognized that the Worker's and Soldier's Councils constituted a serious barrier to unity of command in the army. Reinhardt concurred that the councils indeed interfered with unity of command and that such multiple authorities were of a highly questional nature. Representative Lampl, author of the Hamburg Points, declared that in his opinion a military man should be War Minister and the fact that Colonel Reinhardt was not a Social Democrat should not disqualify him. Compromise was possible on certain matters, Lampl continued, but the primary concern was command authority.[92] Several deputies expressed agreement with Reinhardt's view that the election of officers was impossible and even Lampl conceded that the Hamburg Points were not the foundation of a new army. Reinhardt then withdrew from the room and a vote of 14 to 3 confirmed his appointment as Prussian War Minister with only the deputies from the Soldier's Councils casting negative votes.[93]

Reinhardt's assignment became effective on January 3, 1919, and he accepted it "only after having made sure of the approval of Field Marshal von Hindenburg and his retiring predecessor, General von Scheüch."[94] Contrary to later statements by Gröner, Hindenburg supported Reinhardt for Prussian War Minister, and later for the post of chief of the army leadership, because of the excellent manner in which the Colonel handled the demobilization process and particularly the question of pensions for retiring officers.[95] The appointment of Reinhardt as Prussian War Minister raised few objections from the political parties. Only the USPD complained of a lack of debate on the nomination. The decision was generally accepted as a fait accompli.[96] Repercussions from the military came primarily from the High Command clique led by Gröner, who bristled with indigation when his candidate was not selected.[97]

Since Reinhardt's selection was a break with the tradition of advancing the highest ranking officer with the longest service time, criticism of the appointment was unavoidable.[98] Reinhardt was well aware of the difficulties which might arise as a result and therefore requested that he not be promoted to General, which as a rule should have accompanied his new assignment, preferring to remain a Colonel during his tenure in office.[99] Indeed, the problems Reinhardt anticipated began soon after his appointment and signaled the beginning of a bitter vendetta against the Colonel by Gröner and other officers who felt their prestige had been damaged by the affair. Reinhardt's subsequent cooperation with the civilian government and attempts to steer a middle course between the radical Left and traditionalists on the right made him a villain for both camps.[100]

A number of officers expressed confidence in the new War Minister and pledged their loyalty and cooperation to him. Van den Bergh, later a General, wrote in his memoirs that the choice was legitimate and Reinhardt was the best qualified for the post.[101] Additional support came from Generals von Scholler of the 8th Army Corps, von Bieberstein, and von Böckmann of the Garde-Korps of the Prussian army who stated that no better representative could be found than Reinhardt. Even General von Seeckt expressed his confidence that "in these fateful hours the interests of the Prussian Army find themselves in strong and reliable hands."[102] Nevertheless, Reinhardt endured opposition and harassment from those who could not adjust to the challenge to their traditional rights and position. His efforts to combat discontent within the officer corps were not successful although he played a major role in the reconstruction of the army. Reinhardt was faithful to his promise of loyalty to the civilian government, and the military establishment remained under the authority of civilian officials as long as he held office.

The Command Authority Question

In reality, the organizational structure of the Imperial army itself was the key to many of the disputes in the Reichswehr period. Relationships within the army hierarchy were ambiguous and, in some cases, had led to bitter conflicts in the past. The command structure in the Empire had a tripartite organization consisting of the Prussian War Ministry, charged with administrative, political and logistical questions; the Military Cabinet which dealt with officer selection and policy; and the General Staff, responsible for planning and operations. Under the Empire all were directly subordinate to the Kaiser.[103] The chain of command

which existed at the time of the armistice survived in theory until the Treaty of Versailles returned the army to a peace time status. In reality, the war time High Command retained many of its functions although it had little left to command.

The second highest officer in the military hierarchy after the Chief of the General Staff was the war time office of First Quartermaster General. This position originally dealt with engineering, entrenching, and camp construction. In the late 1750s, the personnel of the First Quartermaster General's staff entered the fields of operations and intelligence and by the 1880s ceased any true quartermaster functions. Instead, the First Quartermaster General became the representative of the Chief of the General Staff and directed all matters pertaining to the sub-sections of that organization as well as individual army staffs. Gradually the position accumulated responsibilities until the First World War when Ludendorff, as First Quartermaster General, shared the function of conducting operations equally with the commander of the field armies. Theoretically, the person holding this position was equal in authority to the head of the army during war time and it was precisely this situation which gave rise to the conflict between Reinhardt and Gröner over command authority.

Gröner served as First Quartermaster General after Ludendorff's ouster shortly before the close of hostilities and would have been the head of the army until the peace treaty if the Empire had remained intact.[104] The fact that the Empire no longer existed failed to deter Gröner from attempting to continue the activities of his precedessor and to seek through various schemes to extend his own influence over the army

and civilian government.[105] However, the ambiguity in the transition from Empire to Republic resulted in there no longer being clear-cut lines of command within the military establishment. In spite of the validity of the Imperial constitution in this period, which provided that the Prussian War Minister was the legitimate head of the army in peace time, both Gröner and Seeckt bitterly fought both Reinhardt and the civilian authority for control of the army to determine the future structure and policies of the institution.

At the end of hostilities in 1918, the German headquarters moved from its wartime location at Spa in Belgium eastward from the Rhine toward Germany's troubled border areas, finally being established at Kolberg in West Prussia near the scene of an undeclared war with Czechoslovokia, with Poland, and with Soviet elements in the Baltic area.[106] From Kolberg, the High Command faction led by Gröner conducted a campaign to re-establish its wartime influence over the army and to replace Reinhardt as Prussian War Minister.

Reinhardt did not wait long after his appointment to furnish his military opposition with a cause célèbre. His January 19, 1919, issuance of provisional regulations regarding command authority and the place of the Soldier's Councils in the peacetime army drew instant and vehement criticism from his antagonists. The decrees reflected, on the one hand, the acceptance by the socialists of Reinhardt's terms for taking the post of Prussian War Minister and, on the other, his compromise with the Hamburg Points.[107] Reinhardt was caught in the middle between the officer corps and the Soldiers' Councils, neither of whom were to be satisfied by less than the complete victory of their own views.[108] The regulations provided

a means of control for the government in that the highest power of command rested with the Council of People's Representatives. It stated further that the government, insofar as it did not issue direct orders itself, transferred the exercise of the power of command to the Prussian War Minister. All military officers of Prussia, as well as those common to Prussia and the Reich, were subordinated to the Minister of War who was responsible in turn to the government for his command decisions.

The most controversial points in Reinhardt's decree dealt with the Soldier's Councils and required that such bodies be elected in regiments, independent battalions and similar formations. The councils would supervise the activities of the unit commanders to guard against any misuse of power. Soldiers' Councils could participate in the promulgation of general and permanent orders relating to the welfare of the troops, social and economic questions, leave and disciplinary matters. Purely military orders, relating to training, command, and employment of troops still emanated solely from regular officers and required no countersignature from the Councils. All appointments still came from the Ministry of War, and the councils could neither remove nor eliminate officers, but could request their dismissal. The final authority rested with the regular officers of the unit, the Area Command, or Ministry of War. Further, soldiers' councils were not permitted to interfere with matters pertaining to other military or to civil authorities. Most important, directives or oders issued by the councils alone had no validity.[109]

Two other decrees accompanied the regulations on command authority. The second dealt with rank markings which became simple stripes and the third restored the obligation to salute.[110] The first two decrees

elicited an immediate and predominantly hostile response from most of the officer corps--much of it directed against Reinhardt personally--because of the compromise nature of the regulations and due to the efficient retention of the solcier's councils. Gröner asserted that Reinhardt was a profiteer from the revolution and a traitor to the officer corps. He claimed that the feelings against Reinhardt were such that "an officer of the General Staff in his fury exclaimed that he would like to throw a hand grenade at the feet of the war minister."[111] The January 19, 1919, decrees increased the support for the High Command and General Staff factions opposed to Reinhardt--and consequently the government--in what a leading officer called the turning point in the relations between the government and the officer corps in the Weimar era.[112] Indeed, the military cooperation with the government which had secured the nation against revolution began to collapse. Gröner complained that Reinhardt had gone "further in the elimination of the old military achievements than even the Social Democrats would dare to do" and therefore raised doubts about the soundness of his character.[113] Seeckt was not as belligerent initially because he appreciated the difficulties inherent in Reinhardt's position. He knew unpopular decisions were inevitable. In February 1919 Seeckt wrote to his wife:

> Everything depends on our succeeding in making the government firm and keeping it firm; whether it pleases us or not, there is nothing else and whoever can, should help. Who is unable to do so, or cannot bring himself to do it, should at least not disturb. But that is what is being done by stupid newspaper articles which publicize the many weaknesses and ridiculous traits of the Republic. This is also done by resolutions and speeches against the military decrees which emanate from the officer's side. It is very easy to say 'This is unheard of,' and then do nothing; it is very difficult to try to find usable timber among the ruins. Politics is the art of the possible, not what is desirable. . . .[114]

Many officers failed to grasp Reinhardt's intentions or political acumen. The crux of his policy was to restore clear command authority to the officer corps while eliminating the revolutionary soldiers' councils. He realized these decrees would be unpopular with traditionalists who demanded a complete restoration of the old military order. They could not, or would not, see that with the January 19, 1919, decrees Reinhardt nullified most of the radical demands of the soldiers' councils and Hamburg Points.[115] The majority of officers throught only of their own personal fate and found Reinhardt an easy scapegoat. In reality, the Soldier's Councils had no power, officers were neither elected nor dismissed by them and their function was limited to an advisory capacity. Military decisions and traditional command authority still remained in the hands of the regular officer corps.

In spite of the practical results of Reinhardt's decrees, the High Command and General Staff factions continued to press the civilian leadership, principally Ebert and Noske, to remove the Colonel from office. This, however, was not to be the case as the civilian regime henceforth regarded Reinhardt with more trust than could have been expected for a representative of the old order. The resolution of the question of the soldiers' councils alleviated one of the problems which threatened the preservation of the officer corps, but the factional fight within the institution still raged. Despite the potential of the conflict for disrupting the effectiveness of the army during a period when the military was the single most important factor in preventing civil war, the civilian political parties did not intervene through the Reichstag to settle the dispute even though it would have been to their own benefit to do so.

The lack of a united front on the part of the civilian parties proved to be a significant factor in later relations with the military.

Conclusions

The November Revolution produced a number of major problems for both the civilian government and the military establishment. These included questions of an immediate nature, but the most significant were long-range conflicts which continued throughout the 1918-1926 period. The most serious and persistent of these problems concerned the control of the military establishment by the new civilian government and the command authority question within the officer corps itself. These conflicts ultimately were resolved, but the manner of their resolution, as well as the delay in settlement, was vital to the future of the military establishment and to the Republic. Because the government failed to solve these problems on a timely basis while the military was divided by internal conflict in the November 1918 to March 1920 period, the most opportune moments for a successful alteration of the system came to naught.

The failure to resolve the major conflicts stemmed basically from the disorders in post-war Germany. A further debilitating factor was the general atmosphere of impermanence existing in both the civilian and military spheres. Such notions served to compound political conflicts in the Reichstag and rendered a consensus for a consistent military policy impossible. Even had significant change been adopted, the civilian authorities did not possess the power to enforce their decisions on a reluctant military establishment.

Most of the political parties in the Republic supported change in the military but could not agree on what to change or how to accomplish it.

There was a wide diversity of opinion on military matters ranging from the radicals of the Independent Social Democratic Party and the Spartacists who sought to replace the old army with a working-class militia led by elected officers, to the conservative German National People's Party which wanted to retain the old system intact. The majority Socialists adopted a moderate position in their attitude toward the military. In keeping with their notion of retaining the organs of the existing state for their own use, the SPD sought to alter the philosophy and value system of the officer corps and army, and to introduce democratic and republican ideals into the military system by opening its ranks to all citizens on an equal basis. The moderate political parties also favored military reform, but in the final analysis the key to the acceptance of the old army and officer corps was that no other force of a reliable nature existed to provide the stability required for the regime's survival.

Although it was not clear at the time, other compromises were possible between the demands of the radical Soldier's Councils and the simple retention of the Imperial army. However, efforts to create truly republican troops such as the Volkswehr or Republican Officer's League found so little support even among the socialist leadership that it became necessary for the government to work with the old army, the officer corps, and the Freikorps in order to defend the Republic. This decision temporarily settled the military question, but most officers found nothing to support in the new government and considered it a transitional stage to the eventual establishment of a more authoritarian system.

The position of the officer corps in the new state was in fact secured by the Gröner-Ebert Pact and Reinhardt's January 19, 1919, decree.

In addition, the Majority Socialists indicated their lack of radicalism in the Workers's and Soldiers's Congress of December 1918 when they opposed demands from the radical left for a revolution in the military system. Support for the Majority Socialist faction came from the bulk of representatives at the Congress who were well aware of the role that popular militias and council government played in the Russian revolution of 1917. Leaders of the majority faction realized that to consider radical alterations in the military system would cost the government the support of the army and the protection which the army leaders could provide against leftist uprisings. The result was that the old military hierarchy was able to retain a major degree of independence and a share in the decision-making processes of the nation.

To insure the survival of the provisional government and to obtain the continued support of the army the government deemed it necessary to restore the command authority of the officer corps to secure the reliability of the troops. Reinhardt accomplished the return of command authority to the regular officer corps through the January 19, 1919, decrees although many officers failed to realize that the underlying objective of this compromise settlement was to destroy the Hamburg Points and the power of the Soldier's Councils through legal means rather than through armed confrontation. This cost Reinhardt the support of many officers who saw compromise as betrayal of the ideals of the corps and who transferred their hatred of the decrees to Reinhardt personally and to the Republic he represented.

Thus, by the end of the revolutionary period, the army and officer corps had survived virtually intact from the Imperial era as an

essential force for defending the government. The decision not to alter the military system had the result of postponing solutions to certain basic problems. Even then, the civilian government was already at a disadvantage in its relations with the army, and the seriousness of the situation was compounded by the absence of long-range plans to alter the organization or philosophy of the institution. One positive result of the period was the appointment of Colonel Reinhardt as Prussian War Minister. This meant that for a time at least, the head of the army could be relied upon to cooperate with the new regime. It remained, therefore, for the civilian authorities to make the most of the resources available to them in subsequent efforts to revolve the conflicts that remained.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER III

[1]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 52.

[2]Gustav Caspar, Die Sozialdemokratischen Partei und das deutschen Wehrproblem in der Jahren der Weimarer Republik, Beiheft II, der Wehrwissenschaftlichen Rundschau, Oktober, 1959.

[3]Wilhelm Mommsen, Deutsche Parteiprogramme, in Deutschen Handbuch Der Politik, Band I (München: Olzog Verlag, 1960), p. 314, hereafter cited Mommsen, Parteiprogramme; and Waldemar Erfurth, Die Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabes, von 1918 vis 1945 (Güttingen: Musterschmidt-Verlag, 1957), p. 351, hereafter cited Erfurth, Generalstabes.

[4]See Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 197ff on Ferdinand Lassalle.

[5]Mommsen, Parteiprogramme, pp. 381-383 clarifies the position of the SPD on the war as being defensive and the result of enemy invasion.

[6]Friedrich Meinecke, Politische Schriften und Reden, edited by G. Kotoski, Darmstadt, 1958, p. 281ff as quoted in J. C. G. Röhl, From Bismarck to Hitler (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1966), p. 67, hereafter cited Röhl, Bismarck to Hitler.

[7]Peter Gay, Weimar Culture (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), p. 17.

[8]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 56; and Walter Tormin, Die Weimarer Republik (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgeschehen, 1954), p. 111, hereafter cited Tormin, Weimar.

[9]Julius Deutsch, Wehrmacht und Sozialdemokratie (Berlin: J. H. W. Dietz Verlag, 1924), p. 5, "Nicht scheint klarer und eindeutiger als die Stellungnahme der Sozialdemokratischen Partei zum militärismus." See also Tormin, Weimar, p. 111.

[10]Hermann Heidegger, Die deutsche Sozialdemokratie und der National Staat, 1870-1920, Band 26, Göttinger Bausteine Zur Gesschichtwissenschaft (Göttingen: Musterschmidt Verlag, 1956), p. 97ff, hereafter cited Heidegger, SPD.

[11]Kitchen, History, p. 40; and Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 374.

[12]Anon., Das 12. Infanterie Regiment der Deutschen Reichswehr, 1.1.1921 bis 1.10.1934 (Osterwieck/Harz und Berlin: A. W. Zickfeldt Verlag, 1939), p. ix.

[13]Heidegger, SPD, p. 265 as quoted from Stenographische Berichte, Band 300, p. 2888.

[14]Richard Hunt, German Social Democracy, 1918-1933 (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970), p. 27, hereafter cited Hunt, SPD; and Craig, Politics, p. 344.

[15]Hunt, SPD, p. 30.

[16]Ibid., pp. 29-30.

[17]Ibid., p. 29.

[18]Karl Rau, Der Wehrgedanke in Deutschland nach den Weltkrieg von 1918-1921, Inaugural Dissertation, Badischen Ruprecht-Karls Universität zu Heidelberg (Würzburg: Buchdruckeri Richard Mayr, 1936), p. 11, hereafter cited Rau, Wehrgedanke.

[19]Wilhelm Reinhard, 1918-1919, Die Wehen der Republik (Berlin: Brunnen-Verlag, W. Bischoff, 1933), p. 44.

[20]Hagen Schulze, Friekorps und Republik, 1918-1920 (Boppard am Rein: Militär Verlag, 1963), p. 15, hereafter cited Schulze, Freikorps.

[21]Mommsen, Parteiprogramme, pp. 435-436.

[22]Gustav Noske, Von Kiel bis Kapp (Berlin: Verlag für Politik und Wissenschaft, 1920), p. 87, hereafter cited Noske, Kiel bis Kapp. See also Rau, Wehrgedanke, p. 20ff on the activities of Die Rote Fahne as the Spartacist party organ. Die Rote Fahne was formerly the Majority Socialist Hamburger Echo which was seized by the Spartacists.

[23]See Rau, Wehrgedanke, pp. 35-38.

[24]Ibid., p. 50.

[25]Ibid.

[26]See Mommsen, Parteiprogramme, p. 494.

[27]Karl Buchheim, Geschichte der Christlichen Parteien in Deutschland (Kosse: Verlag zu München, 1953), p. 356.

[28]Fritz Stern, The Failure of Illiberalism (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), p. 172, hereafter cited Stern, Illiberalism.

[29]Rau, Wehrgedanke, pp. 43-47 as quoted from Germania, Nr. 354, August 6, 1919.

[30]Werner Liebe, Die Deutschnationale Volkspartei, 1918-1924 (Düsseldorff: Droste Verlag, 1956), p. 15, hereafter cited Liebe, DNVP.

[31]Ibid., pp. 7-8.

[32]Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[33]Ibid., p. 16.

[34]Tormin, Weimar, p. 114; and Liebe, DNVP, p. 13.

[35]Mommsen, Parteiprogramme, p. 537.

[36]Liebe, DNVP., p. 51.

[37]Rau, Wehrgedanke, p. 55.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Gerhard Schulz, Zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur, Verfassungspolitik und Reichsreform in der Weimarer Republik, Band I, "Die Periode der Konsolidierung und der Revision des Bismarckischen Reichsaufbau, 1919-1930" (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1963), p. 62, hereafter cited Schulz, Zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur.

[40]Wilhelm Gröner, Lebenserinnerungen (Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1957), p. 467ff.

[41]Ibid., p. 467.

[42]F. L. Carsten, The Reichswehr and Politics, 1918-1933 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), p. 14, hereafter cited Carsten, Reichswehr.

[43]Ibid., pp. 13-14. The author states here that from the content and tone of the letter he believes it was actually composed by Gröner.

[44]Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 31.

[45]Ranier Wohlfeil, Handbuch zur deutschen militärgeschichte 1648-1939, VI Abschnitt, Band VI, "Reichswehr und Republik, 1918-1933" (Freiburg im Breisgau: Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, 1962), p. 57, hereafted cited Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr"; and Craig, Politics, pp. 349-354.

[46]Craig, Politics, pp. 255-256.

[47]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 24.

[48]Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, p. 44.

[49]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 58.

[50]Heinz Oeckel, Die Revolutionäre Volkswehr 1918/1919, Die Deutsche Arbeiterklasse im Kampf um Die Revolutionäre Volkswehr, November 1918 bis Mai 1919 (Berlin, east: Deutscher Militärverlag, 1968), pp. 249-250, original document in the Deutschen Militär Archiv, Potsdam, 52 Jg., Nr. 69, December 20, 1918, pp. 745-748.

[51]Ibid., pp. 250ff, KM 1413/12.18. A1.

[52]Schulze, Freikorps, p. 18.

[53]Noske, Kiel bis Kapp, pp. 116-117, 121-122; and Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 25.

[54]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 58.

[55]HSA Stuttgart, M 360, Band 289, "Der Reichswehrminister," Berlin, July 17, 1919.

[56]Rau, Wehrgedanke, p. 27.

[57]Noske, Von Kiel bis Kapp, p. 199; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 73.

[58]Albert Grzesinski, Inside Germany, translated by A. Lipschitz (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1939), pp. 90-91, hereafter cited Grzesinski, Inside Germany.

[59]Ibid., p. 92.

[60]Eberhard Kolb and Reinhard Rürup, eds., Der Zentralrat der Deutschen Sozialistischen Republik, 12-19-18 - 4-8-19, vom Ersten zum Zweiten Ratekongress (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), p. 125, hereafter cited Kolb and Rürup, Zentralrat; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 16, report from Gröner dated December 14, 1918, to the government.

[61]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 16.

[62]Craig, Politics, pp. 10-11; and Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 366 who states that 95% of the Soldier's Councils favored the Majority Socialists.

[63]Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 368.

[64]Ibid., p. 385; Grzesinski, Inside Germany, p. 59; and Fritz Ernst, Aus Dem Nachlass des Walther Reinhardt (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer Verlag, 1958), p. 13, hereafter cited, Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass as quoted from the memoirs of Reinhardt's aide Major Wolfgang Fleck who wrote that ". . . the government, that is the Council of People's Representatives had acknowledged the Zentral Rat as a kind of central body."

[65]Heidegger, SPD, p. 230.

[66]Carsten, Reichswehr, pp. 17-19. See also Craig, Politics, p. 353; and Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 151.

[67]Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 32.

[68]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 53.

[69]Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, pp. 32-33; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 33 who claims that the Soldier's Councils were replaced by Vertrauensleute on Hindenburg's orders of November 10, 1918. This is incorrect as a subsequent letter from Hindenburg to Ebert of December 8, 1918, still demanded that the councils must disappear. This was accomplished later by Prussian War Minister Reinhardt with the cooperation of Defense Minister Noske.

[70]Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 385 states that these elements now sought to inspire a second revolution on the Russian model.

[71]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 14.

[72]Schulz, Zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur, p. 30.

[73]Charles Bevans, ed., Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949, vol. II, 1918-1930, Multilateral (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, released 1969), pp. 9-19, "German Armistice," hereafter cited Bevans, Treaties. The terms also included the condition that any German troops remaining in previously occupied territory at the end of the fifteen day period would be made prisoners of war. The armistice was to last 36 days with options to extend it. This occurred December 13, 1918, January 6, 1919, and on February 10, 1919.

[74]Pinson, Modern Germany, p. 351.

[75]See Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 213ff.

[76]Schulze, Freikorps, p. 26; and Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 19. These units were under the command of regular army personnel controlled by the High Command from the "Zentralstelle Grenzschutz Ost" (Zegrost) whose head at one time was General von Seeckt.

[77]See Thilo Vogelsang, Reichswehr, Staat und NSDAP (Stuttgart: Deutsche-Verlags-Anstalt, 1962), p. 17.

[78]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 213ff.

[79]Michael Salewski, Entwaffnung und Militärkontrolle in Deutschland 1919-1927 (München: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1966), p. 88, hereafter cited Salewski, Entwaffnung.

[80]Benoist-Mèchin, L'Armee Allemande, II, p. 149.

[81]Ibid.

[82]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," pp. 207-213.

[83]Fried, Guilt, pp. 148-149.

[84]Pinson, Modern Germany, pp. 389-390; Hunt, SPD, p. 38; Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 387, Noske, Von Kiel bis Kapp, p. 99; and Heidegger, SPD, p. 280.

[85]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 15 as quoted from Fleck Nachlass who recorded Reinhardt's words thus: "Ich bin mir dabei der schwierigkeiten bewusst, das allein schon darin liegen, dass ich als Württ[emberg] Oberst der Preussischen Generalität übergeordnet werder muss."

[86]Kolb and Rürup, Zentralrat, p. 116, footnote 6. The Social Democratic candidates discussed were Noske, Cohn and Schöpflin. Some members of the USPD backed the 33-year-old brother of flying ace Oswald Bölcke, Captain Wilhelm Bölche, because he supported the Hambur Points. Bölcke eventually was disqualified for the past as being too young.

[87]Ibid., p. 116, footnote 8.

[88]Ibid., ;. 117.

[89]Ibid., p. 118. It is crucial to note Reinhardt's choice of the word "Beamter" which indicated a civil servant rather than a military one.

[90]Ibid., p. 119. "Da ist Herr Oberst Reinhardt der gegebene Mann."

[91]Ibid. "Ich glaube aslo, dass Oberst Reinhardt der richtige Mann ist. Das er aus Süddeutschland stammt, ist also ein Vorzug für uns." This refers to the commonly held notion that south Germans were more liberal than north Germans or Prussians.

[92]Ibid., p. 120.

[93]Ibid., p. 126, footnote 32 from the notes of the meeting taken by Albert Grzesinski who recorded the negative votes from representatives Wäger, Kohl, and Struve.

[94]Grzesinski, Inside Germany, p. 83; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 15.

[95]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 48.

[96]Ibid., p. 22.

[97]Schwatlo-Gesterding, "Reichswehr," p. 69.

[98]Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 57.

[99]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 54 from Fleck Nachlass, p. 42.

[100]Ibid., p. 57.

[101]Ibid., p. 16 from van den Bergh Nachlass, December 31, 1918.

[102]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 24.

[103]Samuel Huntington, The Soldier and the State (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 102, hereafter cited Huntington, Soldier and State; and Friedrich Hossbach, Die Entwicklung des Oberbefehls über das Heer in Brandenburg-Preussen und im Deutschen Reich von 1655-1945 (Würzburg: Hozner Verlag, 1957), p. 78, hereafter cited Hossbach, Entwicklung.

[104]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 53.

[105]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 28, passim; Erfurth, Generalstabes, pp. 32-33; and Dorothea Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner: Soldat und Staatsmann (Frankfurt am Main: Societäts Verlag, 1955), p. 137, hereafter cited Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner. Gröner wrote to his wife on March 25, 1919, that they were living in a crisis and he wanted to extend his influence (meiner Einflus) within the government by the use of "my trusted men" (meiner Vertrauensleute) in Berlin, Weimar and the new provinces while personally remaining in the background.

[106]See Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 18; and Schulz, Zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur, pp. 90-91.

[107]Kitchen, History, p. 238. Reinhardt wished to make some concessions to democratic principles and accepted the notion that the power of command rested with the Council of People's Representatives whose Central Council appointed him to the post of Prussian War Minister. Both Seeckt and Gröner felt that Reinhardt was going too far in the direction of democratic republicanism. See also Hans Meier-Welcker, "Die Stellung des Chefs der Heeresleitung in der Anfängen der Republik: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Reichswehrministeriums," Viertelsjahrhefte für Zeitgeschichte, 4(2), 1956, pp. 152, hereafter cited Meier-Welcker, "Stellung" and Walter Görlitz, History of the German General Staff, 1657-1945, translated by Brian Battershaw (New York: Praeger, 1957), p. 316, hereafter cited Görlitz, General Staff.

[108]Carsten, Reichswehr, pp. 25-26.

[109]A complete text of the regulation is presented in Herbert Michaelis and Ernst Schräpler, editors, Ursachen und Folgen Vom deutschen Zusammenbruch 1918 und 1945 bis zur staatlichen Neuordung Deutschlands in der Gegenwart, Band III, "Der Weg in der Weimarer Republik," hereafter cited Michaelis and Schräpler, "Weg in Weimar," pp. 518-521 with a selective translation in Carsten, Reichswehr, pp. 25-26 and a discussion in Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 30-31.

[110]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 31. The regulation dealing with rank markings was entitled "Vorläfige Bestimmungen über Bekleidung und Anzug im Friedensheer," Heeresverordnungs Blatt 1919, p. 56, and the restoration of military greeting, "Vorläufige Bestimmungen über den militärischen Gruss im Freidensheer," Heeresverordnungs Blatt, 1919, p. 57.

[111]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," pp. 63-64 and Heidegger, SPD, p. 292, letter from Gröner to his wife, March 21, 1919, as quoted from Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner, p. 151 and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 55. Gröner claimed that Noske promised Seeckt the position held by Reinhardt in the spring of 1920.

[112]General Georg Märcker, Vom Kaiserheer zur Reichswehr (Leipzig: Köhler Verlag, 1921), pp. 78-83, hereafter cited Märcker, Kaiserheer.

[113]Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner, p. 169, letter of August 24, 1919, to his wife and Seeckt Papers, Stuck III, "Niederschrift über eine Besprechung mit Generalleutnant a.D. Gröner," undated, National Archives Microfilm Series M 137-21, Papers of General Hans von Seeckt. "Ich habe wahrend meiner verschiedenlich Anlass gehabt, an der Charakterfestigkeit des damaligen Preussischen Kreigsminister Obersten Reinhardt.

[114]Carsten, Reichswehr, pp. 31-32.

[115]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 18.

CHAPTER IV

THE DEMOBILIZATION STAGE, JANUARY 1919 TO JUNE 1919

Along with the general problems which the officer corps faced because of the lost war and the end of the monarchy, a number of specific issues bred further dissension in the corps. These included the demobilization of the Imperial army and what form the army command structure should have in the new state. In the period following the revolution, the government sought to construct a new armed force as the first step toward a peace time army. Created from remnants of the Imperial army and Freikorps units, the Provisional Reichswehr served as a transitional body prior to the implementation of the military provisions of the Versailles Treaty. It was also during this period that the government made its last major effort to democratize the military through the promotion of non-commissioned personnel to officer status.

Within the officer corps, the disputes between Reinhardt, Gröner and Seeckt not only continued but expanded to include disputes over the selection of officers for the Provisional Reichswehr. Initially, the selection process began with the demobilization of the Imperial army after the armistice in November 1918. At that time a demobilization commission, headed by Reinhardt and composed of various staff, command, and administrative personnel connected with the General Staff, established the selection criteria and determined the order of preference for retaining

of efficient, well-trained men. This also meant that the attitudes of the officers toward their profession and the corps remained the same as before. Four main groups formed the basis of personnel for the officer corps: those commissioned in pre-war years, war-commissioned officers, qualified non-commissioned officers from the Imperial army, and after 1920, candidates from outside the military establishment. In addition to the purely technical military qualifications required of officer aspirants, during the Seeckt years the prospective officer had to show a properly conservative attitude in order to join this elite. Those deemed by the military hierarchy not to possess this virtue generally never reached important command positions. This included all but a few of the NCOs commissioned during the immediate post-war period at the insistance of the civilian government. Although the Versailles Treaty established a minimum service time of twenty-five years or until age forty-five, many officers left the corps after a short career because they found promotion slow or impossible for those whose opinions differed from the leaders of the military hierarchy. Those who remained possessed the same ideals as their leaders, adopted those views, or performed their duty in silence to preserve their careers. Once again, unquestioning obedience became the key to success.

The demobilization of the regular, active officer corps of the Imperial army began slowly because of the uncertainty of the peace settlement. Amid much speculation, the government and the military establishment attempted to calculate the number of officer personnel required to form a peace time army. Their estimates were universally high, based upon figures slightly lower than the peace-time status of the Imperial

army in 1913. Thus the demobilization proceeded cautiously while the details of the treaty settlement were being determined by the Allies.

The Demobilization of the Imperial Army

Dismantling of the Imperial army began with the Reich government's Demobilization Order of December 31, 1918, and was to be completed by January 10, 1919.[1] The Rat der Volksbeauftragten considered the early demobilization of the old army vital in order to eliminate the influence of reactionary officers who might seek to use the army as a counter-revolutionary force and, secondarily, to remove any possible threat to the state and to public order from an armed rabble of soldiers.[2] Demobilization, therefore, was the first method employed to reduce the number of personnel in the officer corps. It involved a process of continuously-stiffening qualifications so that only the best of the old corps could remain. Those retained were to be supplemented by only small numbers of new officers. The demobilization period continued from December 1918 to the final creation in 1921 of the 100,000-man army mandated by the treaty. During the interim, resentment toward the Republic grew within the officer corps as the number of discharged officers increased.

In general, the criteria for selecting officers to remain in the army were the same as in the past, based upon performance of duty, six months minimum combat service in the field, general education with an emphasis on military knowledge and ability, physical fitness, and character values.[3] From the beginning, there existed a sharp difference of opinion regarding the criteria for the retention of officers in the peace army. Career officers objected to the retention of war-commissioned

officers, regular officers without full preparatory training as well as reservists, viewing them as neither efficient officers nor proper gentlemen.[4]

Voluntary retirement of a number of officers eased the situation to some extent, but the majority of reductions had to be made by the Demobilization Commission headed by Reinhardt as Prussian War Minister, and assisted by the Personalamt of General Ritter und Edler von Braun. Unlike the demobilization of the common soldiers, which was carried out on the basis of specific instructions from the government, the terms for the reduction of the officer corps emanated from the military authorities themselves.[5] This involved discharging both younger officers and those of advancing age, leaving men between the ages of 25 and 45 eligible to remain in the service. The Personalamt also favored officers with combat experience over career staff officers, retaining in particular those combat officers commissioned before the war who had completed their full training course.[6] Most officers considered for positions in the peacetime army were of senior and middle-grade ranks from regimental commander upwards along with some young regular officers of the General Staff and a small number of regular, war-commissioned lieutenants who were acting battery or company commanders for two years in the field before the end of the war.[7]

It was clear even to those who opposed the demobilization methods that not all officers could remain in the service. Gröner wrote that he favored instituting "a severe screening of the officer corps and the retention of officers from all classes."[8] However, like Ludendorff before him, Gröner imagined that his position as First Quartermaster

General entitled him, rather than the Prussian War Minister, to manage the activities of the army. In this vein, Gröner wrote to Reinhardt in March, 1919, and complained that the selection of officers was not based upon the traditional criteria for recruiting officers. Gröner asserted that the process should include, along with military ability and education, a great reliance upon character and convictions (Gesinnung) and above all that officers should "have their hearts in the right place (das Herz auf dem rechten Fleck haben)."[9] On May 2, 1919, Reinhardt circulated a reply to the troop commanders of the Reichswehr indicating that the Personalamt and the War Minister still sought "to retain the best men for army service (die besten Männer dem Heeresdienst zu erhalten)" and that while having one's heart in the right place was important, officers should be receptive to new influences brought on by the advent of a republic.[10]

Attempts to deal with the new situation in Germany appeared in all the contingents of the army. In Bavaria, the Ministry of Military Affairs went further than Reinhardt's suggestion that the officer corps become receptive to new influences. The ministry issued a decree to Reichswehr units in its area (Reichswehr Gruppenkommando IV) which stated that officers who could not adjust to the new political situation would be dismissed from the service.[11] In Württemberg, the local military authorities employed a review process of their own to establish qualifications for officers desiring to remain in the service. An officer of the rank of Major or higher reviewed the records and performance of the command personnel of each regiment with battalions or smaller units scrutinized by a Captain, e.g., Grenadier Regiment 119 by Colonel Strölin;

Foot Artillery Regiment 29 by Major Seeger. For officers in staff positions, a special investigating officer reported his findings directly to the Württemberg War Minister. Each investigator held a rank superior to his subject and formal instructions established the criteria to be utilized. These restated that the army must have only the best men. The strong and weak points of each officer appeared in each report along with an analysis of the subject's character. In concluding, the instructions repeated Gröner's phrase that each officer should have his heart in the right place, i.e., the proper conservative and traditional convictions. In many commands, confusion existed as to whether the First Quartermaster General or the Prussian War Minister had the legitimate command authority over officer selection.[12]

While receiving the majority of their instructions from the offices of the Prussian War Minister and Personalamt, as they had under the Empire, the various states administered the demobilization of their own contingents. This furthered the already existing particularist sentiments and lent credence to the concept of a continuing federated structure for the army as it had been under the Empire. Such notions were quite pronounced in Bavaria where the funds for the Bavarian officer's pensions came entirely from the state government with no contribution from the Reich authorities in Berlin. Such an obligation served to confirm the opinion of Bavarian civil and military authorities that local autonomy still prevailed while in reality that notion ran counter to the efforts of the Reich officials to create a unitary military structure.[13]

Officers who were not selected to remain in the service but who wanted to secure a military related occupation had a number of options

available to them. They could apply for an administrative position within the military establishment and pursue a civil career in this manner, or they could join one of the various police organizations actively seeking former military officers to augment their own leadership ranks. Under a new retirement law, the retiring officer received a promotion for pension purposes if he otherwise qualified for the next highest rank at the time of leaving the service.[14] The retirement provisions appealed to many middle-class officers who had never intended to pursue a military career. The voluntary process, however, did not reduce the officer corps to anywhere near the High Command's projected peacetime quota and necessitated the implementation of a forced retirement program whereby many officers were given an outright release from the army.[15]

To ascertain the number of officers who desired to remain after the retirement law, Prussian War Minister Reinhardt requested in the spring of 1919 a statement of intent from each officer as well as a letter of recommendation from his immediate commanding officer.[16] A special "U" list existed for those who received ratings of unqualified (ungeeignet) from their commanders, but such lists were supposed to be unofficial. Black-lists of any type had been discontinued officially somewhat earlier in fear of possible charges of discrimination against persons of lower social or economic groups, or of differing political philosophy.[17] Those deemed qualified to remain in the service entered an angonizing period of uncertainty which resulted nevertheless in dismissal for the majority when further personnel reductions came as the result of the Versailles Treaty.[18] The number of officers released by 1923 was substantial relative to the estimated 40,000 active officers who survived the war.[19]

According to figures compiled by Lt. Gen. a. D. Constantin von Altrock, the numbers of demobilized officers by rank were as follows:[20]

OFFICERS RELEASED BY 1923

First and Second Lieutenants	7,695
Captains	17,100
Majors	8,170
Lieutenant-Colonels	5,890
Colonels	2,850
Major-Generals	1,615
Lieutenant-Generals	760
Generals	230
	44,310

Many officers who faced dismissal from the army found various police formations an increasingly attractive alternative career. Militarized police organizations in the Republic were of significance because their training, political attitudes, and value systems paralleled those of the army. In personnel, the police eventually outnumbered the 100,000 man army and were in many instances utilized as an appendage of the Reichswehr. Eventually, in the army expansion during the Third Reich, re-entry directly into the Wehrmacht and Waffen SS by police personnel created full combat "Police Divisions" led by their own officers.

Because of the importance of the militarized police, the civil government sought to democratize such units as an example for the Reichswehr. Accordingly, some 200 to 300 officers joined police units at the national, state, and local level becoming leaders in the Schutzpolizei, Landespolizei, Ordungspolizei, Sicherheitspolizei, Hilfspolzei and Exekutivpolizei.[21] Many of these possessed a strictly military character. They were organized in Hundertschaften, housed in barracks, and

were led by former army officers. Their ties with the army were so strong that these formations often participated in military maneuvers with the Reichswehr. By the summer of 1919, the Ordungspolizei numbered 150,000 and the Sicherheitspolizei, 70,000.[22] This situation existed in violation of the Versailles Treaty, which limited the size of the police establishment in the Weimar Republic to less than its 1913 strength. Such a limitation should have produced only 46,000 men for Prussia and an additional 20,000 for the remainder of the nation.[23]

Problems in the selection of officers for the police were much the same as for the regular army insofar as pressure on the government came from the radical left to initiate the election of officers on the lower levels. The police expert of the Social Democratic Party, Colonel Schützinger, adopted the same position as the officer corps, declaring that such a program would result in command limitations for the police leadership in relation to the elected officers and finally the breakdown of the institution's reliability.[24] As in the army, the government opted for the selection of trained officers who, besides having command experience, were available in increasing numbers. In Bavaria, the state government reserved a full twenty percent of positions in the police service for retired army personnel.[25] As an incentive to enter police service, the government permitted each officer who enlisted by October 1, 1920, to retain the highest military rank attained to which was added the prefix "Police." A regular army Colonel thereby became a Police-Colonel whose duties and command functions often paralleled his former army command. Many of the military districts, the Wehrkreise, actively assisted with the recruiting of officers from units within their jurisdiction and made

efforts to bring the police and army as close together as possible.[26] In time, many police units operated directly under the High Command, and a comradeship developed between the regular army officers and their former comrades who still retained special feelings for the military establishment.

The post-armistice demobilization of the Imperial army accomplished little in reducing the size of the officer corps. Too few officers chose to retire voluntarily. The situation thus required some form of compulsion. Inevitably, bitterness and resentment followed involuntary reductions and many of the officers affected became life-long opponents of the Republic. Even though a number of officers subsequently found a position in the police which was not far removed in practice from their former career, they were not totally satisfied outside the regular army.

With the problem of reductions in officer personnel also came another contest between the government and the Gröner and Seeckt factions inside the corps to reorganize the command structure of the peacetime army. This added to the conflicts between those officers already struggling for control of the institution. The organizational structure of the command echelon of the new army was of grave concern to all of the factions because it would determine the competency of key positions in the military hierarchy. The officers who held those posts initiated policy and made decisions vital to the future of the army. It was upon these men that relations with the civilian military officials depended.

The Command Structure Question in the Peace Army

Reorganization of the Imperial army actually began on October 28, 1918, when the Reichstag replaced the Kaiser as the ultimate authority over the army. In order to strengthen its position in regard to the military, the new regime created a state Under-Secretary to supervise military affairs. Members of the SPD held the post until November 1919, when the office was abolished.[27] The National Assembly subsequently dealt with the question of army organization, but made no attempt to implement the Hamburg Points or create an independent militia based on the December 1918 Volkswehr Decree. For the most part, the deputies exhibited a preference for an army strong enough to restore domestic order, to protect the national borders, and nothing more. They further sought to provide constitutional guarantees for the civilian control of the military establishment as a whole, while permitting internal administration and command to remain in the hands of the officer corps.[28]

With the demobilization of the Imperial army came a period of uncertainty regarding the future of the military establishment in Weimar Germany. A number of plans for a peacetime army evolved during this period, but none of them seriously considered the full elimination of the institution. Most of the plans were based on speculations about the terms of the forthcoming Versailles Treaty, and there was little agreement among either politicians or the military on which arrangement to implement.

Once the military clauses of the peace settlement became known, the government and military discussed the possibility of bargaining for a larger German army. Seeckt wanted to obtain agreement for a 200,000

man army, but at Paris the civilian representatives led by Matthias Erzberger decided--without consulting the military mission--to accept the 100,000 figure contained in the Versailles Treaty. The Allies knew of the decision and showed little inclination to discuss the military's proposal offered half-heartedly by the chief civilian negotiator Brockdorff-Rantzau. As a result, Seeckt accused the civilians of treachery and of "sacrificing Germany's honor" in the matter.[29] As it became increasingly clear that the Allies would not modify the military provisions of the treaty, Reinhardt recalled Seeckt to Germany. In the interim, Gröner's associates at Kolberg launched a poison-pen campaign against Reinhardt. The High Command faction at Kolberg advised Defense Minister Noske that the officer corps had no confidence in Reinhardt, and as a result, Noske made Seeckt the head of the Peace Army Commission (Heeres-Friedenskommission) with the task of reorganizing the army.[30]

The future organization of the army and its command structure was a primary concern go the High Command, General Staff and the government. It was clear that whatever group reconstructed the army would set the criteria for officer selection as well as the limits of parliamentary control over the military establishment. During the early months, the High Command and the General Staff operated in some aspects of military administration independently from the Prussian War Ministry. In theory, the Defense Minister, which was Noske's title until August 1919, coordinnated the activities of all three bodies. Each group planned policy and concurrently sought the re-establishment of discipline and unity of command although the most vital question of command authority in the future army was not settled.[31] Such ambiguity only increased the confusion and

hostility between the various groups trying to solidify their own positions in the emerging military hierarchy.

The problem became more clearly defined after the constitution created the post of Reichswehr Minister to act as the civilian head of the army. In spite of the settlement of the command authority question in favor of the civilian government, controversy still persisted in the military. The inner-military dispute shifted its emphasis to the character of the new ministry, its authority over military administration, and officer selection criteria. Members of the High Command had drafted plans for a future command structure as early as February, 1919. The Chief of the Military Railway Department, General von Olderhausen, raised the primary question of how the General Staff in the future could obtain a position independent of the War Ministry. His plan attempted, as did most of the subsequent ones proposed by the High Command and General Staff, to circumvent or nullify the constitutional controls imposed on the army. Specifically, Olderhausen's version called for a State Secretary of Defense on the federal cabinet level to be held by a civilian politican who would have control of the state war ministries. The Secretary would, however, be required to refer any army questions to the Personalamt and cede to the military authorities direction of officer selection, especially in the contingents. Further, the High Command wanted to keep the civilian authorities divided by a federal political system giving full rein to particularism while creating a unified military structure which would have a strong position in relation to the weak civil government.[32] The State Secretary under this plan would theoretically have control over the General Staff, Reich Army Office, Personnel

Office, and Admiralty. These were to be coordinated by parliamentary and military Under-Secretaries while the War Ministry became a General Inspectorate in charge of officer education. The proponents of the plan invisioned that Gröner, Seeckt, or an officer satisfactory to the High Command and General Staff factions would be appointed to head the structure.

To the chagrin of the High Command and General Staff, not to mention Gröner and Seeckt personally, the first Chief of the Army Leadership was Reinhardt.[33] Concurrent with this development, the struggle for control of the army intensified between Gröner's High Command faction at Kolberg and Reinhardt, whose post of Prussian War Minister was to be abolished by the constitution. In the interim, Reinhardt held the position of Chef der Reichswehrbefehlsstelle Preussen (Reichswehr Command Prussia) and exercised the same functions as the Prussian War Minister.

The other contender, Seeckt, continued as head of the Peace Army Commission and formulated plans of his own for the future army and command structure. His proposal envisioned an army of 300,000 men organized on the basis of contingents from Prussia, Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Saxony. These were to be formed by treaty or convention into a unitary system under the Prussian War Ministry and General Staff. The actual structure would contain twenty-four divisions composed of two-year volunteers and augmented by a militia with a three-month training period.[34] Seeckt's plan also proved to be a further irritant in his conflict with Reinhardt over officer selection because many surplus officers from duplicated staffs created by Seeckt faced retirement or dismissal from the corps in order to reduce its personnel to the Versailles

specifications.[35] Many of these officers, long-time career men on the General Staff, looked to Seeckt for protection of their positions and supported the General's efforts to control selection criteria.

The differences between the High Command, General Staff, and Reinhardt made a confrontation inevitable over a number of issues. This occurred on June 29, 1919, when Reinhardt proposed a new command structure under which the special army and group commands in the east directed by the High Command were to be placed within the authority of the Minister of Defense and the Chief of Reichswehr Command Prussia. The plan envisioned a simplified command structure and included a provision for the High Command, which was essentially a wartime organization, to be redesignated Befehlsstelle Kolberg with reduced authority. President Ebert and Reichswehr Minister Noske accepted Reinhardt's suggestions which also meant curtailing the autonomy of the Kolberg faction. Gröner, enraged at Reinhardt's move, telephoned the Colonel and demanded full authority in the east.[36] Reinhardt refused and shortly thereafter Gröner announced his retirement, but declared he would remain at his post until "military matters were finally settled."[37] Gröner wrote of the incident in his diary that it was

> nothing but an affront to my person: the Herr war minister, the Bastard (Schweinhund), to whom I am bothersome as the devil, continues the struggle against me by means that slowly become indecent. I would not have expected him to be such a nasty character.[38]

At the same time, a dispute flared up between Reinhardt and Seeckt over the functions of the Reichswehr Ministry within the constitutional framework of the Republic. The creation of such a post entailed changes within the command structure of the military establishment as a

whole because the Prussian War Minister and the contingent war ministers had been eliminated.[39] Seeckt sought to secure significant powers for the military over its own activites, while increasing his personal authority as chief of the most important military office, the Truppenamt. Under Article 47 of the constitution, the Reichswehr Minister assumed the military duties of the old Reich Chancellor which included being superior to all soldiers with the highest command authority (Kommandogewalt--here, in the sense of an administrative function). Until the actual creation of the Reichswehr Ministry on October 1, 1919, the Reich Minister of Defense exercised this function through the Prussian War Minister.[40]

Seeckt's proposal of August, 1919, for a re-organization of the army's command echelon called for a horizontally-ordered college of office chiefs led by the head of the Truppenamt as the representative of the Reichswehr Minister. Known collectively as the Army Office (Heeresamt), the various offices in the system would include the Troop Office, Quartermaster, Ordnance Office, Intendent for the army, and the Personnel Office. The Army Office, which had strictly advisory powers under the Reichswehr Minister, was to be supplemented by a second body, the Armeerat (Army Council), composed of the chiefs of the Troop Office, Personnel Office, Quartermaster, and a number of high ranking command personnel in the field service. The Armeerat in this system had complete control over all matters pertaining to officers.[41] Seeckt's purpose was to make the chief of the Truppenamt an independent military head of the army under a Reichswehr Minister with sole civilian responsibility for military affairs but no actual command authority. Seeckt did not want to become merely the pro forma head of the army, but rather as chief of

the Truppenamt the successor to the chief of the Genral Staff with no military superior.[42] The Reichswehr Minister in this scheme commanded the troops in peacetime and the chiefs of the various offices came under his direct responsibility. Since these would be controlled by the chief of the Truppenamt--Seeckt himself--the person in that post possessed the supreme military authority in the establishment.[43]

Reichswehr
Minister

I. Heeresamt

Chief of
Truppenamt

Chief Quarter-master	Chief of Ordnance	Intendant	Chief of Personnel

II. Armeerat

Chief of Truppenamt	Chief Quarter-master	Chief of Personnel	Higher Troop Commanders

Seeckt's Proposed Organization[44]

Neither the civilian government nor Prussian War Minister Reinhardt considered adopting Seeckt's organizational scheme. The intent to destroy the newly-won civilian control over the army was apparent. On the other

hand, Reinhardt accepted most of the structure proposed by Seeckt, but insisted upon a unitary head for the army in the form of a Chief of Army Leadership (Chef der Heeresleitung) under the Reichswehr Minister who would have the authority to initiate binding orders independently of other military authorities. Gröner made demands for the acceptance of Seeckt's organization plan, and then for the naming of Seeckt as Chef der Heeresleitung. Both President Ebert and Reichswehr Minister Noske refused to be pressured into making such an appointment.[45]

Ultimately, the government accepted a system devised by Noske and Reinhardt which retained checks on the military. Reinhardt's willingness to concede considerable powers to the Reichswehr Minister in the eyes of the conservatives aided in the adoption of the plan. The civilian government trusted Reinhardt and followed this suggestions regarding army reorganization. Reinhardt wanted the creation of a central administrative office which would end the struggle for control of the army between his own office, the High Command, and the General Staff.[46] Reinhardt proposed, therefore, a constitutionally correct vertical plan that had no Heeresamt or Armeerat, but placed the Chef der Heeresleitung in direct control of the system under a Reichswehr Minister with full command powers over the military.[47] The Army Ordinance Gazette (Heeresverordnungs-Blatt) of 1919 enacted Reinhardt's plan into law, signifying a victory for the Noske-Reinhardt faction and temporarily preserving civilian supremacy over the military.[48]

Reinhardt then faced the additional problem of legitimizing the newly-won authority of the Reichswehr Minister and Heeresleitung in the eyes of the officer corps and army.[49] He did not consider a viable

Reichswehr Minister

Chef der Heeresleitung

Zentralrat (Army Office)

Personalamt (Personnel Office)

Truppenamt (Troop Office)

Waffenamt (Weapons Office)

Heeresverwaltungsamt
(Army Administrative Office)

Feldzugmeisteramt
(Ordnance Office)

Reinhardt's Proposed Organization[50]

military system possible on the basis of the Hamburg Points nor could the old system be maintained as many conservative officers wanted.[51] He therefore adopted a middle course to insure that the military remained as free as possible from influence of the right or left. His objective was to assure security for the army by making it a vital part of the new order, indispensable to the existing government and an independent factor

in German politics.[52] To accomplish this end, Reinhardt believed that the Reichswehr had to accept the Republic and integrate its troops politically into the constitutional system.[53] He established the structure to make this possible but in doing so alienated many officers who refused to accept it as permanent. Reinhardt's efforts to achieve for the Reichswehr Minister more than a figurehead status simply ran counter to the traditions of the officer corps although most officers did not object to Gustav Noske personally.[54]

Indeed, many officers were not dissatisfied with Noske's administration of the Reichswehr Ministry. As the conservative General Märcker wrote, Noske "showed a good understanding of military questions and I have often later said that he had an excellent knowledge of the 'soul' of the troops--also of the officers."[55] Noske himself was respected in the officer corps. The majority of officers considered him the strongest leader in the Social Democratic Party, displaying courage and a cold-blooded soldierly thought in the best Prussian tradition.[56] Like Reinhardt and other professional military men, Noske believed that command authority should be held by the officer corps of the regular army rather than the Soldiers's Councils, and he supported efforts to achieve this end. He once wrote that an army without discipline was a "scandal" (Affenschande--literally, ape-comedy).[57]

Reinhardt and Noske brought the Reichswehr into compliance with the republican constitution and established an independent command authority quite different from that of the old army. Since Seeckt did not prevail in the quest for implementation of his system, he left active service on July 14, 1919, though he was available in an advisory

capacity.[58] According to Gröner, Reinhardt then had the field to himself and could organize the army as he wished.[59] Indeed, Reinhardt's appointment to the post of Chef der Heeresleitung came on September 30, 1919, the very day Gröner retired.[60]

Under Reinhardt, the Heeresleitung became an integral part of the Reichswehr Ministry. It contained six major units: the Zentralrat handled legal and budgetary questions, dealt with legislation which affected the military, and managed the internal affairs of the Heeresleitung; the Personalamt controlled all officer personnel assignments, selection, promotion, retirement, and pensions for both officers and NCOs; the Allegemeine Truppenamt assumed the role of the Great General Staff and had competence over troop employment, education of staff officers and staff assistants, national defense, army organization, military schools, physical training, and the Peace Army Commission. The Truppenamt controlled the education and training of officer candidates, but not their selection which remained a function of the Personalamt under the supervision of the Chef der Heeresleitung.[61] Reinhardt, as the senior military officer of the Reichswehr, cooperated closely with both President Ebert and Reichswehr Minister Noske to whom the Colonel conceded control of the army. Reinhardt accepted the constitutional superiority of civil authority in military matters "as a corollary of the revolution."[62]

The Provisional Reichswehr Law of March 6, 1919

While the debate raged over the permanent form of the new army and its command structure, the need to build an interim system became imperative. The Law for the Construction of a Provisional Reichswehr, passed by the National Assembly on March 6, 1919, gave the Reichspresident

the power to dissolve the old standing army in order to form a Provisional Reichswehr. It specifically cited the duties of the new armed forces as the protection of the Reich's borders, the providing of security for the government, and the establishing of internal peace. This recreated, in effect, the same structural framework as the federated Imperial army with contingents from Prussia, Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and Baden. Reinhardt, along with Gröner, Seeckt and others opposed this system in favor of a unitary, centralized military structure.[63] The Provisional Reichswehr also retained many older relationships in the command structure that rested upon the 1871 special rights accorded to federation members and added to this a number of new positions which increased the confusion already present during the demobilization of the old army. State administrative organs for military affairs thereafter consisted of semi-autonomous civilian military ministries which were, as before, under the domination of the Prussian War Minister. They conveyed orders, verbatim in most cases, from the Prussian War Minister to their own contingents with only letterheads on the paperwork changed.[64] Since the old Military Cabinet was not retained, the new structure simply compounded the conflict over authority by introducing new factions into the arena.[65]

The Provisional Reichswehr carried over many characteristics from the old army because the nucleus came from existing units which had not been demobilized and from the ranks of the Freikorps or other volunteer forces. Most of these units relied heavily upon former Imperial army personnel who were generally anti-republican. A few republican Freikorps and security units also entered the Provisional Reichswehr along with

their officers, but their numbers were small and resentment against such officers continued, particularly among the older personnel.[66]

The Provisional Reichswehr Law delineated the general structure of the armed forces and the command relationships governing it. Paragraph One placed the Provisional Reichswehr under the supreme command of the President. Paragraph Two stated that the active command of the army originated with the President and was exercised on his behalf by the Reichswehr Minister. Subordinate to him was the Prussian War Minister who controlled the contingents of the army through the individual state war ministers. The former High Command received the authority to give orders in conjunction with the President through the Reichswehr Minister and government in concert with the Prussian War Minister. The naming, promotion, removal, and discharge of officers remained within the competence of the contingents, while officers of General rank were appointed by the President on the advice of the Prussian War Ministry. For each contingent, the law of March 6 received additional sections relating to the prerogatives in military affairs held by that state. Special rights in the sphere of officer selection on the lower levels for Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg gave these states a large degree of autonomy within the system.[67]

New officer selection criteria opened the ranks of the officer corps to NCOs and enlisted men who qualified through superior service records, leadership ability, and duty in the field in a combat arm as a deputy officer for a minimum of six months.[68] Within the contingents, the military ministers followed the instructions of the Prussian War Minister to form the Provisional Reichswehr. The selection of officers

Reichswehrminister

Prussian Kriegsministerium

1. The High Command (OHL)
2. Reichswehrgruppenkommando 1 (Berlin)
3. Generalkommandos VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XIV, XV, XVIII

Saxon Ministerium für militärwesen

1. Saxon Reichswehrkommando (Reichswehr Brigades 12, 19)
2. Generalkommandos XII, XIV

Württemberg Kriegsministerium

1. Generalkommando XIII (Reichswehr Brigade 13)

Bavarian Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten

1. Reichswehrgruppenkommando 4 (Bavarian Schützen Brigade 21, Bavarian Reichswehr Brigades 22, 23, 24)
2. Generalkommando I, II, III

The Command Structure of the Reichswehr - June, 1919

for the position of regimental commander came under the jurisdiction of the individual state ministries. Local Group Commands (Gruppenkommando) chose company commanders and other subordinate ranks in consideration of the wishes of the volunteer (freiwilligen) formations absorbed directly into the Provisional Reichswehr. Most of these units simply retained the officers already serving in their ranks. For officer personnel on the regimental, company, and battalion level, the implementation orders stated that the following categories of personnel merited first consideration for retention in the service:

> 1. Officers and NCOs of excellent service during the war who proved themselves in volunteer formations.
>
> 2. Officers and men from the East African Colonial forces.
>
> 3. Active officers and NCOs who did not join volunteer forces but who were otherwise qualified.
>
> 4. Officers and NCOs from the old peacetime army who were associated with military schools or establishments.[69]

The priorities for retention of officer and NCO's established by the March 6, 1919, law provided an important element of continuity between the Imperial army and the Reichswehr. Because the leadership element of the Provisional Reichswehr came solely from the ranks of the old army, its officer corps retained an anti-republican, anti-democratic character which survived to influence the future 100,000-man army. Expedients such as the return to active service of entire Freikorps units, most of whom were openly hostile to the government, served only to defeat the new regime's avowed goal of democratizing the armed forces. The officer corps remained conservative and tradition-oriented with the majority of its personnel supporting political ideals far removed from those of the government. In the education and training of both the troops and officer

candidates, traditionalist officers had a primary role and exerted a vital influence in advocating the replacement of the Republic with a more authoritarian system.

The immediate objective of the expanded selection criteria had been to provide as many trained officers as possible for the Provisional Reichswehr in order to maintain a maximum military efficiency. There was, in fact, an overabundance of such personnel even with the continuing demobilization of the Imperial army. Many men wanted to remain in the military in lieu of the uncertainty of obtaining civil employment during the post-war years. The problem for the government was either to have an efficient force immediately available for use in a time of continuing crisis or to attempt the creation of a new body more attuned to democratic ideals. In 1919, the former prevailed because the internal situation in Germany endangered the Republic and the leaders of the government sought to insure the viability of the system as their primary goal. However, efforts by the new regime to democratize the army continued through the promotion of qualified non-commissioned personnel to officer status.

The Promotion of Non-Commissioned Personnel to Officer

The upgrading of enlisted personnel to officer grades was a recognized, but not often practiced, custom throughout the history of the Prussian-German military establishment. With the demise of the Imperial army, the Social Democrats sought as one of their primary objectives to democratize the military system by the extension of possibilities for qualified non-commissioned officers (Unteroffiziere) to attain commissioned rank. The Provisional Reichswehr Law of March 6, 1919, established the legality of this concept and, at least in theory, made positions in

the officer corps open to all soldiers. In practice, however, requirements were rigorous and candidates limited to those who had served in a combat unit, been decorated for bravery, completed the seventh class of a middle school with a leaving certificate (Obersekundarreife), and had performed the duties of an officer for at least six months while holding the rank of sergeant-lieutenant (Feldwebelleutnant) or who had been breveted to deputy officer (Offizierstellvertreter).[70] For those who did not have the proper educational background, but had a satisfactory public school (Volksschule) record, special officer candidate courses assisted in preparing the aspirant for the Officer Candidate's Examination. The test itself covered the military knowledge of the prospective officer candidate. Those who either did not do well in the course or who did not pass the test returned to their former units and had their names removed from the candidate's list.[71]

The Army Ordinances of 1919 established a specific application process which required a formal written declaration that the aspirant wished to pursue the career of a professional officer in the Reichswehr as his life's "calling." Included also were comments from the applicant's commander regarding the suitability of the candidacy. The aspirant submitted in addition:

1. an autobiography
2. war record with comments by former commanders
3. recommendations for the candidate from officers under whom he served which were to include:
    a. mobilization assignment and duration of duty
    b. present assignment and the date on which it began
    c. assignments for which the candidate was especially qualified
    d. military service abilities
    e. marital status

f. short assessment of personality and prognosis regarding the officer candidate examination
g. verification that the candidate had served in the field six months as a deputy-officer
h. recommendations from other former field commanders

4. verification of the proper education
5. declaration of freedom for officer's school, i.e., that present duty will permit release
6. prior military certificates
7. complete address of candidate[72]

For those who attended Officer Candidate School, the application went to the Office of Military Education (Inspektion der Militär-Bildungsanstalten). For personnel with the proper non-military education, the process went through the appropriate Group Command and ultimately to the Office of Military Education. The final determination of candidates to be examined came from Berlin for all contingents. A description of the examination appeared in Ordinance 977 of the Army Regulations of 1919, volume II. It consisted of tactics, weaponry, pioneer service (field engineering), map reading and general military knowledge. Both theoretical and applied problems had to be answered with the expertise of subaltern front officers.[73]

The officer's candidate program consisted of taking special education courses in preparation for the Officer's Examination, attending Officer's School (Kriegsschule), and involved the same criteria for regular NCOs in each step of the process. All candidates attended Officer's School along with officers commissioned during the war and only after successful completion of the course was it possible to be commissioned as a regular officer. The curriculum in Officer's School varied in content from military subjects to economics, politics, and subjects of current interest.[74] Candidates for promotion to officer came from all

combat branches of the Imperial army, the Provisional Reichswehr, and even the Austrian army on occasion.[75]

A particular concern to both the Reich and Länder military authorities was the arbitrary commissioning of NCOs by the Reichswehr Minister, who in June, 1919, boasted that he had personally named seventy-five NCOs to be officers in one day. Such promotions were not isolated in the Prussian contingent, but occurred in Bavaria as well.[76] Arbitrary commissionings brought complaints from the Bavarian contingent, whose military leaders felt it allowed candidates not educationally qualified under the terms of the Provisional Reichswehr Law to attain a commission. Some, the authorities contended, were sponsored by soldiers's councils and were not even active NCOs.[77] The Bavarians pointed out that under the limitations of the Versailles Treaty their contingent in the officer corps should be approximately 420 active, professional officers. This meant that by April, 1920, around 2,400 officers would be released from the service in Bavaria. The present practice of promoting NCOs, they argued, would lead to non-commissioned personnel obtaining a disproportionate number of positions within the contingent compared with regular officers who wished to remain. Since there were approximately 8,000 NCOs who technically qualified for appointment to the rank of officer or officer candidate, the solution was for many of the commissions to be made in the reserves.[78] By July 16, 1919, the Bavarian Ministry for Military Affairs reported that, in accordance with the Army Regulations Gazette program for promotion to officer, 288 NCOs had been promoted to officer in their contingent:[79]

NCOs

Ensign (Fähnriche)	22
Sergeant-Lieutenant (Feldwebelleutnant)	66
Active NCOs (bravery in action)	29
Active NCOs (educationally qualified)	25
Active NCOs (officer candidate course)	146
Promoted to lieutenant in the Reichswehr	288

In addition to the above cited commissions, a limited number of persons entered active service after promotion to lieutenant in the reserves when the Freikorps units in which they served were absorbed into the Reichswehr.[80]

The process for non-commissioned officers requesting promotion or becoming officer candidates required a strict adherence to the appropriate sections outlined in the Army Ordinance Gazette of 1919. Even if the prospective candidate followed the procedures and possessed superior qualifications, admission to the officer candidate program was not automatic. Indeed, no NCO received an outright promotion to officer status except those arbitrarily appointed by the Reichswehr Minister or the Bavarian Minister of Military Affairs. The army demanded that the prescribed route detailed in the official regulations be employed and insisted that all candidates pass the appropriate educational courses prior to consideration for a commission.

The Bavarian Central State Archives contains a number of complete dossiers of applicants for commission under the regulations of 1919. The majority revealed that the process for application received the exacting treatment demanded by the military. Indeed, only those who did follow

the procedure outlined and made application through proper military channels had a good chance for selection. One of the most complete dossiers belonged to Ordnance Deputy-Officer Konrad Fabian, who wrote to his superiors regarding promotion to officer on the basis of bravery in action. Fabian wanted to become an active officer in the infantry, field artillery, or foot artillery and "pursue the officer's calling as his life's profession." Fabian followed precisely the format for applications as set forth in the army regulations. The required documents demonstrated that he had been a deputy-officer in combat for longer than six months. He had been cited for distinction against the enemy for defusing unexploded gas shells during the war and recommended for promotion to officer. Fabian therefore requested promotion to officer in the Reichswehr on the basis of the army regulations authorizing commissions for NCOs cited for bravery.[81] After several additional letters to his superiors, Fabian's request was reviewed by Reichswehrgruppenkommando IV in Munich. The applicant was found to have acted in a brave and exemplary manner, but promotion to lieutenant was denied on the grounds that gas shells per se were not considered the same as enemy troops. However, Fabian received a recommendation for Officer Candidate School after which he would be eligible for the Officer's Examination, and then a commission.[82] The example again confirmed the military's insistence upon proper preparation and success through performance.

In some cases, the contingent commands prepared lists of non-commissiones personnel considered qualified for promotion, primarily on the basis of bravery before the enemy. Often, only those names appeared on the list whom the authorities wanted to be promoted. The lists also

contained comments regarding the service records of leading candidates with what amounted to an official request for consideration of those persons named. One such list, prepared by the Bavarian command, contained eighteen names, thirteen of which were infantry NCOs and the remainder from diverse services within the contingent. Two received special attention for their war services in the form of lengthy comments and details from their official records.[83] Such a recommendation virtually assured the person a place in an officer candidate program, while NCOs applying to the military authorities on their own behalf had much less chance to be selected.

In practice, the majority of successful candidates from the non-commissioned ranks came from among those sponsored by Group Commands where the local military authorities had already narrowed the lists of persons deemed qualified. Most of the NCOs in that category had been trained under the old Imperial system and possessed what the military considered a proper attitude toward the profession, the officer corps, and politics in general. Certainly few, if any, of those selected came from Soldier's Councils or possessed beliefs far removed from their superiors. Thus, the commissioning of NCOs did little to democratize the army because the personnel chosen for promotion were from the former establishment.

Because the promotion of non-commissioned personnel to officer could be accomplished in either the arbitrary fashion of the civilian officials or that of the military, confusion arose in the minds of many NCOs regarding those eligible for consideration. Even though the army regulations were quite specific in this regard, a number of NCOs from

other than combat arms applied for commissions and were universally rejected.[84] With arbitrary promotion there also existed the possibility for undesirable personnel to enter the officer corps. One such incident involved a Bavarian NCO who became a member of the Communist Party after his application for a commission. The Bavarian military authorities voiced great concern that since the discovery of his political affiliation came rather late in the process, the applicant might have already been to officer candidate school, passed the Officer's Examination, and was, in fact, being commissioned.[85] To avoid such problems, the military considered it imperative that arbitrary commissioning or appointments to officer candidate programs by civilian authorities cease. Such actions did stop after a brief initial period as the civilian ministers began to realize the extent of military opposition to arbitrary commissionings and because the Provisional Reichswehr Law provided a system with the possibility of producing more efficient officers through additional training and education.

The number of non-commissioned officers raised to lieutenant from December, 1918 to March, 1920 was not precisely known. Some historians, Harold Gordon for example, estimate the total as high as 300-400, while a retired Lieutenant-General, Hans Mundt, numbered such promotions at 200.[86] It was known that many NCOs who took the officer candidate course and examination erned commissions either in the Reichswehr or in the reserves. Their total, in all probability, was far greater than a minimum of 200 or maximum of 400. Whether active or reserve, the total number of NCOs who became officers declined due to the personnel cutbacks associated with the Versailles Treaty and the inauguration of later

officer candidate programs directed at persons outside the military establishment. The second Reichswehr Minister, Dr. Otto Gessler, noted that the promotion of NCOs to officer was not particularly successful as a means to democratize the army or to produce efficient officers. In 1928, of the 209 Unteroffiziere commissioned through various means who were still in the service, only twenty-five had attained the rank of captain.[87]

The promotion of NCOs to officer failed to produce lasting or significant effects on the army because the bulk of personnel involved came from the old military system. They generally held the same political views as the officer corps, accepted the same basic notions of inequalities in German society, and felt as threatened in their careers by the revolution as did the command hierarchy. Further, it was as necessary for an NCO officer aspirant to conform to the traditions, ideals, and values of the corps as it was for an officer candidate from any other source. Such men were quickly assimilated by the system and in most cases were quite willing to meet the expectations of the leaders of the corps in order to join a more elite and prestigious social group. The failure of the NCO promotion program brought an end to attempts by the civilian authorities to alter the military. The Republic henceforth accepted the Reichswehr on its own terms because no other possibilities still existed.

Conclusions

In the demobilization period from January 1919 to June 1919, the conflicts already existing within the military and in military-civil relations continued. From the outset, the major area of dispute was

over the question of what officers should be retained in the service. The High Command and the General Staff sought to preserve the positions of officers of a traditionalist character, in particular staff officers, while the Demobilization Commission headed by Reinhardt insisted upon retaining the best men determined by front service and performance of combat duty. In the end, the former triumphed because in spite of efforts to reduce the officer corps' personnel, Seeckt preserved many positions by the creation of superfluous staffs. As a result, fewer staff officers were released from the army. This meant that a high proportion of officers remaining in the service had strong ties with the hierarchy of the Imperial army.

For officer selection, the process of demobilization created more problems than it solved. Too few officers retired voluntarily and this left a large pool of men who wanted to continue a military career anxiously awaiting the results of the peace treaty and the formation of a new army. Because of Reinhardt's cooperation and acknowledgment of the Soldier's Councils is his January 19, 1919, decree, the Colonel appeared to these officers to be a traitor to the traditions and ideals of the officer corps. Many officers saw Reinhardt as merely a tool in the hands of a government hostile to the military. Such men failed utterly to grasp his sense of reality or appreciate the tactics he employed in nullifying radical demands to alter the entire military system.

The contest among Reinhardt, the High Command and the General Staff became more heated as plans for the organization of a peacetime command structure for the army began to materialize. Both the High

Command and the General Staff submitted proposals to the government which were obviously weighted in favor of obtaining independence for the military leadership with freedom from civilian control as the ultimate goal. These plans allowed more power for the military than the civilian government wished to concede and were, in reality, contrary to the requirements for the command structure of the army as set forth in the constitution. Although the majority of Seeckt's organizational proposals were adopted, Reinhardt insisted upon changing the collegial system to one headed by a single commander-in-chief for the military establishment. With the acceptance of Reinhardt's constitutionally correct vertical plan by the government, the President and the Reichswehr Minister became the actual commanders of the army. Gröner retured shortly thereafter and Seeckt adopted an inactive status though he remained highly influential. He operated behind the scenes to oppose and undermine Reinhardt as Chef der Heeresleitung through close personal associates still on active service. With the loss of their traditional superiority in civil-military relations, the old military hierarchy had suffered a severe defeat. However, these officers were not content to retire from the battle and continued the struggle by other means.

The last major effort on the part of the government to change the values and ideals of the military also occurred during the demobilization period. This objective was considered obtainable by civilian officials through the infusion of presumably more democratic and liberal-minded officer personnel into the officer corps from the non-commissioned ranks. However, most of those commissioned were simply not as efficient as the officers they replaced nor were they any more democratic, being

products of the Imperial army themselves. Further, the army itself controlled the majority of appointments to officer candidate programs and naturally selected only personnel considered to possess the proper conservative outlook. Those of liberal or democratic views who were commissioned found the career a difficult one. Many were subsequently dismissed from the service because they did not qualify for the next highest rank, as evidenced by the small number who attained the rank of Captain. The long-term influence of commissioned NCOs on the officer corps was negligible in the final analysis.

The primary significance of the Provisional Reichswehr for the future was in the high degree of continuity it provided between the Imperial army and the 100,000-man Reichswehr. The inclusion of former Freikorps personnel in both the leadership echelon and rank and file meant that a significant portion of the military, whose sworn duty was to protect the constitution, actually despised the present government. Their reliability was highly questionable if circumstances had required them to defend republican institutions. In reality, the Provisional Reichswehr served as a base for a 100,000-man army which was anti-democratic, anti-republican, and in favor of a more authoritarian system.

Thus, by June 1919, most of the conflicts within the army itself and between the civilian government and military leaders remained unsolved. Considerable progress had been made toward establishing civilian control over the army, but powerful forces opposed to governmental interference in military affairs remained at work in the officer corps. The publishing of the Versailles Treaty in May 1919 presented the military leaders with the unpleasant task of making further reductions in officer personnel.

Since this would require more drastic measures than heretofore employed, bitter conflict within the military was unavoidable.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER IV

[1]Michaelis and Schraepler, "Weg in Weimar," pp. 513-514.

[2]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 62.

[3]Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," p. 52. See also GLA Karlsruhe, K 5776, Personalamt, Nr. 1898/18.19 PA, Berlin,W.8, den 31, Dezember 19. A certain Lieutenant Bayer of Infantry Regiment 11 did not qualify to remain in the service as he spent only one month during the war at the front in combat. "Leutnant B a y e r während des Krieges nur 1 Monat als Offizier in der front Dienst geleistet habe."

[4]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 292.

[5]Kolb and Rürup, Zentralrat, meeting of December 2, 1918, p. 79, footnote 40. See also Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 26 who states that Ebert expected the old officer corps to be employed as the basis for the new army and Wolfgang Sauer, "Die Reichswehr," in Karl D. Bracher, Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik (Villigen: Ring-Verlag, 1964), p. 120, hereafter cited Sauer, "Die Reichswehr."

[6]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 292.

[7]Demeter, Officer Corps, pp. 49-50.

[8]Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner, p. 151, letter from Gröner to his wife dated March 21, 1919.

[9]Gröner, Lebenserinnerungen, p. 513.

[10]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 199, Akt. 1, Kreigsministerium, Personalamt I, 1/5.19, Berlin, 2. Mai 1919.

[11]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 199, Akt. 1, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten an Reichswehrgruppenkommando 4, Nr. 75821 P, München, 6 Juli, 1919, point 5.

[12]HSA Stuttgart, M 390, Band 289, Württemberg Kreigsministerium, Abt. Gen. Kd. IIa, Nr. 6095/19P, Stuttgart, 11 Juli, 1919. An example of the personal review of one officer by another was ordered thus: "ueber Major Seeger: Colonel Freiherr von Mühlen."

[13]BHA München, Abt.IV., Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 19, Akt.8, Heeresabwicklungsamt Bayern. Betreff: Überweisung von Offizieren aus Reichswehr. ". . . die Verabscheidungs und Versorgungsangelegenheiten der bayerischen Offiziere nicht vom Reich, sonder von Bayern behandelt werder . . ."

[14]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, Nr. 116778P 1, München, 20 August, 1919. For a commentary on this law, see Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 41.

[15]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 59.

[16]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Reichswehrbefelhsstelle Bayern, Nr. 120743 P 11, München, 27, August, 1919, "Berichtstattung über die aktiven Offiziere."

[17]BHA München, Abt.IV., MKR 14529, Heeresabwicklungsamt Bayern, Nr. 144464, P I 3, München, 20 12.1919 an Schützen-Regiment Nr. 42, Augsburg. Vertraulich! (confidential). Although this document deals with a Landwehr Lieutenant, the reference to an "Offiziers-U Liste" is noteworthy. This was a supposedly unofficial, but widely practiced procedure. The existence of such lists was confirmed by a fellow researcher at the BHA Munich from his personal experience and knowledge, having served in the military during this period. See also Friedrich Rau, Übergangheeres, p. 166. The "U-List" notation meant "classified as unqualified for the Reichswehr. (Verzeichnisse für die Reichswehr ungeeigneter).

[18]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 83, Akt. 3, Bayer. Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr. 4, P I, Nr. 3540, München, 3.10.1919, "Stellenbesetzung," p. 2.

[19]Hans von Seeckt, Die Reichswehr (Leipzig: R. Kittler Verlag, 1933), p. 65, hereafter cited Seeckt, Reichswehr.

[20]Fried, Guilt, p. 107, footnotes 1 and 2.

[21]Caspar, SPD, pp. 49-50.

[22]Research Branch, Office of the Chief of Staff (B2), Main Headquarters, Central Commission for Germany (BE), Lübbecke, B.A.O.R., HQ/4310 (Res), van Cutrum, Brig. Gen. Staff, W.S., report. "Organization and Personnel Problems in the Control of the Reichswehr," circa 1945, p. 2. It was widely held by the Allies that the "Sicherheits" units were created specifically to evade the Versailles Treaty. This was not entirely correct as many existed prior to the treaty and were simply expanded to meet the continuing domestic and border crises of the immediate post-war period, hereafter cited Van Cutrum, "Organization." See also Michael Salewski, Entwaffnung und Militärkontrolle in Deutschland 1919-1922 (München: Oldenburg Verlag, 1966), pp. 150-151, hereafter cited Salewski, Entwaffnung; and National Archives, A44K, Militär 3, Volkswehr und Wehrpflicht, Band 4, K 951/248376, microfilm, frame K 248452.

[23]Salewski, Entwaffnung, p. 84.

[24]Caspar, SPD, p. 23.

[25]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr. 4, Hpt. Nr. 16043/ P I Nr. 4991, Betreff: Verwendung der Offiziere, die unter Umständen am 1.4.20 ausscheiden mussen, page 1, part 1, point 2.

[26]BHA München, Abt.IV., Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 83, Akt. 3, Nr. 2001 C 1632, Staataministerium des Innern an Wehrkreiskommando VII, whose distribution list revealed that it was sent to all military units in the Bavarian Reichswehr command. Of significance was the total absence of non-military agencies included for recruiting purposes.

[27]HSA Stuttgart, M 660, Reinhardt Nachlass, Band 57a, "Aufbau der Reichswehr," p. 7.

[28]Craig, Politics, pp. 361-362.

[29]Görlitz, General Staff, p. 216; Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 31; Craig, Politics, pp. 367-368, footnote 3, page 368; and Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 88.

[30]Kitchen, History, p. 240.

[31]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 218.

[32]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 64 from the Denkschrift des Chefs des Feldeisenbahnwesens von Olderhausen, "über die künfige Stellung des Generalstabes," Gr. H.Q., den 9 Februar, 1919. See also Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 48. It appears likely that Gröner was instrumental in the concept of the document as his stated objectives were the same.

[33]See Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 66-73.

[34]Görlitz, General Staff, p. 214.

[35]Ibid., p. 225.

[36]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, pp. 45-46.

[37]Ibid., p. 44.

[38]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 52. For other accounts see Friedrich von Rabenau, Seeckt: Aus seinem Leben, 1918-1936 (Leipzig: Hase und Köhler Verlag, 1936), p. 115, hereafter cited Rabenau, Seeckt; Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 47; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 44. Gröner, whose own tactics were many times rather dubious, was simply outmaneuvered on this occasion.

[39]Hossbach, Entwicklung, p. 82 and Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 99.

[40]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 55.

[41]See Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 74-79.

[42]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 99.

[43]Meier-Welcker, "Stellung," p. 150.

[44]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 196; and Görlitz, General Staff, p. 218.

[45]Johannes Erger, Der Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch: Ein Beitrag zur deutschen Innenpolitik 1919/20 (Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, 1967), p. 58, hereafter cited Erger, Kapp Putsch.

[46]Kitchen, History, p. 240.

[47]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 53; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 46.

[48]Meier-Welcker, "Stellung," p. 155.

[49]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 61; and Schwatlo-Gesterding, Reichswehr, p. 67.

[50]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 200-201.

[51]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 61; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 13.

[52]Gen. Walther Reinhardt, Wehrkraft und Wehrwille, edited by Lt. Gen. a.D. Ernst Reinhardt (Berlin: Verlag von E. S. Mittler & Sohn, 1932), p. 51, hereafter cited Reinhardt, Wehrkraft; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 57, letter from Reinhardt to General von der Goltz, January 2, 1920.

[53]Erger, Kapp Putsch, p. 59.

[54]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 84.

[55]Märcker, Kaiserheer, p. 65.

[56]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 23.

[57]Ibid., p. 28.

[58]See Meier-Welcker, "Stellung," pp. 152-153, where Seeckt's illness, which arose after the realization that Reinhardt's position was secure, has been described variously as a heart attack, heart condition and malaria.

[59]Ibid., pp. 152-153.

[60]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 221 who points out that while Seeckt was Reinhardt's subordinate in the army chain of command, the General was busily engaged in solidifying control for himself over the Truppenamt where he intended to attain complete autonomy.

[61]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 20.

[62]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 276. Seeckt and many other officers, Gordon writes, felt quite differently about this.

[63]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 41; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, pp. 12 and 33. Reinhardt expressed it as "ein wirklich einheitliches Reichsheer."

[64]See Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 27.

[65]Görlitz, General Staff, pp. 215-216.

[66]Gordon, Reichswehr, pp. 68-69 and Appendix I showing the Freikorps which entered the Reichswehr, pp. 436-438.

[67]Reichs-Gesetzblatt, Jahrgang 1919, Nr. 57 (nr. 6555), p. 295. For Bavaria, see Bundesgesetzblatt, 1870, p. 9, paragraph III, section 5. In the case of Württemberg, see Bundesgesetzblatt, 1870, p. 658, from the military convention of November 25, 1870.

[68]Ibid., p. 206. These were deputy or vice officers termed Offizierstellvertreter or Feldwebel-Leutnants.

[69]Verordnungs-Amts-Blatt des Heeresabwicklungsamt Bayern, no. 1 mit 87, 1919, v. 2, Nr. 55645A, Bamberg, 10 Mai, 1919, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, Betreff: Reichswehr, Aufführungbestimmungen des Ministeriums für mil. Angelegenheiten für die Bildung einer vorläufigen Reichswehr in Bayern, p. 455F, part B, section 9ff. For a commentary, see Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 66ff and passim.

[70]Heeresverordnungsblatt 1919, v. 2, Anlage 8a and 8b, Bestimmungen über Ernennung von Feldwebelleutnant zu Leutnant, pp. 470-474. Note: The HVBl had different titles in the various contingents. The one used here was the Bavarian Verordnungs-Amts-Blatt des Heeresabwicklungsamt Bayern. This ordinance was substantially the same as Nr. 65, 24 Juli, 1919, p. 646 of the preussischen Armee-Verordnungsblatt, Der Reichswehrminister, Nr. 1498/6 19.C 1a, Berlin, den 16 Juli, 1919, Nr. 1060 Beförderung von Unteroffizier zu Offizieren in der Reichswehr.

[71]Ibid., p. 474.

[72]Heeresverordnungsblatt, 1919, v. 2, Nr. 945, pp. 989-990 regarding Nr. 103239 A, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten. Armee-Abteilung, München 25 Juli, 1919. Betreff: Erstellung der Anmeldungen zur Offizierprüfung, zum Schullehrgangen für Unteroffiziere, die Offiziere werder sollen und zur Offizieranwärterschule.

[73]Heeresverordnungsblatt, 1919, v. 2, Nr. 977, pp. 1029-1031 regarding Nr. 103638 A, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten. Armee-Abteilung, Betreff: Offizierprüfung für aktive Unteroffizier, München. 30 Juli, 1919.

[74]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 142, Akt. 1, Bayer. Gruppenkommando 4, IIa, Nr. 1196, Betreff: Beförderungen von Fähnrichen und Unteroffizieren, München, den 8.7.19.

[75]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Bayer. Gruppenkommando Nr. 4, IIa Nr. 262, München, den 6. Juni, 1919, Besetzung der für Unteroffizier freiwerderen Offiziersstellen in der vorläufigen Reichswehr.

[76]Caspar, SPD, p. 51. This practice was also employed on a more limited scale by the Bavarian Military Minister Schneppenhorst. Those so promoted were dubbed "Schneppenhorst-Leutnants."

[77]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Nr. 97 137 P, 97 138 P, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, München, 7.19. pp. 2-3.

[78]Ibid., pp. 6-8ff.

[79]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, P 5, Nr. 64368 P/19 et al., Besetzung der für Unteroffizier freiwerdenen Offiziersstellen in der vorläufigen Reichswehr, München, 16.7.1919, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, p. 3.

[80]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Bayer. Gruppenkommando Nr. 4, IIa, Nr. 1983 an Minist. f. mil. Angelegenheiten, München, 29.7.1919, Beförderungen, p. 1. Note entry "C"-Zu Leutnants des Beurlaubtenstands (1) Vzfw. Oesterreicher, Freikorps Oberland. Freikorps Oberland later became Reichswehr Brigade 21.

[81]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Fwks-Offizierstellv. Fabian an Artillerie depot Ingolstadt, den 2.6.1919, 2 pages.

[82]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Bayer. Gruppenkommando Nr. 4, IIa, Nr. 7231 an die Stadtkommandanten, (zu Nr. 447 IIa v. 1.7.19), München, den 12.7.1919, Betreff: Ernennung von Feldwebelleutnants und Beförderung wegen Tapferkeit vor der Feind.

[83]See BHA München, ABT.IV, MKR 14529, 118706 P I 5, Betreff: Personalveränderungen, 21. Aug.1919.

[84]A typical example may be found in BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Rw. BB, Zu. Nr. 134798 P I 5, Betreff: Beförderung, München 29.9.1919. This referred to Sanitäts-Vizefeldwebel Oskar Hans Mueller who applied directly to Reichswehrminister Noske for promotion to officer. The military authorities in Munich wrote that "Mueller seems to believe that each NCO without exception can become an officer." The local commander at Würzburg was asked to clarify this for Mueller on the basis of the appropriate HVBl section.

[85]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Aw.A.B., Zu Nr. 133706 P I 5, Betreff: Beförderung, P I 5, München, 13.10.1919 regarding Offizierstellvertreter Erbs of the 6th Field Artillery Regiment.

[86]See Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 193; and Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 117.

[87]Caspar, SPD, p. 52.

CHAPTER V

THE SCREENING AND FORCED REDUCTION STAGE: JUNE 1919 - MARCH 1920

More than any other factor, control of officer selection and education for the Reichswehr after World War One determined the character of the new German army. The recruitment and training of young men on whom the future officer corps and army depended was a critical issue, both to the government, which hoped that the army would be republican-minded, and to the traditionalists in the officer corps led by Seeckt, who wanted the ideals of the past maintained. This divergence of goals produced an unending conflict between the socialist-led government and the surviving officers from the hierarchy of the Imperial army.

During the June 1919-March 1920 period, the major conflicts remained much the same as before: between the Reinhardt and Seeckt factions in the military, and between the traditionalists in the army command and the government. Neither side in the latter dispute emerged victorious because the government was as divided as the military, if not more so. Relations among all the contending groups deteriorated during the June 1919-March 1920 months to the point where major confrontations became inevitable if a settlement of the issues was to be reached.

The period also saw the re-emergence of an assertive particularism in the south German states which challenged the authority of the Reich government, especially in matters relating to military personnel, and precluded the implementation of a united command and administrative system for the army. This meant, on the one hand, that the military leadership could not present a united front in its relations with the government and on the other, that the government in Berlin could not exert much control over personnel selection in the Baden and Bavarian contingents. Although the Reich government was not successful in solving this problem, the Reich military command--under Seeckt--did eventually overcome particularism in officer selection.

The period immediately following the demobilization of the Imperial army, therefore, contributed little toward solving the basic military problems which had existed since the armistice in November 1918. Because of lingering disputes between the civilians and military, and due to the continuity with the Imperial army provided by the Provisional Reichswehr, the government failed to find an alternative to the employment of the old army for its protection. Therefore, the conflicts over reorganization and officer selection widened the distance between the government and the bulk of the officer corps to an impassible chasm. Added to these problems were the controversies over the acceptance or rejection of the Versailles Treaty, as well as the establishment of a new command structure necessitated by both the treaty and the Weimar constitution.

For the officer corps, the Versailles Treaty meant that the reduction of personnel continued through the employment of measures

designed to force the retirement or separation of surplus officers. In spite of the fact that Reinhardt and Braun established basic selection criteria to be applied impartially to all candidates by the Personalamt, the decisive point in the development of the officer corps was Seeckt's manipulation of the system when he became Chef der Heeresleitung after March 1920. Even before then, however, from his position as head of the Truppenamt, Seeckt could influence officers and officer candidates preparing for promotion or commissions through his control of training and education for the army.

In general terms, the very acceptance of the treaty caused problems in civil-military relations. Many officers previously dismissed from the servoice joined conservative political parties or groups plotting against the new regime and later supported such forces in the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch of March 1920. It was, indeed, the continued reductions in officer personnel, first under the continuing demobilization, and then after Versailles, which led to the Putsch that changed the history of the Reichswehr.

The Reduction of the Officer Corps: June 1919 to March 1920

With the adoption of Reinhardt's organizational plan for the command structure of the new army, Gröner's retirement, and Seeckt's assumption of an advisory role in the Truppenamt, the primary conflict shifted from structural and command questions to that of officer selection. The officer corps of the Prussian-German army never possessed a centrally administered officer selection program because the Imperial army incorporated into its structure troops of the formerly independent states. These states retained considerable control over the selection

process, but there were certain criteria common to all contingents, including military education, training, and performance, as well as the acceptance of a conservative outlook based upon the traditions of the past. In reality, very little changed in the basic requirements in the Reichswehr although the overall philosophy of the corps leadership underwent alteration due to the differences in outlook between Reinhardt and Seeckt.[1]

In the Imperial army, officer selection came in wartime under the direction of the Personalamt, as part of the Military Cabinet while the Prussian War Minister administered the program in peacetime. In the Reichswehr, the head of the Personalamt, the Badenese General von Braun (1918-1922) possessed an autonomous position because of his relations with Prussian War Minister Reinhardt. Braun had a great deal of influence, especially in the daily running of his office as well as in policy decisions. It was Braun, as Reinhardt later wrote, who was responsible through "his trustworthy loyalty [for] the position of the officer corps not being destroyed."[2]

Initially, the government considered the demobilization process adequate to reduce the army to peacetime strength. Some officers had no interest in pursuing a military career and opted to retire voluntarily.[3] For officers wishing to remain in the service, the Personalamt applied the Personnel and Qualifications Regulations (Personal- und Qualifikations Bestimmung) from the Army Ordinance Gazette of 1902. These requirements listed the general characteristics for officers--and later officer candidates as well--as military and intellectual knowledge and ability, physical vigor and condition, and they demanded that the nomination of

officers be made only in the "interests of the service" (Interesse des Dienstes).[4] At that time, the overwhelming majority of officers and officer candidates came from personnel of the old army.

The application of the officer selection criteria in most cases was assigned to the regimental level, but in the spring of 1919, a serious dispute arose over selection criteria between the High Command and the Personalamt. The Imperial army had between 38,000 and 40,000 active officers at the end of the war. Of this total about 23,000 had pre-war patents (tenure); and 15,000 were war-commissioned. When on August 1, 1919, it became known that only 4,000 officers would be retained, the policy of allowing demobilization to serve as the basis for the selection procedure came under severe criticism by the Hand Command and General Staff factions. By that time, 2,800 staff officers, 5,800 Hauptleute (Captains and First Lieutenants), and a large part of the war-commissioned and reserve-status officers slated for dismissal indicated that they wished to remain in the service.[5] When Reinhardt and Braun began the selection process by picking the most qualified front line officers first, Gröner and then Seeckt sent angry letters to the Reichswehr Ministry.

As acting Chief of the General Staff, Seeckt stated that he wanted all the really good elements of the old officer corps to remain and demanded that this should be made known to the Kreiskommissare in charge of local selection. He stated further that apparently the Personalamt took an opposite stand with the policy that "the proven front officers must be selected first" due to the present unpopularity of the General Staff. The General Staff officer, he wrote, is a front officer and reminded Reinhardt of the great service the General Staff had

performed in the past. In Seeckt's opinion, these men were the best possible officer material and the elite of the officer corps. Seeckt argued that strength and homogeneity in the army depended upon the older officers and every effort had to be made to procure positions for them.[6] Reinhardt forwarded the letter to Braun with handwritten comments to the effect that he shared Seeckt's view on the performance of the General Staff as he was certain the Chief of the Personalamt did, but the matter remained in Braun's hands.

Seeckt's demand was not rejected, but modified because Braun believed that he had to oversee the interests of all officers in the army. Therefore, the selection criteria remained as before; the best qualified officers in terms of performance of duty and education in each service grade of all combat arms would be considered first. General von Braun explained further that he had been advised by two leading officers not to give preference to General Staff officers in making appointments to the corps. They did not want front line officers forced to give "pride of place" to General Staff officers as a matter of principle. Many thousands of officers, Braun continued, had been released from the service since 1918, but none from the General Staff. According to Braun, there was no official policy to select front officers over the General Staff although there was, he admitted, consideration of the present mood against the military elite on the part of proven front officers who were apprehensive about their own future. In conclusion, the Chief of the Personalamt commented that he would follow any course set by the Prussian War Minister.[7] Selection criteria remained in Braun's control thereafter, unaltered by Gröner's or Seeckt's complaints. It would in time be changed somewhat

by the Versailles Treaty, but then only in numbers for both regular and reserve officers and not in policy or procedure.[8]

The conflict over who should be retained, war-commissioned front officers or staff officers, had long range consequences. Many of the former were young, virtually taken out of school and sent to the front lines with inadequate training. The army became the focal point of their lives as it already was with the professional officer. After being excluded by the selection process, neither the war-commissioned officer nor the professional officer had an acceptable alternate career. Front officers felt badly misused after the sacrifices they made for the nation, and consequently the majority became alienated from the Republic and even the army. Radicalism and violence appealed to many who turned in their frustration to groups opposing the Republic and espousing a violent solution to Germany's post-war problems. Organizations like the SA provided these persons solace and a comradeship akin to that of the front.

The professional General Staff officer differed in his response to the threat to his position. Like the front officer, the staff officer was bitter and resentful toward the Republic and its military leaders, However, the majority of these officers were highly competent leaders unlike the war-commissioned personnel who had less training. The staff officers were among the most competent in the service and were more likely to possess the traditional social and political qualifications. They were a part of the military elite of the nation and their talents were well respected regardless of their conservative or traditionalist views, even by the republican government. Furthermore, with Seeckt as their champion,

they could expect support within the military hierarchy. It was possible, therefore, for the staff officer to obtain effective support for retention in the officer corps through ties with Seeckt at the Truppenamt, where officer training and educational policies were determined. This proved to be a decisive factor in the struggle over officer selection criteria, especially when Seeckt became Chef der Heeresleitung after March 1920. The programs to select future commanders during Seeckt's tenure as head of the Truppenamt made it possible for staff officers to utilize their educational superiority to great advantage in direct competition with other officers. The tests and courses which formed a vital part of the selection process better suited the capabilities of the staff officer and considerably enhanced his chances of success in retaining a place in the new army.

Thus, Seeckt's position as head of the Truppenamt became the key for the future officer corps because of its role in the preparation of officers and officer candidates for promotion. This became apparent--at least to the military leadership--early in the contest over officer selection because only through superior education and performance of duty could officers expect to remain in the corps. Particularly important in this respect was a program initiated by Seeckt in 1920 to attract volunteers from outside the present establishment for training as officer candidates in the army.

The Officer Candidate Program of 1920

A new officer training program in the army became vital to the command hierarchy because of the republican government's early policy of

promoting non-commissioned personnel to officer status. The army leadership became concerned with the number of NCOs arbitrarily raised to subaltern and Seeckt devised a program to give the military at least some control over the commissioning of NCOs through the Truppenamt. In this manner, the army could assure that those promoted accorded with their notion of a Reichswehr officer. Concern in the army grew further with the reductions in professional personnel and due to the commissioning of enlisted men. Seeckt's 1920 program for officer candidates sought to ensure that rigorous education and performance standards, as well as political reliability, continued to be met by all officers regardless of their origin.

The existence of such a program became vital to Seeckt's rebuilding of the officer corps. Eventually, the majority of officer candidates who attained commissions after completing the program came from previously non-military backgrounds. In addition, the bulk of non-commissioned personnel who had been promoted to officer were then dismissed from the service as unqualified for the next highest rank. Their replacements were not only more qualified technically through the military educational programs, but due to Seeckt's influence in designing the courses also held more traditionalist views.

Later, after the Versailles Treaty limited the number of officer candidates to that produced by a yearly discharge rate of five percent, the Reichswehr had a maximum of 200 new officers annually.[9] In the beginning, the sources for officer candidates were the same as before; NCOs, former Cadets, Fähnriche or Fahnenjunker from the army, air service, or navy. The method by which applicants were chosen as officer

candidates from outside the establishment became even more important as many former sources for officers, especially the Cadet Corps, were eliminated. After 1920, most officer candidates had attended civilian schools and the examinations for these persons tested performance on the expected educational level of a Realschule, Oberrealschule, Gymnasium, or other public secondary institution.[10] Non-graduates could become officers, but could not rise to the higher ranks because the military hierarchy considered these candidates only marginally qualified in educational background.[11] The officer candidate training process entailed attendance at a number of service schools and exposed the candidate to constant scrutiny and examination. Each successful candidate began with the Reifeprüfung or matriculation certification from a secondary school. If he did not already have the completion certificate, he could obtain it through special courses and qualifying examinations before becoming an official officer candidate.[12]

The scope of recruiting personnel for the officer corps also expanded since it became possible for officers of the navy to enter the Reichswehr as provided by an order of Reichswehr Minister Noske on September 2, 1919. Active naval ensigns (Fähnriche zur See) could transfer to the army if they had passed the Sea Officer's Examination and were qualified for the rank of Sea Lieutenant or under the law entitling ensigns of the old army to become officer candidates.[13] The number of naval personnel who actually transferred to the army is not exactly know, but sources for such applicants might have been the radical Volksmarine Division and the Loewenfeld Naval Brigade.

An important question which arose regarding Fähnriche and Fahnenjunker of the old army dealt with whether or not the half year at the front was still required or whether in such cases the aspirant was eligible only for promotion into the reserves.[14] The need for clarification of policy was resolved by instructions from Noske and Seeckt, acting on behalf of the Chef der Heeresleitung, on January 20, 1920. It set the tone for the following years by stating that the new army was indeed smaller and its officers needed to be more capable. Strict observance of the selection criteria established by the Personalamt was the order of the day.

During the officer candidate's training with the troops and in weapons school, evaluation of his qualifications occurred regularly. The volunteer who entered the army could expect the following schedule in his career:

1½ years front service (active duty with a troop unit)

2 years weapons school (including service time with the troops)

½ year front service (active duty with a troop unit)

4 years total, or until promotion

The earliest possible date for a commission of new officer candidates under the Seeckt plan was April 1, 1924, and the number of candidates eligible for promotion at that time could produce as many as 450 new officers. Fähnriche, Fahnenjunker and officer candidates from the non-commissioned ranks were to be given primary consideration for entry into the program. In the first category (A) were personnel from the old army who qualified under the terms of the Army Ordinance Gazette of 1919 for promotion to officer, candidates whose qualifications were not yet

fulfilled, but who had completed special courses; and lastly volunteers of promise who entered the army and served on active duty with a troop unit. In the next category (B) were non-commissioned officers who passed the Officer's Examination required by a March 31, 1919, decree, those qualified by other categories such as bravery before the enemy, and others who were deemed by their commanding officers especially qualified. Up to thirty percent of the available positions in the special courses to prepare officer candidates for the Officer's Examination were to be filled by non-commissioned personnel.[15]

The fact that the civilian government took no part in determining the content of educational and training programs for the army meant that the head of the Truppenamt had a powerful tool with which to mould the attitudes and values of the future leaders of the military establishment. Officer training and education were areas in which the government traditionally played no role, this being left to the experts in the field--the military themselves. Even after the November Revolution, the new regime placed education and training on an internal administrative basis for the military hierarchy to control and thus forfeited a possible means with which to influence the army along more liberal lines. It was the heads of the Truppenamt in the final analysis who maintained the ideals of the past in the Reichswehr through their control of education and training.

The officer education program sponsored by the Truppenamt was not the only one which produced highly qualified personnel for the Reichswehr. Lieutenant-General Reinhardt, after his resignation as the Chef der Heeresleitung inaugurated the "Reinhardt Course" of university study for ten army and two navy officers per year. The curriculum included

military history, operations, foreign languages, seminars on topics of general interest and trips outside the country to broaden the officer's perspective. The program featured instruction by both military and civilian educators and was the forerunner of the latter-day Wehrmacht academy.[16] Additional programs were offered in specific subject areas for officers at technical colleges which featured bridge building, ballistics, and motor and aircraft construction during an eight-semester curriculum. Examinations followed the completion of the course, and successful candidates earned academic degrees as Diploma Engineers (Diplom-Ingenieur-Dipl.Ing.) or Doctor of Engineering (Dr.Ing.).[17]

The technical quality of officer produced by the Reichswehr system of selection and education was extremely high. This, coupled with the rigorous competition for the few positions available within the officer corps, meant that the old military classes, the nobility, the professions, and the upper middle class with proper education, once again monopolized control over the army as a whole. The lower classes, particularly the workers, were effectively excluded through a lack of education, social position, and after March 1920 when Seeckt became head of the army, by the traditional view that these elements did not possess proper "character." Most middle-class officers did not suffer this discrimination, especially if they had a conservative political philosophy.

By the end of 1922, Seeckt controlled all of the vital positions in the leadership of the Reichswehr which were necessary for the centralization of the selection, training, and education of officers. None of the civilian plans for the re-adjustment of the philosophy of the army had succeeded and the traditionalists under Seeckt's direction reconstructed

the Reichswehr to suit their own conceptions of the new army in Germany. Despite the numerous plans by various civilian and military groups for the future army, it was the Versailles Treaty which had the greatest long-term effects on the organization of the military establishment on subsequent programs for officer selection.

The Versailles Treaty and the Reichswehr

Much of the in-fighting between the Prussian War Minister, the High Command and the General Staff factions in the military came to naught because the Versailles Treaty provided specific terms under which the government and Reichswehr had to operate. The provisions of the treaty first became known to the Germans in May 1919 and were received with shock and resentment.

The treaty contained a special section, Number 5, which dealt with military, naval, and air matters. It outlined the organization and strength of the future German army in great detail, and for the officer corps, nine particular points were of utmost importance. These few lines shaped the corps' structure, fixed the total number of officers permitted to serve in the army at 4,000, but established no criteria for officer selection. According to the treaty, the German army was to comprise no more than seven divisions of infantry and three of cavalry with a total number of effectives not to exceed 100,000 men inclusive of officers and depots. Furthermore, the army was to be reduced to 200,000 men three months after ratification of the settlement. In each subsequent three-month period, new reductions schedules were to be determined by the Allies so that by March 31, 1920, the army would be at the specified 100,000 men. The treaty also restricted para-military forces, as well as the number of

customs officers, forest guards and coast guards to that of 1913 and forbade the assembly of these personnel for military training.

For the future army, the most important articles dealt with the creation of a professional military force based upon voluntary enlistments. Article 174 set the service time for NCOs and other enlisted ranks at twelve consecutive years with an annual discharge rate of five percent. Article 175 provided that officers retained in the army had to serve to forty-five years of age and new officers for twenty-five consecutive years. Former officers were forbidden to take part in any type of military exercise and the annual discharge rate was also five percent. Article 176 abolished military schools except those training replacements in specific branches of the service at the rate of one school per arm with the number of students related to the actual vacancies in the officer corps. Educational establishments, societies of discharged soldiers and clubs of any type could not engage in military training or have any connection with the ministries of war or other military authority.

As a result of the Versailles Treaty, the Germans lost the greater part of their army administrative organs, training facilities, and educational institutions. These included the War Academies at Berlin and Munich, military technical academies, war schools, the Cadet Corps, and NCO schools of the Imperial army. In the military administrative system, the agreement necessitated the dissolution of seven inspection areas, twenty-five general command areas (Generalkommando), the Inspectorates of the Cavalry, Foot Artillery, Pioneers, Fortresses, Jägers, the Landwehr Inspectorate and regional recruiting commands in addition to numerous staffs and commands created during the war. The most significant

losses, however, were that of the General Staff and the High Command which were dissolved and, by the terms of the treaty, never to be reconstituted.[18]

A law implementing the treaty became effective August 21, 1920, and stated that the armed forces (Wehrmacht) were to be composed of volunteers from the same sources as the Provisional Reichswehr, from the Provisional Reichswehr itself, and the Provisional Navy with all of the stipulations regarding the period of service and requirements included.[19] The creation of the treaty-based army opened a new era in the history of the German military establishment. Instead of weakening the German military to the point where they could never threaten the peace of Europe again, the stringent terms led to the development of a small, but highly efficient army which could easily be expanded should the opportunity ever arise. The ultimate effect of the treaty was precisely the opposite of that intended. The Reichswehr trained future leaders for a larger army which became a force without equal in Europe.

The immediate reaction of leading officers to the treaty, however, showed no uniformity of opinion on a course of action. Most favored rejection, even at the cost of renewed hostilities and the probable loss of German territory.[20] Reinhardt called the treaty unbearable, especially the so-called Peace Treaty; like Pandora's Box contains new evil that once again only blood and iron can heal. . . ."[21] Further conflict emerged within the officer corps between those favoring rejection and those who did not and like Gröner counseled acceptance to preserve the unity of the Reich. Most officers realized that it was extremely doubtful any popular support could be found for a continuation of hostilities.[22] Reinhardt

considered resigning over the matter, but did not want to have Gröner succeed him as Prussian War Minister. He eventually accepted the treaty in spite of his reservations and dislike of the honor paragraphs.[23] To strengthen the pro-treaty forces, Gröner proposed the formation of a national dictatorship headed by Gustav Noske and received limited support from his own High Command faction. However, Noske flatly refused Gröner's offer even though the General pledged personally to remain with the Defense Minister on the acceptance of the treaty "through thick and thin."[24] Noske's refusal ended the matter, but the bitterness over the issue remained in the officer corps.

The Constitution of August 1919

After the acceptance of the Versailles Treaty, the framers of the Weimar constitution attempted to incorporate the stipulations contained in the military clauses into national law. Particular emphasis was placed upon a strict adherence to the exact requirements in numbers of personnel and the overall structure demanded by the Allies. In most respects, however, the constitution maintained the pattern of the Imperial army by implementing a contingent system rather than a unitary one favored by the majority of the military hierarchy.

The republican constitution also partially recreated the command structure of the former regime by making the head of state the commander-in-chief of the armed forces in the same manner as the Kaiser had been.[25] In the revised system, the president became the head of the army and his office had the authority to name officers and the senior military officer in the army.[26] The constitution further provided for a Reichswehrministerium led by a civilian in order to place the armed forces under

parliamentary control. Although the National Assembly intended to create a central authority for the Reichswehr to eliminate the previous federal system, many politicians felt that it was not possible at that time. The result was a compromise that continued many features of the Imperial period.

The Weimar constitution retained the system of special rights instituted in 1871, thereby respecting the particularist sympathies of the south German states. Article 79 gave partial control of the state contingents to a special commandant (Landeskommandant) who represented the state's interests. This person was also the actual contingent commander for the Bavarian units in the Reichswehr.[27] Each contingent, while under the command of the Prussian War Minister, was also subordinate to the administrative competence of a state defense minister.[28]

Instead of clarifying the conflict between the Reich authority and the Länder military officials, the constitution contributed further to the divisiveness. By re-affirming the federal character of the military system and giving the states a semi-autonomous position in personnel matters, the constitution considerably lessened the control of the Reich government over officer selection--an area vital to the future army and officer corps. The adoption of a contingent system lent credence to existing notions and claims for independence in certain military matters on the parts of Bavaria and Baden made the task of creating a central or unified system dependent on the readiness of the southern states to do so voluntarily or upon a change in the law governing the military relations between the Reich and the states. In the interim, the selection of officers by the states continued to be based upon directives from the

Personalamt although consideration was given to the special rights and wishes of the individual contingents.

The Versailles Treaty and Weimar constitution also heightened another problem for the Reich civil and military authorities, that of south German particularism. Throughout the demobilization of the Imperial army and the initial reductions in the officer corps, the local authorities in Bavaria and Baden utilized the special rights accorded to them to retain places in the armed forces for soldiers of their Länder. However, the Versailles Treaty meant that in practical terms the south German states could no longer have such a free hand in local personnel matters because the reduction of the army and officer corps to the agreed treaty level fell under the competency of the Reich.

The Germans failed to meet the initial reductions schedule as some 290,000 troops were still under arms in February 1920 and 231,000 in April of that year. At the Spa Conference in July 1920, the Germans convinced the Allies to extend the timetable and finally reached the treaty figure of 100,000 men by January 1, 1921. It was, however, not met without difficulty, and many of the problems stemmed from the Bavarians and Badenese employing their constitutional prerogatives in personnel matters to protect the positions of their own officers in the Reichwehr.

During the interim between the Versailles Treaty and the attainment of the 100,000-man level, the army command attempted to find an acceptable formula for the allotment of personnel to each contingent. The formula which ultimately prevailed was based on the percentages of the Reich population in the individual states. This would have given Prussia 71%, Bavaria 13%, Saxony 10.5%, Württemberg 5% and Baden 0.5%.[29]

In practice, however, the figures were somewhat different and produced the following numbers of men for each contingent:[30]

Contingent	Percentage	Number of Troops
Prussia	72.6	72,600
Bavaria	11.6	11,600
Saxony	8.1	8,100
Württemberg	4.1	4,100
Baden	3.6	3,600

With further troop and officer reductions, the Reich government and military authorities met increasing resistance from the Bavarian and Badenese officials to release personnel from their contingents. Particularism had always been a potentially disruptive force in the Republic and after mid-1919 became so in fact.

Particularism and Personnel Selection

Particularism in southern Germany stemmed from Bavaria, Württemberg, and Baden having been independent political entities before the formation of the Empire. The differences in culture, traditions, and to a great extent, religion, were recognized by the creation of a federal system in both the civil and military spheres of Imperial Germany. Because of the federated political system and the semi-autonomous position of the *Länder* military contingents, the feelings of a separate identity from the other parts of the Empire persisted in the southern states. With the end of hostilities in 1918 and the subsequent disarray of the civil government and Imperial army, the southerners seized the opportunity to lessen the dominance of Prussia over their states. Particularism thus became a strong divisive force in the civil and military affairs of the early Weimar Republic. The national authorities constantly sought a solution to the problem in order to re-establish administrative and military unity.

However, southern particularism continued to trouble the national government until after 1923.

World War One brought about a re-birth of particularist sympathies in south Germany. The prolonged war effort after 1914 necessitated the imposition of national controls over the state economies and other facets of life. Relations between Prussia and the south deteriorated sharply in 1916 with the advent of the Hindenburg-Ludendorff dictatorship. This situation served to add constitutional as well as economic differences to the traditional rivalries.[31] The increasing centralization of functions under the Prussian-dominated government resurrected the idea of a Prussian "power-hunger" in the minds of many south Germans. They believed that at the opportune moment Prussia would attempt to subvert their constitutional rights by creating a Grosspreussen at the expense of the states in the south.[32] Since Berlin assumed the direction of the war effort and war economy, the Bavarians in particular reasoned that Berlin was responsible for every inconvenience and misfortune and "there had not been so much grumbling about the 'Saupreussen' in Bavaria since 1866."[33] Indeed, the expression became so common and so widely used that many Bavarian children believed that Saupreussen was a single word.[34]

Much of the anti-Prussian agitation in Bavaria toward the end of the war came from the radicals of the left, such as Kurt Eisner of the Independent Socialist Party, who sought to establish a republic. The propaganda of the radicals developed a decidely anti-monarchist character directed against the Wittelsbachs as well as the Hohenzollerns.[35] However,

in 1918, Bavarians in general lamented the end of the monarchy instead of celebrating the founding of the republic.[36]

The immediate post-war months brought an intensification of particularist agitation by southern politicans. As early as the Länder Reichskonferenz of November 25, 1918, in Stuttgart, south German spokesmen voiced support for the retention of a federal system based upon the 1871 military convention and constitution. This continued at the second Reichskonferenz in Berlin on January 25, 1919, where Eisner proposed a federal plan in the names of Bavaria, Hesse, and Saxony which featured a continuation and enlargement of the special rights (Sonderrechte) of the Länder.[37] In addition, ideas for a new south German Bund to include Austria emerged and won support from delegates representing Bavaria, Württemberg, Baden, and Hesse.[38]

The debate soon spilled over into the National Assembly, where the protection of military rights against possible reduction became a primary objective of the representatives of Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg.[39] Prussian representatives opted for a system which would have retained the prominence of their own state and even the SPD deputy Eduard David warned that the National Assembly should not become an "organ of particularims."[40] It was necessary, however, to heed the wishes of the south German states, and their demands helped shape the final character of the republican constitution.[41] The framers of the Weimar constitution realized fully that a solution to the particularist problem would not easily be found. On January 28, 1919, Hugo Preuss, who played a principal role in drafting the new constitution, stated at a cabinet meeting that "The unified state cannot currently be realized in Germany;

particularism is still too strong."[42] The system which evolved as the result of the insistence of the southern states upon retaining their special rights served only to prolong the particularist problem. Particularism waxed and waned over the following years, but always remained present and visible in one form or another.

The command echelon of the Reichswehr was especially concerned over the retention of the contingent system for the army under the Republic. Both Reinhardt and Seeckt as successive Chefs der Heeresleitung favored a unitary Reich command authority with complete control of officer selection, training, and administration in a centralized system.[43] Seeckt in particular made efforts to overcome the particularism of the state governments and state commandants, because the contingent system and state's rights constituted two of the greatest obstacles not only to his personal control of the army, but also to the internal unity of the officer corps, the independence of the army within the republican framework, and the general effectiveness of the troops.[44] Simply stated, Seeckt as commander of the Reichswehr felt that he could not rely on certain units in view of the hostility of the southern states toward the Reich authorities.[45] The Heeresleitung under both Reinhardt and Seeckt conducted campaigns to obtain more control over the contingents primarily in the field of personnel policy, but the Land governments resisted vigorously in the military and political spheres.[46]

The conflict between the state authorities and the Reich officials continued throughout the life of the Weimar Republic. However, only Baden and Bavaria had any success in pressing particularist demands because they had been granted more autonomy than other states by the

constitutions of 1871 and 1919. In the republic Württemberg and Saxony were subject to the direct control of Prussia and Reich officials as they had been under the Empire and possessed a much less autonomous position. Many south Germans saw little difference in control by Prussia under the monarchy and control by Prussia in a republic led by Social Democrats or liberals. To them, the conflict was a matter of defeating Prussian designs to control all of Germany for its own purposes.

The position of the states regarding military rights related to constitutional questions which offered no ready solution until alterations occurred in the military command structure and administrative functions of the military authorities. Seeckt instigated such changes in the relationships between the Reichswehr Minister and the Chef der Heeresleitung and reduced the powers of the Länder military ministries in the Wehrgesetz of 1921. He then assured compliance with his wishes by the appointment of personal protegés to commands within those states seeking autonomy for their contingent after the Bavarian Crisis of 1923. The problem, however, remained even after Seeckt's resignation in 1926. Seeckt ultimately achieved control over officer selection and over other key functions in the system as Chef der Heeresleitung. The long-standing dispute with General von Braun in the Personalamt ended in 1922 with Braun's ouster from that position and the inclusion of the Personalamt under the direct supervision of the Chef der Heeresleitung.

Particularism and Officer Selection: The Baden Example

The demobilization of the Imperial army and its contingents brought forth a strong upsurge of particularist sympathies focused on the percentage of officers to be retained by each state compared with the

Prussian allotment. Baden and Bavaria were the most volatile because of anti-Prussian sentiments which had lingered since 1866 and because it appeared to state officials that the Prussian-dominated Reich administration planned violations of local rights in personnel matters. Thus, officer selection became a point of contention from the outset. Both Baden and Bavaria sought to retain a higher percentage of native-born personnel in their Länder contingents which meant that many Prussians serving in the states's contingents faced dismissal on grounds other than military capabilities. In regard to the Baden conflict, the historian Harold Gordon asserts that the problem was gradually overcome so that "no immeasurable differences arose between the military authorities of the Reich and the government of Baden."[47] However, Gordon errs because the problem continued throughout the Seeckt era and beyond.

The reduction of personnel in the officers' corps of the Länder contingents provided an opportunity for the state governments and military authorities to exercise their special rights in selecting officers for command positions. The states based their arguments on both constitutional and traditional grounds in that the rights in question stemmed from the Imperial period and had been exercised on occasion since that time. In the Weimar era, the Reich authorities tried in vain to obtain voluntary compliance with the wishes of national officials in such questions but ultimately bowed to the demands of the states. Nevertheless, the removal of special state's rights occupied a prominent place in the objectives of both the civil and military authorities of the federal government.

The most common conflict which arose between the state military establishments and the Reich in the immediate post-war years centered around the retention of officers for command positions in the state contingents. In Baden, both the state government and the local military authorities made continuous efforts to secure positions in the Reichswehr for Badenese officers. This effort constituted an excellent example of the contest between the Reich and state officials over personnel selection.

The Chief of Staff of the Baden contingent, Lieutenant-Colonel Föhrenbach, carried on the struggle to secure positions for native Badenese officers during the demobilization with such vigor that it attracted the attention of not only the Baden state government, but also the Reich government and the Baden-born head of the Personalamt, General von Braun. Föhrenbach advised the Baden military ministry as early as April 1919 that the Baden Reichswehr Brigade was too small to permit industrious young officers the possibility of progress and good training. Badenese officers, he contended, were worth as much as their Prussian comrades and should be afforded more opportunities for training in the Prussian contingent of which they were a part.[48] On May 26, 1919, the Baden Ministerium für militarische Angelegenheiten communicated with the Generalkommando of the XIVth Army Corps on this subject. The ministry stated that the military convention (Übereinkunft) between Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, Württemberg and Baden provided for the possibility of the selection of higher leadership personnel by each state utilizing indigenous personnel (Landeskindern). Ministry officials, therefore, were of the opinion that it was not permissible for the position of

Adjutant of the Baden Reichswehr Brigade to be occupied by a non-Badenese. Consequently, the appointment of a certain Captain Richter could not receive the consent of the ministry. Badenese military authorities, it continued, also placed a special value upon filling the position of Brigade Intendant with a Badenese. Positions for physicians and veterinarians, it further complained, had been filled with non-Badenese and the ministry requested that especially qualified personnel from Baden in these categories be taken from other corps areas or recalled from the reserves to correct the imbalance. One complaint related to a specific officer, Major-General von Chrismar. The Badenese wanted Chrismar dismissed as Brigade Artillery Commander because he did not get along with his Badenese troops. The ministry suggested that his replacement be the Baden-born Major-General von Freideburg. In a similar vein, the ministry stated that a certain Captain, "as a non-Badener does not possess the Badenese native character (Volkscharakter)."[49]

On May 27, 1919, the reply to the Baden military ministry from the Gruppenkommando of the XIVth Army Corps stated that an exhaustive examination had been conducted pursuant to the complaints received. The point regarding the non-Badenese Adjutant was well taken. However, the Generalkommando had previously suggested this to the Reich authorities and had attempted to find a qualified Badenese Captain without success. Captain Richter, the report continued, was the son of an officer who spent many years in a Badenese regiment and had himself joined a Freiburg infantry unit in 1907. He served as battalion and regimental Adjutant and was twice wounded "for the German Fatherland and in a sense for the Baden homeland."[50] The question was therefore referred to the Chief of

the General Staff and to the Chief of the Personalamt. Badenese reserve medical personnel would not be recalled to active duty, but efforts would be made to locate qualified personnel in other corps areas for service with the Baden Reichswehr Brigade. The note closed with the stat ement that Major-General von Freideburg would likely be named to replace Major-General von Chrismar as the Badenese suggested. The question of the Major-General's qualifications, however, rested "with the Personalamt."[51]

The conflict continued and toward the end of 1919, a member of the National Assembly in BErlin sent a letter of protest to Baden State President Geiss stating that complaints had been received by Reich authorities regarding the preferential treatment accorded to Badenese officers over Prussian officers in the Baden Reichswehr Brigade. Reserve Badenese officers, it asserted, had been retained in the service instead of active non-Baden officers. The member of the National Assembly reminded the Baden State President of the critical nature of the times and concluded with the admonition that discrimination among contingent officers was henceforward discouraged.[52] However, in November 1919, the Baden Ministry of Military Affairs pursued the matter further by addressing its case directly to the Personalamt. The ministry again repeated its contention that the Prussian-Baden military convention required participation by the Baden contingent within the Prussian system and that as a result, there were many Badenese officers in Prussian formations and non-Baden officers and officials in the Baden contingent. Of a total of 245 officers in the Badenese component of Reichswehr Brigade 13, the letter stated, sixty-seven were Prussian with an additional twenty-two

Prussian officers recently appointed to the Brigade. With a maximum of three hundred officers forming the Badenese part of the Reichswehr officer corps, the Prussian share should have been a maximum of ninety the ministry contended. Yet, nearly a third of all officer positions were already filled with non-Badenese. The Baden Landtag, it warned, could not accept such a situation as long as qualified Badenese officers were available. The ministry complained that the twenty-two Prussians recently appointed to the predominantly Badenese Reichswehr Brigade 13 did not belong in the Baden contingent because they were born Prussians, although they were rated by the Reich military authorities--Reich in this instance being synonymous with Prussian--as superior to many of their Badenese comrades. The Badenese government and military contingent were capable, the ministry asserted, of determining the correctness of the qualifications of the officers themselves.[53]

The Personalamt's tentative answer to the claims of the Baden military ministry dated November 29, 1919, agreed to fill as many places in the Baden contingent as possible with Badenese. If necessary, the additional Badenese would come from among those serving in other Reichswehr contingents.[54] On January 20, 1920, General von Braun personally wrote a reply to the Badenese in which he attempted to refute the claim that only a few Baden-born officers had been selected for the Prussian contingent and stated that those in various staffs, training, and command echelon positions numbered twenty-eight. According to Braun, an additional forty-seven native Badenese had officer positions in the Prussian contingent of the 200,000-man army, other than those in special assignments. Forthwith, he ordered, there was to be no discrimination made between

Badenese and Prussians. This applied particularly to officers of long service in Badenese regiments. General von Braun then repeated the former instructions given for the selection of officers stating, "that for the future army it is conclusively known and shall remain [our policy] to obtain the most qualified and meritorius officers."[55]

The controversy which should have ended with Braun's directive against further discrimination continued because the basic constitutional problems of the contingent system remained. Even after Seeckt became Chef der Heeresleitung and appointed personal protegés to positions within the Badenese--and Bavarian--commands to insure that his wishes would be followed, particularism remained as a latent but always potent force. As late as 1926, after the army was generally considered to have achieved a unitary command and administrative posture as the result of Seeckt's efforts the Badenese contingent still jealously guarded its prerogatives in officer selection and assignments. On December 12, 1926, a letter from Landeskommandant Major-General Föhrenbach to the Baden State Ministry noted that a Lieutenant-Colonel Muff, commander of the 2nd Battalion of Baden Infantry Regiment 24 in Tübingen had been ordered to Berlin. In his place had been named Lieutenant-Colonel Noak, now in the Reichswehr Ministry. The letter closed with the comment "Oberstleutnant Noak ist nicht geborner Badner."[56]

Particularism in the military affairs of the Weimar Republic was only part of the struggle between factions holding different views of the proper relationships and functions of national and state governments in a federal system. The southern states supported a concept of decentralized government in which local authorities possessed considerable

autonomy, both in civil and military affairs. The Reich government, which wanted to maintain the power of initiative in its own hands, viewed particularism as a threat and obstruction to the implementation of a stable, unified system in the civil as well as the military sphere.

The particularist problem revealed a great deal about the relations between the southern states and the national government. The fact that the framers of the Weimar constitution felt compelled to retain the basic federal structure of the Empire, complete with the special rights accorded to the south German states, revealed the importance given to particularism as a political force. It was present in many states, although Bavaria and Baden became the leading proponents in the military sphere because of their traditional independence. Particularism was a combination of real political objectives--federalism, among the most important--and notions regarding the continued existence of the state traditions, customs, and cultures under a government still dominated by Prussia. The state governments saw any attempt to increase the authority of the Reich government as an encroachment on their constitutional rights and a threat to their sovereignty by what they considered to be a tool of Prussian expansionism. Many of the political leaders of the southern states believed that steps toward a centralized political or military system simply meant the return of the same Prussian domination of the nation as it had under the Empire and increased the possibility of a permanent Prussian hegemony.

Many particularist politicians and military leaders saw their salvation in the maintenance of a federal system in which the national government remained subordinate to the member states. This produced a

political orientation toward the past and to arrangements such as under the Empire, although without Prussian leadership, which recognized the rights of the states to a separate existence and their governments to local autonomy. Efforts by the political leaders of the Republic to centralize functions, even for the sake of efficiency in some cases, bore the connotation for the particularists of attempts to destroy the unique Bavarian, Badenese, or Württemberg homeland, culture, and way of life. Particularism, therefore, became identified in the south with Land patriotism, opposition to the national government, anti-Prussianism, and remained present in civil and military affairs until the states themselves were dissolved during the centralization of the Third Reich.

Notwithstanding the particularist insistence upon a decentralized system and state's rights, the southerners in general did not unalterably oppose the Republic as the governmental form for Germany and did not attempt its dissolution. Other groups, however, had no regard for a parliamentary system and it was through their actions that the process began to settle some of the lingering problems which first arose at the end of World War One. In the months following the ratification of the Versailles Treaty, hostilities against the government increased to the point where a test of will and strength became only a matter of time. Such a contest, known as the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch, occurred in March 1920 and proved to be the turning point in civil-military relations in the Weimar Republic.

The Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch

The Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch was important in several apsects both for the military and civil authorities. Politically, it resulted in the

withdrawal of the Social Democrats from participation in the government and consequently produced a move to the right in the leadership echelon of the Republic with the introduction of control by less radical parties such as the Democratic Party, the People's Party, and the Catholic Center Party. For the military, the coup resulted in the resignation of Colonel Reinhardt as Chef der Heeresleitung and the appointment of Seeckt in his place as the head of the army. In addition, Dr. Otto Gessler replaced Gustav Noske as Reichswehr Minister, and the next six years brought changes in the relationships between the civilians and military which culminated in independence for the army on its own terms. Along with the changes in leadership came a change in the philosophy of officer selection and the imposition of Seeckt's personal views on the qualities necessary for commissions to the existing criteria.

Prior to the Putsch the civilian government still enjoyed control over the military establishment, and officer selection remained in the hands of General von Braun at the Personalamt. The struggle within the military for leadership of the command structure of the army appeared to be over with Reinhardt's victory at the expense of the Gröner and Seeckt factions and the emergence of civilians in offices directing military affairs. All of this, however, proved to be temporary, for in a few years the situation had become completely reversed. In the interim, from April 1920 to the end of Seeckt's tenure in 1926, the new head of the army ousted Braun from the Personalamt due to differences over officer selection and policy, eliminated particularism as an obstruction to the implementation of a unitary command and administrative system in the Reichswehr and gave the army a virtually unassailable position in the nation.

The Putsch itself resulted from the beginning of further troop and officer reductions required by the Versailles Treaty. General Walter Lüttwitz, commander of Reichswehr Group Command I in Berlin, proclaimed that he would not permit the dissolution of certain units under his command. He then made demands on the government for the cancellation of orders disbanding particular formations as well as political demands which Reichswehr Minister Noske refused to meet. On February 29, 1920, word reached the Reichswehr Ministry of an imminent coup directed against the government by General Lüttwitz and a civilian official, Dr. Wolfgang Kapp.

The German historian Johannes Erger wrote in his study of the Putsch that General von Seeckt knew of the coup intentions of the Kapp-Lüttwitz group from contacts with the conspirators as early as November 1918 and had knowledge of the impending coup in October 1919, while Chief of the Truppenamt.[57] Indeed, Gustav Noske later complained that Seeckt advised him of the coming putsch only at the last moment even though the General was well informed about it.[58] Seeckt acted in that manner because he wanted to become Chef der Heeresleitung in order to control the command and administrative functions of the army. The officer in such a position could set policies for the military establishment and direct the relations of the military with the civilian government with the goal of securing independence for the army from outside control. Seeckt saw the coup as an opportunity to oust the present head of the army, Reinhardt, whose policies he thoroughly opposed. In this regard, Colonel von Thaer wrote that he believed Seeckt could have obtained Lüttwitz's resignation in October 1919 to avoid the whole episode.

However, according to Thaer, Seeckt "adopted an attitude that was above all to his own advantage."[59]

Early in the morning of March 13, 1919, with the rebel troops already on their way to Berlin, a meeting took place in the Reichswehr Ministry to consider the situation and possible action to rectify it. Only Colonel Reinhardt and Major von Gilsa counseled armed resistance with the former stating, "There can be no neutrality for the Reichswehr. The quicker we act, the quicker the spark will be put out."[60] The majority of officers, however, followed Seeckt who said to Noske that the Reichswehr would not fire on its own and asked, "Do you, Herr Minister, have the intention of countenancing a battle before the Brandenburg Gate between troops who have fought side by side against the enemy?"[61] Noske, with President Ebert's approval, decided against armed resistance and thereby determined that future civil-military relations in the Weimar Republic would favor the army. In doing so he also made untenable the positions of Reinhardt as Chef der Heeresleitung and himself as Reichswehr Minister.[62]

While the military refused to resist the putsch, the Social Democrats called a general strike which destroyed the rebel government in three days. As the Putschists fled, both Noske and Reinhardt resigned while Seeckt assumed command of Reichswehr Group I. Reinhardt wrote that the order for loyal troops not to fire made his position impossible, and with Noske's resignation, he could no longer retain his post either.[63] In a letter to President Ebert on March 25, 1920, Reinhardt wrote:

> After you, Herr Reichspresident, have now accepted the request of Minister Noske for release from his office, I hold it fitting

> that I also request my discharge. I have always administered my office as Prussian War Minister and Chief of the German Army Leadership in close cooperation with People's Representative Noske. Starting from entirely different political attitudes, we were united in the conviction that a competently-led armed force, divorced from political parties and high in morale but undeviatingly faithful to the Constitution, is a vital necessity for the German people, because without such a force neither can order be preserved at home, nor can our sovereign rights be protected nor our borders defended. . . . If because of the defeat of March 13 Reichswehrminister Noske cannot remain at his post, I see also for myself no useful possibility of remaining active as Chief of the Army Leadership.[64]

Since his appointment as Prussian War Minister, Reinhardt's position had been constantly attacked and gradually undermined by Gröner and Seeckt, as well as by dissatisfied officers like Lüttwitz. In addition, he had been away from his post immediately prior to the Putsch and out of touch with current developments. Reinhardt's wife died in late February 1920, and the Colonel stayed in Stuttgart far from the center of activity in Berlin, until early March. He thus became a victim of the Putsch from which only Seeckt profited.[65]

With Reinhardt's resignation, Seeckt became Chef der Heeresleitung, having finally succeeded in the power struggle for control of the army in a manner which Harold Gordon praised as being "in the highest tradition of German military leadership."[66] Others have seen Seeckt's behavior in a different light, suggesting that by remaining outwardly neutral he in fact supported the Putsch and therefore "usurped" the post of Chef der Heeresleitung to gain control of the army.[67] His actual appointment came as the result of nominations by a council of officers from the Berlin command area--a number being close personal protegés from the outset--and from Reinhardt. The civilian Minister of Justice, Dr. Eugen Schiffer, confirmed Seeckt's new position on behalf of

the government on the same day as the nominations, March 27, 1920. The choice fell upon Seeckt because he had the support of the officers in the Berlin command who were on hand and could make their influence felt, and the civilian government allowed the appointment to stand because it appeared that Seeckt had enough control of the army to handle the situation. Seeckt had not, in any case, carried out his sworn oath to protect the constitution and sought primarily to preserve the Reichswehr as his own instrument.[68] Seeckt thereafter became what F. L. Carsten termed "king of the army" and a substitute "Royal shield" which the officer corps had lost on November 9, 1918.[69] In the aftermath of the coup, President Ebert soon renewed the same pact with Seeckt that he had made with Gröner and Hindenburg some eighteen months earlier. In the latter instance, however, the officer corps was not only assured of its existence, but also control over its own affairs with minimal civilian interference.[70]

The results of the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch produced unforeseen consequences for the officer corps and army and was a turning point for Weimar Germany as well.[71] The change in personnel in key positions in the army and civil government stemmed from the hopes of civilian leaders that Seeckt could restore stability to the army without violence and a loss of unity in its ranks. Once again, the political parties left what they considered an internal army matter to the military who seemed to be able to manage the situation. As a result, the government became dependent on a hostile institution for its existence and even granted to the leaders of that body more autonomy than it had accorded to officers such as Reinhardt who supported the constitution against threats from any quarter. Further, the government permitted the resignation of the most prominent

military man prepared to defend it with force and allowed the appointment to the highest leadership position in the military establishment of another man who had already shown that he would not defend the republican system.[72]

Noske and Reinhardt had for a time bridged the chasm between the political leadership of the nation and in the process tried to bring the army and the Republic closer together. Seeckt now had an unopposed reign and the power to build the officer corps according to his own philosophy. This he did, and the legacy of his work ultimately contributed to the downfall of the Republic. The Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch marked the end of Social Democratic control over the Reichswehr and this was soon followed by a withdrawal of the party from participation in the political machinery of the nation as well. The retirement from the political scene of Noske and Reinhardt proved to be the end of any opportunity for the civilian government to establish a rapport with, or controls over, the officer corps. Relations between the civilians and the military were never again on any basis but military superiority.

Conclusions

The period of forced reductions of personnel in the army and officer corps from June 1919 to March 1920 was a pivotal one in the development of the Reichswehr. During these months the basic conflicts between the military and the civilian government, and those within the military itself, intensified significantly. Bitterness against the Republic rose perceptibly in the minds of the majority of officers because they felt the civilian regime bore the responsibility for Germany's degradation and ruin. For many officers, who saw the reductions in the officer corps and

the threat to their careers as a direct result of the treachery of the civilian government, the acceptance of the Versailles Treaty was the last straw. Within the military, the situation became explosive, as the bulk of dismissed officers considered Reinhardt, who acted for the hated civilian regime, a traitor to the officer corps and an accomplice in the destruction of their way of life. Hostilities reached the stage where the idea of forcefully removing the government and its military authorities found favor among dissidents both within and outside the ranks of the army. The ultimate result of the efforts to decrease the army and officer corps to conform with the terms of the peace settlement was the nearly complete alienation of the officer corps from the Republic. Differences in opinion regarding the acceptance or rejection of the treaty proved extremely destructive to the unity of the corps, and in many quarters the ratification of the Versailles Treaty did not end the controversy.

The future form of the army was perhaps the only question to be clarified during the period, although factional fighting within the command structure of the officer corps continued until after March 1920. Reinhardt and Seeckt battled for the key position of Chef der Heeresleitung which combined the command and administrative heads of the army into one office. Reinhardt's victory temporarily assured the continuation of a policy of cooperation with the civilian government, but the principal barriers to a unified command and administrative system still existed. These were, in fact, strengthened by the Weimar constitution and the adoption of a decentralized contingent organization for the Reichswehr. The other primary obstacle, also reinforced by the constitution, was the

particularism of the south German states which produced deep divisions in both the civil and military spheres.

Between the factions of the military, the rivalry for control of the officer selection program continued throughout 1919 and 1920. Both Gröner and Seeckt complained bitterly about the criteria initiated by Reinhardt and the head of the Personalamt, General von Braun. The real conflict was not over procedures, or even technical qualifications, but stemmed from the application of the criteria to officers already on active service. Reinhardt and Braun emerged victorious in the content and continued to employ their selection policies through the Personalamt on a predominantly impartial basis despite Seeckt's insistence on giving preference to former General Staff officers. However, all of this changed in 1920 when Seeckt became Chef der Heeresleitung. From that office he maintained total control of officer selection procedures, policy, and qualifications.

After March 1920, the danger to the Republic as a persisting form of government increased when the Reichswehr came under the command of von Seeckt who secured independence for the military from civilian control and established a degree of internal unity that the army had not enjoyed since the demise of the Empire. With the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch came the end of the brief era of civilian control and direction of military affairs and began another of more lasting consequences.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER V

[1]Friedrich Doepner, "Zur Auswahl der Offizieranwärter im 100,000-Mann Heer," I, Wehrkunde, 22 (1973), Nr. 4, pp. 200-204, hereafter cited Doepner, "Auswahl."

[2]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 22.

[3]Doepner, "Auswahl," p. 201.

[4]Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," pp. 140-414.

[5]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 97. Other figures for officers in the service at that time include Heidegger, SPD, p. 298 fn. 717 who sets the figure at 24,000 and Seeckt, Reichswehr, p. 65 who estimated 40,000.

[6]See Seeckt Nachlass, Stuck III, M-137-21, National Archives microfilm, Kommandostelle Kolberg, Kolberg 24 August 1919 for Gröner's letter to the Reichsminister and HSA Stuttgart, M 660, Reinhardt Nachlass, Band 16e, Bl. 125,126. General von Seeckt, Nr. 17 pers., Berlin den 29.8.1919, An den Preussischen Kriegsminister for Seeckt's letter to Reinhardt. Commentary appears in Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, pp. 50-51.

[7]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, pp. 51-52. See also Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 97. A translation of the letter appears in Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 56.

[8]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 53.

[9]Charles Bevans, ed., Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949, vol. II, 1918-1930, Multilateral (Washington, D.C.: Department of State, released 1969), "Versailles Treaty," Part V, Military, Naval and Air Clauses, Section I, Military Clauses, Article 175, p. 81. See also Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 118 and Mg.F., "Offizierkorps," pp. 144-146.

[10]Günther Blummentritt, "Thoughts Concerning the Instruction Given in Military Schools," National Archives MS series, no. B 322, ca. 1954.

[11]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 121.

[12]Gordon, Reichswehr, pp. 294-295.

[13]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529 from the preussischen Armee-Verordnungsblatt, Nr.8, 1 September 1919, p. 99, Reichswehrminister, Nr. 389/6.19. C 1a, Berlin den 12. September 1919.

[14]See BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 142, Akt. 1, Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr. 4, P 2 Nr. 4248.

[15]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Reichswehrminister Nr. 626/11.19.T.Ia, Berlin W.10. den 20.I.1920, Beförderungsaussichten für Offizieranwärter während der ersten Jahre im zukünftigen Freidensheer.

[16]Hans-Georg Model, Der deutsche Generalstabsoffizier, Seine Auswahl und Ausbildung in Reichswehr, Wehrmacht und Bundeswehr (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard und Graefe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1968), p. 37, hereafter cited Model, Generalstabsoffizier.

[17]Ibid., p. 43.

[18]Karl Linnebach, Deutsche Heeresgeschichte (Hamburg: Hanseatische Verlag, 1935), p. 380.

[19]Reichs-Gesetzblatt, Jahrgang 1920, Nr. 7742, pp. 1008-1009.

[20]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 89.

[21]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 27; and Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 184.

[22]Craig, Politics, p. 368.

[23]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 40 quoted from Major Fleck. See also Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 44.

[24]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 90; and Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 35.

[25]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 112.

[26]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 54-56.

[27]Ibid., pp. 44-45.

[28]Fritz Koch, "Die Reichswehr," Handbuch der Politik, 6 vols., Band 3, Die Politische Erneuerung (Berlin: Publisher unknown, 1921), p. 329; and Hossbach, Entwicklung, p. 80.

[29]Rau, Übergangheeres, p. 223.

[30]Ibid., p. 224.

[31]Allan Mitchell, Revolution in Bavaria, 1918-1919: The Eisner Regime and the Soviet Republic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), pp. 21-22, hereafter cited Mitchell, Revolution in Bavaria. See also Karl-Ludwig Ay, Beträge zu einer historischen Strukturanalyse Bayerns im Industriezeitalter, Band I, "Die Entstehung einer Revolution, Die Volksstimmung in Bayern während des Ersten Weltkriegs" (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1968), p. 136, hereafter cited Ay, Volksstimmung in Bayern.

[32]Ay, Volksstimmung in Bayern, p. 134.

[33]Mitchell, Revolution in Bavaria, p. 24; and Richard Grunberger, Red Rising in Bavaria (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973), pp. 26-27 who describes a "lingering Bavarian hatred of Prussia. . ."

[34]Harold Gordon, Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 177, hereafter cited Gordon, Beer Hall Putsch.

[35]Werner Zimmermann, Bayern und Das Reich 1918-1923: Der Bayerische Föderalismus Zwischen Revolution und Reaktion (Munchen: Richard Pflaum, 1953), pp. 21-22 and footnote 46, hereafter cited Zimmermann, Bayerische Föderalismus.

[36]Mitchell, Revolution in Bavaria, p. 5.

[37]Falk Wisemann, "Kurt Eisner, Studie zu seiner politischen Biographie," p. 415, in Karl Bosl, ed., Bayern im Umbruch: Die Revolution von 1918, ihre Voraussetzungen, ihr Verlauf und ihre Folgen (München: R. Oldenburg Verlag, 1969), hereafter cited Wisemann, "Eisner" and Bosl, Umbruch.

[38]Wolfgang Benz,"Bayern und seine Nachbatstaaten: Ansätze einer gemeinsamen Verfassungspolitik in November und Dezember 1918," p. 509ff in Bosl, Umbruch, hereafter cited Benz, "Nachbarstaaten."

[39]Zimmermann, Bayerische Föderalismus, p. 41.

[40]Wisemann, "Eisner," p. 415.

[41]Benz, "Nachbarstaaten," p. 530.

[42]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 39.

[43]Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 464; and Reinhardt, Wehrkraft, p. 19.

[44]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 285.

[45]Ibid., p. 287.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 40.

[48]GLA Karlsruhe, Abt. 233/12324, Kg 5776, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, Offiziers Stellenbesetzung, Auszug aus der Niederschrift über die Sitzung des Staatsministerium über militärische Angelegenheiten vom 26. April 1919, microfilm.

[49]GLA Karlsruhe, K. 5776, Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, Nr. 795, Karlsruhe, den 26 Mai 1919, Die Besetzung der Offizierstellen in der badischen Reichswehrbrigade betrefend, I. An das Generalkommando des XIV. Armeekorps in Durlach.

[50]GLA Karlsruhe, Abt. 233/12324, K. 5776, Generalkommando XIV. A.K., Reichswehrbrigade, Ia Nr.24, Durlach, den 27 Mai 1919. An des Ministerium für militärische Angelegenheiten, Karlsruhe, p. 1.

[51]Ibid., p. 1.

[52]GLA Karlsruhe, K. 7374, Verfassungsgebende deutsche Nationalversammlung, Berling, 6.1o.19, Herrn Staatspräsidenten Geiss.

[53]GLA Karlsruhe, K 7374, Ministeriim für militärische Angelegenheiten, M. 4505:4509, 4530:4960, Karlsruhe; den 17 November 1919, Die Besetzung der Offizier-und Beamtenstellen in den badischen Teilen der Reichswehr, I, An das Reichswehrministerium (Personalamt).

[54]GLA Karlsruhe, K 7374, Reichswehrministerium, Personalamt, I, Nr. 4104/11.19 PA, Berlin 29 November, 1919.

[55]GLA Karlsruhe, K 7374, Reichswehrministerium, Personalamt, I, Nr. 351011.20 PA, Berlin den 26 Januar, 1920, Zum Schreiben vom 17.11.19/4960.

[56]GLA Karlsruhe, K 7374, Badischer Landeskommandant, IIa. Nr. 48/26, Canstatt, den 12.12.1926, An das Badische Staatsministerium Karlsruhe.

[57]Erger, Kapp-Putsch, p. 18.

[58]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 92 as quoted from Gustav Noske, Aufsteig und Niedergang der deutschen Sozialdemokratie (Zurich, 1947), p. 158. See also Gordon, Reichswehr, pp. 101-103 who states that Seeckt replied to Noske's assertion that he had tried to "spike the conspirator's guns" himself. Gordon further contends that although Seeckt "could not force his superiors to take action against Lüttwitz, Seeckt could and did order his own subordinates not to deal with Lüttwitz or the other plotters."

[59]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 73, footnote 47, Colonel von Thaer to Reinhardt, April 14, 1927.

[60]Ibid., p. 61ff; Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 222; and Craig, Politics, p. 377.

[61]Rabaneu, Seeckt, p. 221.

[62]See additional comments in: HSA Stuttgart, M 660, Band 57a, Reinhardt Nachlass, "Aufbau der Reichswehr."

[63]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 69 where Reinhardt stated, ". . . der Befehl an unsere Truppen nicht zu kampfen, meine Stellung unmöglich machte . . ."

[64]Reinhardt, Wehrkraft, p. 20. For a translation, see Gordon, Reichswehr, pp. 222-223.

[65]Ernst, Reinhardt Nachlass, p. 58. See also Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 90; Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, pp. 88 and 103; Bracher, Auflösung, section by Wolfgang Asuer, "Reichswehr," p. 245; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 99.

[66]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 133.

[67]See Kitchen, History, p. 243; Hossbach, Entwicklung, p. 84; and Sauer, "Reichswehr," p. 246.

[68]Görlitz, General Staff, p. 93.

[69]F. L. Carsten, "Germany," p. 87 in Michael Howard, ed., Soldiers and Governments. See also Sauer, "Reichswehr," p. 256, footnote 292; and Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 116.

[70]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 75. Regarding Ebert, Erfurth wrote, "Er neneuere mit dem General von Seeckt den gleichen Pakt, den er ein und halbes Jahr zuvor mit Hindenburg und Gröner geschlossen habe."

[71]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 143.

[72]Kitchen, History, p. 244.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONFLICTS RESOLVED

The elevation of General von Seeckt to the position of Chef der Heeresleitung in April 1920 opened a new phase in the history of the Reichswehr. One of his first tasks was to complete the formation of the 100,000-man army and, of greater significance, to establish his own ideas on the proper place for the military establishment in the Republic. Seeckt's ideas differed substantially from those of Reinhardt, specifically in the area of civilian control over the army. In the area of officer selection, Seeckt did not change the procedures or criteria set in the Reinhardt period, but he did subtly alter the emphasis on the qualities demanded for officers. Instead of selecting the best qualified men for the officer corps regardless of their political views or social background, the General required in addition to efficient performance of duty and extensive educational preparation, the attribute of "character" by which he meant a return to the traditional values of the past.

With the end of factional disputes within the officer corps, and the emergence of the post of Chef der Heeresleitung as the single head of both the command and administrative functions for the army, Seeckt became the most powerful man in the military establishment. With his control of officer education and training through the Truppenamt, and later his direct supervision of the Personalamt, Seeckt acquired all of

the facilities necessary to mould an officer corps into any configuration he chose. The General completed his personal control of the Reichswehr after the Bavarian Crisis in 1923 by appointing trusted men to key positions where they nullified the particularists' ability to obstruct a unitary system directed by the Reich-appointed head of the army.

Along with Seeckt's activities, a second significant factor which altered civil-military relations in the Weimar period was the appointment of Otto Gessler as Reichwehr Minister. Gessler allowed Seeckt to dominate the relations between their offices, and in doing so, he materially assisted the military in recovering its independence from civilian control. Instead of the cooperation of the Noske-Reinhardt period, the military became independent of the civilian authorities in fact and then in law. The Wehregesetz of 1921 confirmed the superiority of the military and reduced the civilian minister to a primarily administrative role in the system. The civilian government abetted the reversal of its position vis-à-vis the military by passing the Wehrgesetz. This stemmed from the attitude that the military should be led by experts, particularly in its internal affairs, and by the continuation without adequate checks of the initiative power granted to Reinhardt as the consequence of his good relations with Noske. Such power in Seeckt's hands invited abuse and enabled Seeckt to eliminate outside interference in army affairs. The result was that by the end of Seeckt's tenure as Chef der Heeresleitung, the Reichswehr had become a state within the state.

Officer Selection in the Seeckt Era

Officer selection in the post-Kapp period began to change slowly and subtly in philosophy, but not in procedure or educational requirements.

The first indication of an alteration in policy came in Seeckt's initial Erlass to the officer corps on April 18, 1920. He stated that the corps had reached a turning point and that it had to learn to live in the new house of the Reichswehr. All ranks of the Reichswehr were to be open to anyone, however, "the choice of leaders will be as before, on the basis of qualification and character."[1] The Versailles Treaty required substantial reductions in officer personnel which made the selection process brutal and uncompromising.

The Personalamt remained in the hands of General von Braun, although substantial differences remained with Seeckt over policy. In addition, the office had progressively less autonomy than in the Reinhardt era because it now fell under the supervision of the Chef des Heeresleitung rather than the Reichswehr Minister. In spite of the mounting pressure from Seeckt to enlist only tradition-oriented, conservative candidates, selection policy under Braun continued as before to seek the best qualified men in technical respects for the few positions available.[2] Requests for the names of officers who wished to remain in the service were again made in the spring of 1920, and the officers in question were advised in strong terms that replies had to be forthcoming. The statements of intent had to be received by the Personalamt by December 31, 1920, because after that date any officer not in compliance with the request, whether qualified or not, would be involuntarily retired.[3] Major-General von Möhl, the Bavarian State Commander, warned that the future selection procedures would be arduous, consisting of exacting and thorough tests. The acceptance of each officer meant fewer places for those who followed and Möhl stressed that only men absolutely certain they wanted a military career should apply for retention.[4]

The criteria employed to reduce the officer corps were to be applied in a strict manner in each case. Many officers possessed the educational background required, but the additional quality of "character" demanded by Seeckt made it possible for the Heeresleitung to approve only personnel with the proper political views. In contrast to this unwritten requirement was Seeckt's statement in the April 18 Erlass that individuals would not be asked their political creed, but from that time forward the High Command expected every officer who served in the Reichswehr to take his oath seriously, a reference to the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch in which many regular officers joined the rebels. To produce the desired personnel, Seeckt insisted upon a good general education for all officers, an intensive professional training program, and a properly conservative philosophy. Seeckt believed these qualities could be developed through the officer's educational process and wrote that genius was work and work came from character.[5]

Seeckt's objective for the educational process for officers and officer candidates was to produce a corps homogeneous in character and thought.[6] He felt that the homogeneity of convictions (Gesinnung) and education (Erziehung), the training and the experience of the old officer corps, should be used to build the new army.[7] Seeckt's idea of personality and character, the German historian Rainer Wohlfeil has written, produced a spirit in the officer corps of a closed entity [caste] whose basic concepts were not in accordance with the ideals of a republic. The consequences of this educational system in the political sphere, Wohlfeil concluded, were all highly questionable.[8] Because of the strong influence of the past in the Reichswehr, the differences between the civilian government and the military hierarchy eventually became irreconcilable.

The methods employed by Seeckt for selecting and training officers for the army were a source of complaint from various Länder contingents, notably the Bavarians and Badenese. In September 1920, General von Möhl, the Bavarian Landeskommandant, wrote to the Personalamt concerning the large numbers of older Captains and First Lieutenants (Hauptleute) retained in the service and pointed out that in an army of 100,000 men no more from this age group should be accepted.[9] Many of these officers, however, were from the former General Staff and among those whom Seeckt wished to retain to build the new army. Seeckt, therefore, continued to reduce the officer corps on his own terms and to determine the basic qualifications for officer candidates using education and character as the primary guidelines.

It was during this time that Seeckt also changed the titles of officer candidates from Fähnriche and Fahnenjunker to Offizieranwärter in order to appear less like the old regime and further required that all such candidates enter the army as private soldiers.[10] Specific selection criteria for officer candidates appeared in a memorandum to the Baden State Ministry on July 2, 1921, from Major von Blomberg, Chief of Staff of the 5th Division in Stuttgart. For admission into the Reichswehr, whether as an officer candidate or not, the applicant had to be in good health, be 17 to 23 years of age, possess German citizenship, and have a desire to become a professional soldier. Those who failed to meet the above qualifications, along with vagrants, persons previously considered unqualified or reduced in rank in the former army or navy, persons who had committed crimes, and married applicants were not accepted. At the time of enlistment, the applicant also had to present a copy of his birth

certificate, a character reference from the police, a photograph, a family background report from the police, a report detailing where the applicant had worked or attended school for the last two years, a copy of his former military papers, and, if a minor, a written consent statement from his legal guardian.[11] The company or battalion recruiting officer handled enlistments and examined each candidate's credentials. If all was satisfactory, the officer ordered a medical examination for the recruit and the applicant received a provisional acceptance. Formal induction for new personnel in the armed forces occurred in April and October of each year.

Normally, the officer candidate program in the Reichswehr involved 120 to 180 persons per year which was slightly less than the number who could have been enrolled if the army employed the five-percent discharge rate allowed by the Versailles Treaty. Later, the discharge rate increased to thirteen percent and, according to a British report, reached twenty to twenty-five percent on occasion.[12] The relatively high turnover in personnel meant that a large number of officers or officer candidates left the corps for various reasons each year. Whether these personnel retired prematurely, failed to meet academic standards, or failed promotion due to political beliefs, Seeckt built the kind of officer corps he wanted from the type of personnel he considered properly suited.

In practice, not all of the officer candidate positions available to those outside the military establishment were filled each year. This was due in part to the selection process but also due to the low esteem many persons accorded a military career, the low pay, and the slow

promotion within the small officer corps. In August 1921 for example, the corps required 250 officer candidates to fill vacancies. However, only 100 applicants qualified for the program; the remainder came from a new series of appointments from the non-commissioned ranks through special qualification courses.[13] Since these candidates entered the officer candidate program from inside the military establishment by nomination from their superior officers, there was little difference in their basic attitudes from that of the other aspirants and only educational differences separated the two sources. In addition, Braun supplied Seeckt with 180 war-experienced air service personnel who either entered the officer corps or joined various aircraft manufacturers until the creation of the Luftwaffe.[14]

On the surface officer selection in the Reinhardt and Seeckt periods appeared to be much the same, yet it changed in several key areas. As the demobilization of the army continued throughout Reinhardt's tenure and well into Seeckt's, the General had the opportunity to retain increasing numbers of staff officers instead of combat personnel and thereby contributed to the maintenance of a homogeneity of philosophy in the officer corps. Reinhardt dealt primarily with officers still in the service and added a few new personnel not already in the armed forces. However, Seeckt looked to the future and initiated an officer training program to select and educate candidates from outside the military establishment. By the time officer candidates entering the Reichswehr in 1920 became eligible for commissions in 1923 and 1924. Seeckt had eliminated most of the NCOs raised to officer status as well as combat officers who did not possess the "character" attributes he demanded. When the General

became Chef der Heeresleitung, he also ended any civilian participation in the officer selection process and ensured that future officers would be conservative and tradition-minded.

The final authority in the selection of officers rested, as it had from the beginning, with the Personalamt, but the actual control and direction came from the Truppenamt. This made Seeckt's supervision of the entire sequence easier because as the head of the army, he appointed his personal protegé, General Heye, to command the Truppenamt. Later, in 1922, Seeckt ousted his old opponent Braun from the Personalamt, and thus eliminated the last barrier to his personal control of the army.[15] The General then employed all the facilities at his disposal to educate and train officers for the Reichswehr without interference from any civil or military source.

Tests and Courses for Officers and Officer Candidates

The education and training processes for officers and officer candidates in the Reichswehr were extensive and arduous. Officers, as well as officer aspirants, were subjected to numerous examinations as part of the selection process to determine fitness for promotion. Eligibility for the next highest rank was a primary requirement to remain in the service. Most of the tests and special educational courses were mandatory and produced a steady stream of personnel entering and leaving the officer corps. The strict educational requirements for officers and officer candidates served to eliminate many persons of lower-class origin who simply did not have the proper schooling. Since all applicants for officer training in the corps had to possess a secondary school

matriculation certificate, the military establishment made efforts prior to 1923 to upgrade the educational level of non-commissioned personnel in the service. Soldiers considered to be good officer material attended special courses to prepare for an elementary examination, the Vorprüfung. Successful completion of the examination enabled the candidate to take another test, the Nachprüfung, which brought him to the level of those candidates entering the service with the certificate completed.[16]

The administration of the tests occurred in April and October of each year in the Wehrkreise (recruiting districts) over a period of about one week. A typical example was the Vorprüfung for April 1922, which encompassed a two-day span separated from the Nachprüfung by oral examinations administered by the divisions to whom each candidate applied as an officer aspirant. The Nachprüfung took three days followed by additional oral examinations on the divisional level. The schedule for the examinations given in Wehrkreis VII, Bavaria, for April 1922 read as follows:[17]

Vorprüfungen

19.4	German, written	45 minutes
	German, essay	3 hours
	Foreign language, dictation	1 hour
	Foreign language, translation	1 hour
20.4	Arithmetic and Geometry Written exercises	3 hours
	History, essay	2 hours
21.4	Oral examinations on specific subjects	
22.4	Examinees report to appropriate divisions	

Nachprüfungen

24.4	German, essay	3 hours
	History, essay	2 hours
	Chemistry, written	1½ hours
25.4	Mathematics, written exercises	4 hours
	Physics, written exercises	1½ hours
26.4	Geography, essay	2 hours
	Foreign language, translation	2 hours
27.4	Oral examinations on specific subjects	
28.4	Examinees report to appropriate divisions	

The candidates who passed the tests continued their officer training program with additional courses and duty with a troop unit. The most successful also had the opportunity to proceed to advanced study which led in many cases to a War Academy appointment. Thereafter, the highest qualified usually received positions in the War Academy with the possibility of a later assignment as a staff officer.

In early 1920, Seeckt, as head of the Truppenamt, developed a program for testing the competence of Reichswehr officers in both military and non-military fields. He wanted to train staff officers for the highest positions in the army and began the program under the pretense that the tests were designed to secure information about the general level of education in the officer corps. In reality, the testing program selected future candidates for general staff training by means which would not cause concern to the Inter-Allied Control Commission.[18] Plans for such an educational program had been considered in early 1919 when Seeckt realized that changes in the military system were inevitable as the

result of the lost war and Germany's political situation. Seeckt set the tone for the future in an order of July 6, 1919, in which he stated, "The form changes, the spirit remains the old. It is the silent, selfless performance of duty in the service of the army. General Staff officers have no names."[19] The program which evolved had the title "Führergehilfenausbildung" (Leader Assistant Education) and followed the old War Academy curriculum. Unlike the former centralized system, however, it had to be maintained and administered by the seven Wehrkreise in a decentralized manner to avoid conflict with the clauses of the Versailles Treaty which expressly forbade a re-institution of the War Academy and like military educational schools. Special testing and examinations, the Wehrkreisprüfungen were given to all officers of the Reichswehr with the rank of Captain or less. The ten highest scoring candidates in each Wehrkreis entered the Führergehilfenausbildung program which encompassed a three-year curriculum.[20] This covered a wide variety of military and civil subjects taught by former General Staff instructors on a Wehrkreis level with the final year at the Reichswehr Ministry in Berlin. However, the final determination of candidates took into consideration not only scholastic merit and practical performance but also "character." To Seeckt, character meant upholding the values of the past.[21]

The Wehrkreisprüfungen, which all officers could take if they so chose, generally involved only First Lieutenants and Captains between twenty-five and thirty years of age with five years' service experience.[22] The subjects tested were:[23]

I. Military

A. formal tactics, command technique
B. applied tactics
C. weaponry and equipment
D. Pioneer (Engineer) service of all arms
E. topography

II. General

A. history
B. civics
C. economic history
D. foreign language
E. mathematics
F. physics
G. chemistry
H. physical education, gymnastics

(Also see Appendix G.)

The physical education portion of the Wehrkreisprüfung contained both theoretical and practical components. Those officers of pre-armistice commission or those above certain ages did not take part in the field trials, being able to substitute a special theory course instead.[24] Included on the practicum of the examination were the hand grenade throw, running, the long jump, and the 3,000-meter run as well as exercises on the horizontal bars, parallel bars, and sidehorse.[25] (Also see Appendix H.)

In addition to the regular battery of tests to which officer personnel of the Reichswehr were subjected were those administered by the various service arms--Infantry, Cavalry, Artillery, etc.--during the period of the candidate's four-year training course. For example, the Infantry Offizieranwärterprüfung of 1922 was given from July 6 to 8 in each division and consisted of written and oral sections. The test schedule and subjects were:

7.6 Morning - Army knowledge, written 1½ hours

Weapons knowledge 1½ hours

Service lessons

Afternoon- Gymnastics

7.7 Morning - Field Service and Topography

Shooting with rifle

7.8 Morning - Army knowledge, oral

Weapons knowledge, oral

Pioneer Service
Signals (communications) Service

Afternoon- Make-up work, if necessary

Further instructions required that the performance of a candidate in the practical examinations as a group leader in physical training be at least "satisfactory" (genügend). In shooting, the candidate's marksmanship with a rifle in the standing position at 150 meters constituted the only firing examination. The test permitted only one practice round to be fired before the three shots which the examiners recorded for the actual score. The results of the entire examination went to the Inspectorate of the Infantry in the Reichswehr Ministry.

The written questions for the infantry officer candidate's examination of 1922 were specific and required analytical skill in most cases. These included:[26]

1. Army knowledge: What does the Wehregesetz state about the service and the rights of personnel in the armed forces?

2. Weapons knowledge: Give the primary parts of the light machine gun and their function. How will the light machine gun be employed on the march and in combat?

3. Field service: The examinees, who are to think as a patrol, are to present or describe a picture of the terrain [various scenario described for the topographical problem . . . .] The examinee must prepare a report about what he sees on a report map.

4. Topography: The premise occurred in the test regarding terrain. The patrol must scout a way for one infantry company with their vehicles or scouting enemy machine gun nests with the objective of an attack there.

(See Appendix I.)

Those whose performance was unsatisfactory could still salvage a military career if they so chose by passing the Unteroffizieranwärterprüfung to become qualified as a non-commissioned officer.[27]

Each officer who passed the Wehrkreisprüfung entered the first Führergehilfen course which his particular division administered under the name "D-I". No examination followed the completion of the D-I curriculum and all candidates thereafter attended a "D-II" course for approximately two years. Upon completion of the D-II program, examinations eliminated all but twelve to fifteen officers out of a class of some seventy. The unsuccessful candidates returned to troop duty.

In the D-III phase, the military education authorities expected eight to ten candidates out of the twelve to fifteen would pass satisfactorily, but this was not achieved in reality in many Wehrkreise.[28] Such was the case of 164 officers of Wehrkreis VI (Hannover, Braunschweig, Oldenburg and Bremen, headquarters Münster) who took the Wehrkreisprüfung in the spring of 1922. In the autumn of that year, twenty entered the Führergehilfen program, but only six passed to the next course and in 1925 only one was posted to the Truppenamt in Berlin.[29] The Führerfehilfen courses were rigorous in content and covered tactics, war history, army organization, logistics, weaponry, communications, air

defense and foreign languages, Special lectures on intelligence, transportation, military and veterinary medicine, and the navy and sea tactics also formed a part of the program. Course D-III expanded the scope of the preparation for the future General Staff officer by adding new areas of study such as General Staff service, organization and leadership of foreign armies, engineering, foreign and domestic politics and sports.[30]

The focal point of the D-III curriculum was to train staff personnel in operations and tactics so that they could become the First General Staff Officer (Ia) of a combat division. A D-I course of study theoretically prepared the candidate for such duties in a reinforced infantry regiment or infantry division, the D-II course prepared personnel for the Ia position in a cavalry or armored division; and D-III for a corps or army level assignment.[31] Successful candidates received an appointment after the completion of the program to a troop staff or a detachment in the Reichswehr Ministry where he served one to two years. Subsequently, the officer was posted to the General Staff and added to his service rank at that time the title "i.G.--im Generalstabe" (in the General Staff) with the right to wear their distinctive silver collar insignia. Above all, he won the most coveted military prize of all, the carmine-red trouser stripes which confirmed his position as a member of the elite of the army.[32]

The education and examination system for officers and officer candidates in the Reichswehr attempted to procure personnel of outstanding leadership ability. Not only were the candidates expected to show a logical, analytical approach to problem-solving processes, but the

examinations also required an integration of technical military knowledge with decision-making ability, clarity of expression in a solution, and decisiveness in the manner of approach to practical situations which could be expected to occur in an officer's career. Military education in the Reichswehr sought to produce a technically well-prepared officer with an extensive general knowledge of many fields, one who demonstrated the ability to assist in maintaining the viability of the institution, whether on the regimental, corps, and army level; or as a future Chef des Heeresleitung.

As a part of the educational process in the Reichswehr, Seeckt devised a system in early 1921 to instill the values of the past into future officers. His objective was to maintain a visible reminder of the glories of former times; not the degradation and dishonor brought upon German arms by the Republic and its civilian political leaders. In Seeckt's mind, the first mission of the Reichwehr was to keep alive the spirit of the old army and, secondarily, to defend the nation's borders.[33] To accomplish this end, he designed a program to not only retain the former spirit, but also to build an inner bond between the new and old armies. Part of the traditions of the past were kept alive by the Freikorps and formations of the Imperial army taken into the Reichswehr.[34] Seeckt himself revered the traditions of the barracks, exercise and maneuver areas, Potsdam, Leuthen and other bygone glories. He believed that the Reichswehr should adopt the traditions of the old army, to which the present system would add a spirit of its own to be passed on as ideals for the German army of the future.[35] As Waldemar Erfurth, a former officer, has written, "Seeckt combined the fundamentals out of historical

and the old Prussian military discipline and it succeeded for him immensely."[36]

Seeckt linked the present and past together for the Reichswehr in the form of tradition companies (Traditionsträger). In his system, each infantry company, cavalry troop, and artillery battery adopted and became the custodian of the traditions of a former regiment or battalion of the Imperial army.[37] This provided a link between the recruits of the Reichswehr and the traditions of glory

> . . . which ran like a thread of gold from the Great Elector and the old Fritz, through Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Blücher, to Moltke and to Schlieffen and to Hindenburg. . . . This glorious heritage, the young recruit was taught, was as much his as it was the Imperial Army's, and it must inspire him to maintain it intact and unsullied.[38]

With the activities of the Traditionsträger, the 21 regiments of the Reichswehr preserved the former glory of 217 geriments of the Imperial army. This was especially important, as Harold Gordon wrote, in an army where the regiment was the center of all military life.[39] Regardless of the future rank held by an officer, or the number of units he commanded, his basic loyalty was always to the reiment in which he was first commissioned.[40] Because of this emphasis, the leaders of the tradition companies in the Reichswehr had a great deal of influence on the attitudes of officer candidates.[41] For officer candidates, a part of their educational process was to learn to respect, to maintain, and to protect the traditions of their regiment. The glory of the past represented all that was good in the values of the military and contrasted sharply with the reality of the situation in the Republic. The young officer candidate was constantly surrounded with reminders of how much better the past had been for the professional soldier. Tradition became, therefore, a

vital part of the officer candidate's introduction to the military life-style.

Thus, the entire system of education and training in the Reichswehr produced a generation of officers attuned to the milieu of the past and dedicated to the traditions of their mentors who opposed, or at best only tolerated, the government of their country. The results of Seeckt's efforts were apparent in other features as well, such as the social composition and the conception of the role of the army in the state. These factors, in the final analysis, were significant in determining the character of the corps and reflected what the institution became under Seeckt's tutelage.

The Social Composition of the Reichswehr

In social terms the composition of the Reichswehr in 1926 revealed the extent of Seeckt's success in selecting and retaining officers from the same classes that filled the ranks of the officer corps during the Empire. The social structure of the upper echelon of the officer corps changed little from that of the Imperial period. In the lower ranks, however, a majority of active Captains and Lieutenants commissioned in the pre-war years were killed in the first few months of the First World War. The replacement of these losses changed the social composition of the subaltern ranks of the officer corps.[42] Many battle-tested non-commissioned personnel and enlisted ranks were commissioned as officers during the war without regard to social background. Traditionalists felt that these persons did not possess the proper education, training, or social standards to become regular officers and the hybrid rank of deputy-officer became widely used as an interim measure.

Sergeants with good records performed officer's duties for the duration of the war as Sergeant-Lieutenants (Feldwebelleutnants) with the understanding that at the end of hostilities they would revert to their old rank.[43] The lower commissioned ranks also underwent a considerable change which continued as the war progressed and as losses in personnel mounted. As Karl Demeter points out, the greater part of the war was fought primarily with reserve and Landwehr officers.[44] The change in social composition did not mean, however, a change in the values or philosophical position of the corps in general. The new officers shared the professional officer's view of the army, but preferred to pursue a civilian occupation in peacetime. These officers served to fulfill their patriotic duty with few considering the military as a career after the war.

Statistical data on the actual numbers of officers who saw service during the war varies considerably. The most often cited statistics are those of Wolfgang Sauer and Karl Demeter, both of whom drew their information from other works. A composite of the figures used by these sources revealed that 30,459 active officers held pre-war commissions in 1914 as well as 89,295 reserve officers for a total of 119,754. Officers participating in the war in combat arms were:[45]

	Active	Reserve
Prussia	39,160	169,625
Bavaria	5,900	30,200
Saxony	3,704	16,555
Württemberg	1,990	9,750
	50,754	226,130

Imperial German army officers killed in the course of hostilities from 1914 to 1918 included including non-combat arms: Prussia - 41,093;

Bavaria - 4,883; Saxony - 3,439; Württemberg - 2,382; reserve: Prussia - 28,100; Bavaria - 3,404; Saxony - 2,310; and Württemberg - 1,679, for a total of 87,290.[46]

Among the 38,103 active officers including war-commissioned personnel, at the time of the armistice, some 23,000 were commissioned prior to the war and 15,000 during the war.[47] Of significance to the later social composition of the Reichswehr, the largest losses in the officer corps were among reservists called to active duty. Demeter, using Altrock's figures, calculated that casualties in this group were 35,943 killed as compared with around 12,000 from the ranks of the regular officer corps. He further observed that regular officers numbered about one-twelfth of the total number employed during the war.[48] The majority of officers who survived the war were pre-war commissioned regulars. Part of the reason for this was that late in the war many pre-war commissioned regulars were withdrawn from front-line combat duty and assigned staff positions, particularly in the General Staff, with the object of utilizing their combat experience and War Academy education to "preserve a nucleus of what can be called the old, properly trained type of officer."[49] Thus, the traditional, conservative outlook of the officer corps survived through these men while those of lesser social status and education bore the brunt of the fighting and suffered the highest losses. By the end of the war, many officers who were admitted to the corps during the course of hostilities, or were originally reservists, had experienced enough combat to destroy whatever notions they might have had about the glory of war. Most of those who survived were simply grateful for their good fortune and wanted nothing further to do with a

military way of life. The disinterest shown by the educated middle class in a military career was significant for the future of the officer corps and civil-military relations in the Weimar Republic.

At the end of hostilities, the majority of officers who wished to remain in the service consisted of those pre-war commissioned regulars assigned to staff duty in the closing days of the conflict. They were professional soldiers whose life was inexorably bound to the army and officer corps. These officers were also the best educated and best trained in the service. Their social background revealed a large percentage of aristocrats. This was due to the high casualty rate among reservists and active officers from the middle classes whose places were often filled by deputy-officers from the non-commissioned ranks. The social origins of officers in the Reichswehr was as follows, according to Demeter, Woertz, and Sauer:[50]

SOCIAL ORIGINS OF THE OFFICER CORPS

	1913 %	1926 %	1921-34 %
Regular and reserve officers	23.74	44.34	34.93
Higher officials, clergy, civil and military doctors and professors	39.06	41.51	36.50
Landowners	9.12	4.73	4.76
Tenant farmers	2.38	.94	1.59
Businessmen, factory owners	15.57	6.13	9.52
Minor officials and non-commissioned officers	4.17	1.41	7.94
Other private persons	5.96	.94	4.76

The numbers of noblemen and officers from traditional officer-producing social backgrounds decreased only slightly in the 1918-1926 period. These officers still comprised an important percentage of the corps in spite of the fewer places available due primarily to better education and training, and due to the group representing the old, conservative outlook that became a vital part of the retention and selection qualifications under Seeckt. The officer corps was thus dominated by the same groups with the same political views and values as in the Imperial period.

Demeter gave a further breakdown of the sociology of the officer corps by service arm regarding the noblemen who served in the Reichswehr as:[51]

	1920		1926	
	Total	Noble	Total	Noble
Staffs	770	26.4	767	21.8%
Infantry	1,692	17.6%	1,480	17.6%
Cavalry	520	50.4%	567	45.0%
Artillery	544	12.5%	551	10.7%
Pioneers	112	4.5%	76	3.9%
Intelligence	88	5.7%	75	5.3%
Motorized	112	10.7%	70	15.7%
Lines of Communication	113	6.1%	92	7.6%
Medical	-	-	61	20.5%
Overall totals and averages (%)	3,971	21.7%	3,739	20.5%

Although the actual number of nobles in the officer corps decreased, and the overall percentage fell by 1.26%, this in no way affected the outlook

of the corps as a whole which still remained conservative. As before, the old military aristocracy retained an important percentage of staff positions where the decisive policy decisions for the army were made and generally chose the same service arms throughout the history of the officer corps. Those branches of the service possessing the highest prestige and glamor, the cavalry and infantry, were joined by a new, emerging arm in the motorized troops which contained the nucleus of the future armored divisions. The percentage of nobles in the Panzer arm contined to rise and remained high throughout the Reichswehr period and the Wehrmacht of the Third Reich. That officers of pre-war tenure were reaching retirement age and leaving the service caused the slight decline in the number of noblemen between 1920 and 1926. However, the large number of older officers still on active service brought Seeckt a great deal of criticism from younger officers who felt their careers stifled by the lack of promotion in the Reichswehr.

In the upper ranks, the nobility still held a numerical superiority in the categories of General, Lieutenant-General, Major-General, and Colonel, while non-nobles held ranks in the lower echelons in an increasingly larger percentage. This was particularly true of service branches where the nobility traditionally showed least interest. By late 1920, the highest ranks of the Reichswehr, comparing nobles to non-nobles, revealed:[52]

	Nobles	Non-Nobles
Generals	3	-
Lieutenant-Generals	14	6
Major-Generals	27	18
Colonels	99	66

The large numbers of older officers and nobility in the highest command positions of the Reichswehr served to perpetuate further traditional ideals in the corps. It also placed many officers in key positions who could oppose new ideas or policies which conflicted with their own point of view. Thus Reinhardt encountered serious problems from these officers over his policy of cooperation with the civilian government, and many held positions where their influence could be powerful.

One of the reasons many members of the middle class who might have pursued a military career did not was the length of time required for advancement. In contrast to the civilian world, to achieve higher military command positions took the greater part of an officer's active career. The average time in service for promotion was:[53]

Rank	Time
Lieutenant	4 years
Captain	16 years
Major	22 years
Colonel	31 years
Major-General	35 years

Many prospective officers simply did not want to wait that length of time for recognition. The long career, with slow promotion, low pay, and a lack of prestige, especially in the immediate post-war years, caused all but the most dedicated to eliminate the army as a career.

Throughout the years of the Weimar Republic, therefore, the persons who most often sought a military career came from the same social strata which traditionally provided the majority of officers, the nobility, followed by the upper middle class who viewed the profession as did the aristocrats. In 1921, an article appeared in the Deutsches Adelsblatt which maintained that "Young noblemen need not fear any competition from

'the crowd' [because] . . . the corps of officers was still being recruited from the best in the land."[54] Persons of a conservative outlook, therefore, maintained a dominant position in the corps and particularly the highest command offices. After March 1920, Seeckt's policies and practices again discriminated against the less educated and those holding political views differing from those of the military leadership.

Even though the social character of the officer corps in the lower ranks changed somewhat in the 1918-1926 years due to the addition of men from varying backgrounds, this was of little consequence since the policy-making positions were still in the hands of the old elite. Regardless of social origin, the values and political orientation for a military career remained those of the past. Officers or officer candidates who wanted a position in the corps conformed to Seeckt's ideals or did not remain long in the service. In the final analysis, since Seeckt possessed the power to make the officer corps what he wanted, the educational and training processes were more important than birth. In 1926, the officer corps was again exclusive, but was composed of the elite of "character" in traditional terms rather than a solely aristocratic one. This result was not solely due to a unilateral manipulation of the selection, education, and training processes from the Heeresleitung but was also related to changes wrought by the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch which brought Otto Gessler to the position of Reichswehr Minister.

The Reichswehr Ministry under Otto Gessler

The Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch brought changes to the Reichswehr Ministry which, according to the SPD's Albert Grzesinski, "soon became

an unbelievably complicated body."[55] In practice, the Reichswehr Minister had a double role, first as an intermediary between the President and the military establishment and second as the superior to all civilian administrators (Beamten) in the military system.[56] After assuming his post, Gessler did not operate as a normal minister who planned policy and tried to realize specific aims. Instead, he seconded Seeckt while providing a public shield for both the activities of the General and the Reichswehr. This constituted a "change of decisive importance since the days of Noske who reserved to himself the vital political influence and had close contacts with leading officers."[57]

According to Seeckt's protegé, General Joachim von Stülpnagel, the General would have never achieved his aims without Gessler's loyal cooperation: "In purely military matters he [Gessler] only intervened in the field of personalia of senior officers and officers of the ministry . . . ."[58] Gessler was a Vernunftrepublikaner who considered himself a man of Realpolitik. His loyalty to the state approximated that of traditionalist officers who served the idea of a Fatherland or Reich rather than a particular form of government or especially a lasting republican regime.[59] Gessler claimed that he wanted to democratize the army and to make it a loyal instrument of the state. However, he saw little hope of accomplishing such a goal under the present system with so many political parties and conflicts.[60] Germany, he stated, "had a parliamentary system that would be suitable for a country with two or three parties, but not based on a parliament with fifteen parties."[61] Gessler's personal relationship with Seeckt also contributed to the re-emergence of military supremacy over the civilian ministry. While Reichswehr Minister,

Gessler readily adopted a submissive role, not unlike the parties themselves, and Seeckt easily excluded him from the mainstream of military planning in the ministry. The General, in fact, privately circulated an order on April 9, 1920, to the officers of the Reichswehr Ministry staff which stated, "The officers and departments are forbideen to announce or give reports to the minister without my prior agreement . . . . Reports are first rendered to me, I shall make further decisions."[62] Along with the parties, who raised no substantial objection to Gessler's posture, the Reichswehr Minister bore the primary responsibility for allowing the military to regain their old position in the state. Gessler was quite correct in his later statement that the civilian command authority of the Reichswehr Minister was a fiction.[63] He helped make it so by his submission to Seeckt's wishes. The subordinate role of the civilian minister which Gessler permitted to be imposed upon his office was later confirmed by law, and the advantage thus gained by the military was never lost.

The Wehrgesetz of 1921

The interaction between the civilian Reichswehr Minister and the Chef der Heeresleitung as head of the military proved to be of vital significance because it was within these offices that policy decisions were made for the entire military establishment. Constitutionally, the Reichswehr Minister held the superior position, but in practice this was not the case after the appointments of Seeckt and Gessler. The cooperation of Noske and Reinhardt in the early years was the exception in the Weimar period, yet it influenced the future relationship between the offices. As a result of the trust which existed between the two men,

the civilian government gave to the Chef der Heeresleitung in an Erlass on September 20, 1919, considerable initiative and discretionary powers, particularly to issue orders independent from the Reichswehr Minister's direct supervision. The edict, entitled "Provisional Regulation of Command Authority and the Competence of the highest Command Positions in the Reichswehr (Vorläufige Regelung der Befehlsbefugnisse und Arbeitsbebieten der obersten Kommandostellen in der Reichswehr), stated that the President was the superior to all personnel in the armed forces. The Reichswehr Minister was second and exercised the legal practice of command authority for the President. Under the minister came the remainder of the military command structure which included the Chef der Heeresleitung who directed all the activities of his own department. By paragraph IV of the regulation, the Chef der Heeresleitung received the power to issue independent decrees, make judgments, and issue instructions in all matters of command leadership insofar as such actions were not reserved by law to the Reichswehr Minister himself. For these orders which emanated from the Heeresleitung, the Reichswehr Minister became accountable even though he may never have seen the orders, have been consulted about them, or been aware of their existence.[64] Such a system required the complete trust on the part of the civilian minister toweard his military counterpart. Reinhardt and Noske achieved this delicate balance, but it could not be maintained with Seeckt as the head of the Heeresleitung.

After the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch, the relationship between the men holding these key positions was completely different from that of their predecessors. Further changes in command authority appeared on August 20, 1920, which confirmed the superior position of the Reichswehr

Minister, but made the head of the army his advisor. It also bestowed upon the Chef der Heeresleitung the authority to represent the Reichswehr Minister in his exercise of command authority.[65] The importance of this change was that Gessler allowed Seeckt to impose his "advice" upon the ministry without question and sought to enact whatever Seeckt wanted rather than pursuing policies of his own. Thus, the Reichswehr Minister reversed the intent of the law which only permitted the military to express an opinion on policy set by the ministry. Seeckt's wishes in practice became the policy of the ministry due to the older regulation permitting a degree of initiative to the head of the army, the new regulation providing an advisor to the minister, and to the subservience of Gessler himself. The minister remained responsible for the actions of the Heeresleitung, while in reality policy decisions came solely from Seeckt.[66]

The final step in the process toward the military regaining full independence over its own affairs was the Wehrgesetz of March 23, 1921. This law laid the basic foundations for the peacetime army and was a synthesis between the military clauses of the Versailles Treaty and the Provisional Reichswehr Law of March 6, 1919.[67] The new law altered the relations of the Länder contingents to the central authority of the Heeresleitung by lessening their autonomy and subordinating them to control by the national government. It also reduced the command authority of the President. He now had to exercise his authority through the office of the Reichswehr Minister and have his orders countersigned by the Minister.[68] Further, the law stipulated that the head of the army was to be a General who would serve in the position of Chef der Heeresleitung. On the

relationship between the civilian and military heads of the army, the new law was ambiguous. What it meant was that the civilians possessed Befehlsgewalt, a non-initiative, administrative authority, and the military received Kommandogewalt, a superior authority to initiate direct orders which governed the military establishment, including its own internal affairs, and to do so independently of control by any other source. Both the former General Staff officer Friedrich Hossbach and the historian Walter Tormin ascribed the wording and intent of this important section to Seeckt himself.[69]

In reality, the type of authority possessed by the head of the army and the Reichswehr Minister was vital to the legitimacy of orders and policies which originated from those offices. Both Befehlsgewalt and Kommandogewalt meant command authority, but as all parties understood the difference in the two implied that the civilians' role was purely administrative. The military, however, recovered superiority in matters dealing with internal questions relating to command, education, training, and personnel selection. Thus, the authority granted to the military and civilian officials determined in specific terms the functions each office controlled and the return of Kommandogewalt to the military brought independence in their own affairs. After the passage of the Wehrgesetz in 1921, Seeckt simply dictated to Gessler and the civilian government without serious challenge until 1926 when an error in judgment in a violation of the Versailles Treaty forced his resignation.

The changes in the command structure and command authority of the military and civilian officials which evolved from 1919 through 1921 made the office of Chef der Heeresleitung the pivotal one in the military

establishment. Each step which centralized decision-making power in this office brought an independent and unified military system closer to realization. Building on the earlier grant of limited initiative authority to Reinhardt, Seeckt assumed progressively more powers because of Gessler's subservient posture. Regardless of the fact that these powers were later confirmed in law, the Reichswehr Minister at any time could have reversed the progression if he had been so inclined by requesting the resignation of the head of the army.

The reversal of authority roles of the civilian president, civilian military officials and the army commanders was not solely the result of Gessler's actions. The Wehrgesetz was passed by civilian parties in the Reichstag. At that time, the political parties controlling the government were the Center Party, the Democratic Party, and the People's Party since the SPD had withdrawn from the leading role in the government. This meant a more conservative outlook in military affairs than under the SPD. The withdrawal of the Social Democrats from active participation in the government in 1920, even though the SPD remained the largest party in the Reichstag, left no real opposition in the inner circles of the administration to oppose such measures of far-reaching implication as the Wehrgesetz. Further, the moderate and conservative parties still clung to the notion that military affairs should be left to experts in the military establishment and supported Seeckt in the belief that his control over the army made the government safe from revolutionary threats. This attitude was a vital factor in the revival of military independence in the Weimar Republic.

General Hans von Seeckt

The early years of Seeckt's tenure as Chef der Heeresleitung were filled with both internal domestic and external crises. During this period the control of the government was in the hands of the Center Party and the Democratic Party, along with a number of non-partisan experts in various fields. It was an era of increasing political radicalization brought about by economic disaster, foreign invasion, the Ruhr crisis, and escalating problems with Bavaria. To the civilian politicians, the situation made the presence of a strong Reichswehr with decisive leadership vital. Thus, the atmosphere in which Seeckt began his efforts for personal control of the army and for freedom from civilian intervention in military affairs, made it possible for the General to conduct his affairs with less criticism than might have been forthcoming in other circumstances.

From the outset it was apparent that Seeckt's own personality and political views would play an important role in the development of the army and officer corps. Seeckt was a thorough traditionalist but politically more astute than the majority of older officers who remained in the service at the end of the war. The fact that during the war the bulk of his service was in the east and also the fact that he was disliked by the Hindenburg-Ludendorff clique saved his reputation from being damaged by the final collapse in the west.[70] Seeckt's notions regarding the place of the army in society reflected the traditional belief that the military should require the state to take into consideration the army's share in the life and substance of the nation. In Seeckt's view, to accomplish this the army leadership had to engage in politics but not

become the instrument of any political party or partisan group. In practice, therefore, the political stance of the army was always quite clear. Since the army served the state, and only the state, Seeckt believed, then it was synonymous with the state.[71] The conservative character of the army, the General wrote, came from its role in history, and the consciousness of being part of a glorious tradition had an unquestionable influence on the quality of the troops.[72] For Seeckt, the military was part of an idealized, although abstract entity--the Reich--which was a reflection of German glory and power obtained through the actions of the army. In this regard he wrote

> The Empire! There is something supersensuous in this word. It embraces far more and connotes something other than the conception of a State. . . . It is an organic living entity, subject to the laws of evolution. . . sprung from roots which did not lie in Germany, linked to the Roman World Empire and the world church . . . .[73]

According to Seeckt, the functions of the state were to insure the highest possible well-being for the whole of its citizenry and not the equal well-being of all. To Seeckt, the weal of the community was the primary consideration and he felt strongly that the socialist-led government courted disaster by considering any changes in the traditional patterns of German life. "The state in which we are living," he wrote, "is not a guinea-pig for vivisection by theorists and we cannot afford the luxury, less than ever nowadays, of reducing wrong tenets to absurdity for the instruction of their disciplines."[74]

Seeckt considered parliamentary government a particular anathema and called it the "inveterate evil of our times . . . an archaic cnd cancerous sore . . . ."[75] The nation was too busy to contend with political problems and preferred, in Seeckt's opinion, to be well

governed regardless of what form or who controlled it.[76] Parliament's duty, if indeed such a body was necessary, was

> . . . to counsel the holder of State power by free parleying, . . . by conveying its wishes, by virtue of its knowledge of the needs and circumstances of the governed, by arriving at agreement with him on the burdens and duties to be imposed, and thereby to exercise the desired checks on the activities of the officialdom.[77]

Seeckt's concept of the functions of government and the role of the army in the state placed him outside the Wilhelmine framework. Instead, he returned in philosophy to Frederickian times, prior to the evils of modern society--parliaments, disruptive political parties, and dangerous social groups who challenged the status quo. In that idealized time, the monarch, the aristocracy, and the army combined to oversee a truly subservient population. Since this relationship could not be reestablished in part because the personal bonds between the monarch and his brother officers had been severed by the lost war and the abdication of William II, an important part of the traditional ties re-emerged with the loyalties of the officer corps attached to Seeckt rather than the Kaiser. This was a vital component of Seeckt's popularity among those older officers who remained in the corps and formed the leadership cadre of the army. He thus became a surrogate Supreme War Lord (Obersten Kriegsherrn) in the place of the Kaiser, and the majority of officers showed devotion to Seeckt as did "the Landsknechte to their Colonels; they fought for this colonel when <u>he</u> ordered it, not for the state."[78] In this role, Seeckt played lord-protector for the army and defended the institution from its enemies. In return, the army was Seeckt's personal instrument, identifying his interests as the army's and the nation's as well. In this context, Seeckt actively engaged in politics, which was

officially frowned upon--and for which he and Gröner had criticized Reinhardt--in order to promote army interests behind a façade of selfless, personal sacrifice for the good of the corps.

Seeckt's popularity with the officer corps declined during the last years of his tenure (1924-1926). His cold and authoritarian nature and his penchant for catering to older officers and ideas aggravated differences over personnel policy in particular. A number of officers who formerly supported Seeckt became disenchanted with him. General von Stülpnagel wrote in his memoirs that Seeckt

> did not like to hear the truth and surrounded himself with stereotypes . . . in questions of defense we have made no progress for years, only because S.[eeckt] could not be pursuaded to discuss all matters openly with the government. In too many things we have play-acted and have not educated characters, but yes-men.[79]

One example involved a suggestion for improved mobility in motor units made by Seeckt's former confidante, Colonel von Blomberg. To it Seeckt replied, "Dear Blomberg, if we are to remain friends, you must refrain from such suggestions."[80] Blomberg believed that Seeckt's hostility stemmed from the General's resentment that the young officers of the Reichswehr were attempting to teach him.[81] Even more bitter was the attitude of General Ritter von Möhl, former commander of the Bavarian contingent who was arbitrarily removed from his command by Seeckt in 1924. In several letters to Reinhardt, Möhl recalled the affair and stated that

> Even in General von Seeckt I would not have believed possible such a lack of sincerity, frankness, and comradeship, although my estimation of him as a character and soldier has always been low. He cultivated Byzantinism and cliquism, the well-known main evils of the Prussian army since the 'Wilhelminian' period.[82]

Möhl further stated he hoped a "change of government" would return Reinhardt to Berlin along with the comment that "With Gessler, Seeckt, and the whole clique connected with them nothing can be achieved. . . ."[83]

After 1925, Seeckt ran afoul of President Paul von Hindenburg. The old soldier took his constitutional position as commander-in-chief of the army seriously and was not content with the secondary role relegated to Ebert by Seeckt. Hindenburg still had a vast following among the younger officers of the Reichswehr, many of whom were dissatisfied with Seeckt's policies and looked to the president for leadership.[84] This also strengthened the position of Reichswehr Minister Gessler who began to reclaim some of the decision-making initiative he had once conceded to Seeckt when it became clear that the President disliked Seeckt and would support those who opposed the General. Seeckt lost ground rapidly after 1925 and a year later Gessler secured his resignation without difficulty. The General's primary objectives, however, had been accomplished. In structure and philosophical framework, the army and officer corps had adopted Seeckt's ideas. These notions lived on in the General's numerous protegés who had been appointed to prominent positions within the system and among the officers trained and educated while he directed the Truppenamt. Seeckt's accomplishments included not only the achievement of a tradition-oriented value system for the officer corps and securing independence for the army from civilian control but also the creation of a united, centralized command in the Reichswehr as the result of the Bavarian Crisis of 1923.

The Bavarian Crisis of 1923

The semi-autonomous status of the Bavarian army contingent led through a series of disputes over policy and procedures with the Reich government and army command to its near mutiny in September 1923. Under the constitution, Bavaria retained a large degree of independence which both Reinhardt and Seeckt sought to eliminate in order to create a truly unified Reich command system. The demobilization of the Imperial army, the formation of the Provisional Reichswehr, and the creation of the 100,000-man army contributed to the conflict due to the large number of career officers dismissed from the service. Because Prussia traditionally played the leading role in the Imperial army by providing the majority of high ranking and General Staff personnel, the Prussian contingent in the peacetime army continued to dominate military affairs in the Weimar Republic.

The fact that Prussia still occupied a superior position in the new federal system produced bitter resentment throughout south Germany and especially in Bavaria. In turn, the Reich command echelon of the Reichswehr resented the efforts of the southern contingents to protect native-born officers, many of whom the Prussians considered inferior in ability to their own officers who were being released from the service. A further irritant was the inability of the Reich authorities to gain full control over the officer selection process due to the special rights held by the southern states. The period leading to the Bavarian Crisis was, therefore, one of hostility within the officer corps--as it was in the civil sphere--which ran counter to Seeckt's desire for unity of command and purpose in military affairs. To Seeckt, the situation was

especially galling because it represented a challenge to his authority and also threatened the tenuous unity within the Reichswehr as a whole. By 1923, the relations between the Reich and Bavaria reached the point where the slightest provocation could produce a confrontation of major proportions.

The incident which set in motion the encounter between the opposing forces stemmed from attacks upon Seeckt in the radical rightist press in Bavaria. A number of nationalist and Völkisch groups objected to Seeckt's curtailing the formation of illegal Freikorps units by Bavarian State Commissioner Gustav von Kahr in response to the establishment of communist governments in the neighboring states of Saxony and Thuringia. As relations between the Reich government and Bavaria continued to deteriorate, rumors spread in Berlin concerning a possible march on the capital by Bavarian troops to remove what the radicals labeled a "Red" regime. The government had good reason to be alarmed over the loyalty of certain Reichswehr units and commanders. At a meeting to discuss the problem on September 26, 1923, President Ebert asked Seeckt where the Reichswehr stood in the conflict with Bavaria and the General answered, "The Reichswehr, Herr President, stands behind me!"[85] In practical terms, this meant that the army would follow Seeckt, not necessarily the constitutional commander-in-chief. The Reich government, therefore, found it necessary to rely again upon the army for protection against possible rebellion from the military ranks. This time, however, Seeckt upheld his oath to defend the constitution because the authority of his position as Chef der Heeresleitung was in question. Many Reich officials also saw more at stake than the unity of the Reichswehr or the

solution to problems created by a dissident state government. They believed that an armed clash with Bavaria would mean the complete dissolution of the Reich and foreign intervention by hostile forces from France, Poland, Czechoslovakia or Russia.[86]

In the crisis, Seeckt hoped to find a solution without resorting to bloodshed because, in his own words, he could not permit the Reichswehr to be placed in circumstances where it had "to fight for a government which is alien to it, [and] against people who have the same convictions as the army."[87] Seeckt wanted to prevent a putsch by either the right or left because in the process the Reichswehr might well suffer permanent damage.[88] The General's position in the conflict with the Bavarian military authorities appeared in an article intended for publication in the Münchener Neueste Nachrichen on October 9, 1923. In it, Seeckt wrote that he believed the protection of the unity of the Reich was foremost in the minds of those representing Bavaria, as it was of the Bavarian Reichswehr, but for himself:[89]

> What weighs heaviest is the support [given] to the State Commissioner's attempt to undermine the command authority of the Reich superiors of the Bavarian troops. The execution of a military order will be made dependent upon the consent of the Bavarian civil authorities, and in agreement with it the leader of the Bavarian troops--although nationally appointed and pledged to obedience--decides whether he will carry out the orders of his military superiors or not. He will decide whether they lie in the public interest. In Bavarian or national interest? . . . It is time the Bavarians realize their dispute with the national government must not be fought out in the military sphere. . . .

With no solution to the problem immediately available, the Reich government proclaimed a state of emergency in the nation and empowered Reichswehr Minister Gessler to deal with the situation. Since Gessler viewed the problem as primarily a military one, he transferred his powers

to Seeckt who became the representative of the government in the matter. As a result of the Reich government delegating authority to the military, Gustav von Kahr and the then little-known Adolf Hitler joined together to protect the rightist Verbände and Bavaria's interests from "Red Berlin."[90] A scathing article appeared in the Völkische Beobachter accusing Seeckt of being a close friend of the Jewish-owned Berliner Tagblatt and stated further that Seeckt's wife, along with Chancellor Stresemann's, was a Jewess and influenced the General politically.[91] Reichswehr Minister Gessler ordered the immediate suppression of the Völkische Beobachter and directed the commander of the Bavarian 7th Division, General Lossow, to execute the decree. Lossow, however, referred the matter to State Commissioner Kahr who refused to order the closing of the Völkische Beobachter. The Reich government then commanded Lossow a second time to enforce the order personally, which he refused to do.

As a result of Lossow's disobedience, Reichswehr Minister Gessler dismissed the Bavarian from his post on October 19, 1923, but State Commissioner Kahr refused to leave and ordered the 7th Division to swear their allegiance to the Bavarian government.[92] Seeckt then demanded the loyalty of the 7th Division to the Reich and its submission to the orders of the highest Reich military commander. The problem for the highest Reichswehr commander during the confrontation was to maintain unity in the army even while the civilian government was becoming fragmented. Seeckt issued a decree to the Reichswehr on November 4, 1923, stating that "A Reichswehr that is united and obedient is invincible and the strongest factor in the state. A Reichwehr split by political cleavages will break up in the hour of danger. . . ."[93]

The situation deteriorated until it seemed to the Reich government nothing short of an armed clash could resolve the dispute. However, the Hitler putsch saved Seeckt from such a decision. The abortive attempt to start a march on Berlin met its end at the hands of the Landespolizei. One of Seeckt's greatest fears was that the Reichswehr units in Munich might not respond to orders to put the putsch down if such had been necessary, but to his relief, the Reichswehr never became extensively involved. Later the General did send the army into Saxony and Thuringia to expel the communist governments amid charges from the leftist parties that he had not been inclined to do the same to the right-wing rebels in Munich. The Chef der Heeresleitung retaliated against the Bavarians by closing the Infantry School in Munich whose cadets had participated in the Hitler putsch and relocated it permanently in Dresden. Further, he returned the Bavarian company of the Berlin Guard Regiment on the grounds that they were no longer reliable, and made the dismissal of all Bavarian officers in the Reichwehr Ministry possible upon request.[94]

The Heeresleitung took advantage of the situation to regain firm control over the 7th Division, "a high-priority project of long standing which had hitherto been blocked by the Bavarian government."[95] Reprisals against Bavarians for their involvement in the putsch attempt emcompassed only a limited number of high-ranking officers. Seeckt, in fact, rescinded most of the orders punishing Bavarian units and officers because he considered the Bavarians as a whole loyal, but misguided. Although they violated the constitution, their aim was the recovery of certain federal rights from the Imperial period and not the destruction of the

Republic.[96] Seeckt insured that future obedience to the Reich military authorities would be unquestioned by dismissing Lossow and naming a personal protegé, General Kress von Kressenstein, to the position of State Military Commandant in Bavaria.

The Bavarian government feebly opposed the nomination of Kressenstein although it offered no suitable alternative. Their primary objection was not to the man, but his "being forced the throats of Bavarians by Seeckt and Gessler."[97] The new appointee was a fervent disciple of Seeckt as was the new Chief-of-Staff of the Bavarian command, Lieutenant-Colonel Ritter von Leeb. Although both officers were native Bavarians, Seeckt knew "they could be trusted to see that the 'Berlin Line' was henceforth followed in Bavaria as in the rest of Germany."[98]

As a result of the Bavarian Crisis and Beer Hall Putsch, Seeckt overcame the last barriers to his personal control of the Reichwehr, its administrative organs, its policy-making officers, and its ability to function on an independent basis. In spite of the continuation in law of the special rights and prerogatives of the southern states, military particularism never again threatened the unity of the Reichswehr. The destruction of the particularists was the final step toward the complete independence of the military establishment in the Weimar Republic and allowed the emergence of the first truly unified army in German military history.[99]

Conclusions

With the end of the Bavarian Crisis in late 1923, the basic conflicts between the civilian government and the military hierarchy, and

those within the military itself were resolved. The solutions to these problems, however, were conservative and anti-republican. This was particularly the case with the departure of Noske and Reinhardt who were responsible for the tenuous control held by the civilian government over the military. It was the appointment of Otto Gessler as Reichswehr Minister and Hans von Seeckt as Chef der Heeresleitung which was the turning point in civil-military relations in the Weimar Republic. From the outset, Seeckt worked to eliminate the Reichswehr Minister from the decision-making processes in military affairs and this did not prove difficult in view of Gessler's subservient attitude toward the General personally and to the army as an institution.

Officer selection in the Seeckt era did not change significantly in procedure or criteria from the earlier period. It did add an emphasis on "character" which meant each candidate had to demonstrate a respect for the past and political conservatism to complete the program successfully. After 1920, each Reichswehr recruit could in theory become an officer and this in itself was a new, even radically different, feature of the process as a whole.

The organizational re-alignment which placed the Personalamt under the direct supervision of the Heeresleitung allowed Seeckt to curtail the autonomy of General von Braun in selection policy. Seeckt then had direct control of the army's internal functions relating to officer selection, education and training. This proved to be vital in the creation of a corps reflecting the General's own ideals and values.

Even more important in the production of the type of officer Seeckt demanded than the initial selection process were the educational

programs in the Reichswehr. Officer candidates had three to four years to learn their trade and during that period were subjected to constant reminders of the values of the past. They were made to feel a part of the glorious traditions of German arms through not only military history courses, but also the activities of the Traditionsträger. Through Seeckt's program, the army assimilated its future leaders, moulded them to fit certain ideals, and provided them with a homogeneous life-style, philosophy, and value system.

One of the primary factors which facilitated re-creation of the officer corps according to Seeckt's ideals was that the majority of the most qualified officers in the transitional army came from the old Imperial army and held the same notions as Seeckt. Since these officers were the basic source of leadership in the hierarchy of the peacetime army, the Reichswehr indeed appeared to be an Imperial army in miniature. The army again was in a position to help influence the outcome of the state crisis in 1933 because it remained virtually the only stable institution in Weimar Germany. By that time, the Republic had already lost the support of most Germans and was in desperate straits socially, politically, economically, and intellectually. The political system was in a state of collapse when the actions of army officers such as Kurt von Schleicher made possible the appointment of Adolf Hitler as Chancellor.

NOTES FOR CHAPTER VI

[1]Seeckt Papers, Stuck III, National Archives and Records, Captured Records Branch, T-137-21, microfilm, "Der Chef der Heeresleitung," Nr. 95 chef, Berlin, den 18. April 1920 and Martin Vogt, ed., Das Kabinet Müller I, 27 Marz bis 21 Juni 1918 (Boppard am Rhein: Harald Boldt Verlag, 1971), pp. 131-134. See also Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 239, Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 75, and Alma Luckau, "Kapp-Putsch," in David Ralston, ed., Soldiers and States, Civil-Military Relations in Modern Europe (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1966), p. 178.

[2]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 83, Akt. 3, Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr. 4, Hpt.nr.18344/I d nr. 3307, Betreff: Verwendung der Offiziere, München, den 30.4.1920, Der Oberbefehlshaber: von Möhl, Generalmajor.

[3]BHA München, Abt.IV, MKR 14529, Wehrkreiskommando VII, Hpt. nr. 46729/Pers 1 Nr. 6784, Betreff: Verordung des Reichspräsidenten vom 5.11.20 über das Ausscheiden aktiven Offiziers aus dem Dienst. (H.V.Bl. 1920 Seite 948.), München, 18. November 1920.

[4]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 83, Akt. 3, Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr. 4, Hpt. nr. 16 944/Pers. 1 nr. 2198., Betreff: Offizierstellenbesetzung im 100 000 Mann Heer. München, 22.4.20.

[5]Hans von Seeckt, Gedanken eines Soldaten (Leipzig: Koehler & Amelang Verlag, 1925), p. 125, hereafter cited Seeckt, Gedanken.

[6]Hans von Seeckt, Die Reichswehr (Leipzig: R. Kittler Verlag, 1933), p. 68, hereafter cited Seeckt, Die Reichswehr.

[7]Ibid., p. 16.

[8]Ibid., p. 172.

[9]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 83, Akt. 3, Wehrkreiskommando VII, Hpt. Nr. 39540/ Pers 1 Nr. 5718, An das Reishswehrministerium-Heeresleitung-Personalamt, Betreff: Beförderungen, München, 27.9.1920.

[10]Heeres-Verordnungsblatt, 1920, p. 929 (Order of November 12, 1920).

[11]GLA Karlsruhe, K 7374, microfilm, 5. Division, Abteilung IIb, Nr. 1408, Das badischen Staatsministerium, 2 Juli 1921, pp. 1-3.

[12]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 118. See also van Cutrum, "Organization," p. 8.

[13]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 117.

[14]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 133.

[15]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 225; and Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, p. 99.

[16]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 14. See also Gaertner, ed., Reichswehr in Weimar, p. 87 who states that the Personalamt under General Heye after 1923 still allowed non-matriculated personnel from the enlisted ranks to become officer candidates by this method. About 100 persons were commissioned in this manner and were dubbed "Heye Leutnants."

[17]BHA München, Abt.IV, Gr. Kdo. 4, Band 144, Akt. 4, Reichswehrministerium. J n s p e k t i o n des Erziehungs-und Bildungswesens. Nr. 383/2.22.Jn.1.I Betr. Vor= und Nachprüfungen gem. Ziffer III der Off. Erg. Best., Berlin den 24, Februar 1922.

[18]Model, Generalstabesoffizier, p. 21. The author presents in this volume an excellent narrative of the General Staff officer and his training during the Reichswehr period in Part I, "Die Führergehilfen-Ausbildung der Reichswehr," pp. 21-32.

[19]Ibid., p. 22.

[20]Ibid., p. 25. See also Gaertner, ed., Reichswehr in Weimar, p. 88.

[21]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 301.

[22]Model, Generalstabesoffizier, p. 26; and Gaertner, ed., Reichswehr in Weimar, p. 88.

[23]Ibid., p. 28; and Ibid., pp. 101-102.

[24]BA/MA Freiburg im Breusgau, RH 37 v.778, Reichswehrministerium-Heer-Heeresleitung, Nr. 173/7.24 T 4 II. Betreff. Wehrkreispurüfung 1925, Berlin den 1.8.1924.

[25]BA/MA Freiburg im Breisgau, RH 37 v.778, Bayer. Wehrkreisskommando VII bayer.7. Division) Nr. 8721/Id 1231, Betr. Wehrkreisprüfung 1924. München den 25.3.1924.

[26]Model, Generalstabesoffizier, pp. 28-31.

[27]Ibid., p. 31.

[28]Ibid., p. 33.

[29]Görlitz, General Staff, p. 328.

[30]Model, Generalstabesoffizier, p. 37.

[31]Ibid., p. 43.

[32]Ibid., p. 58.

[33]Seeckt, Reichswehr, pp. 24-25.

[34]Ibid., p. 60.

[35]Ibid., p. 64.

[36]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 58.

[37]Craig, Politics, p. 363; Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 174; and Görlitz, General Staff, p. 225 who states this applied to famous requirements of the old Prussian, Bavarian, Saxon and Württemberg armies.

[38]Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 100.

[39]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 174.

[40]Ibid.

[41]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 170; and Schwatlo-Gesterding, "Reichswehr," pp. 81-83.

[42]Erich Eych, A History of the Weimar Republic, translated by Harlan Hanson and Robert G. L. Waite (New York: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 1962), vol. 1, p. 3.

[43]Görlitz, General Staff, p. 185.

[44]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 47.

[45]Lt. Gen. a.D. Constantin von Altrock, Vom Sterben des deutschen Offizierkorps (Berlin: E. S. Mittler und Sohn, 1922), p. 69. Sauer's figures came from a 1930 article by Franz Woertz who purportedly compiled them from official Reichswhr Ministry data on the officer corps during the war years. These were also the basis for the statistical presentations in the 1962 Handbuch zur deutschen militärgeschichte 1648-1939 by Rainer Wohlfeil. The source for most of the other statistics on the officer corps during the 1914-1918 years came from Curt Jany's work on the history of the Prussian army and from Lieutenant-General a.D. Constantin von Altrock's Vom Sterben das deutschen Offizierkorps of 1922.

[46]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 47. Demeter's figures differ somewhat from Sauer's (Woertz) as follows:

Officers in service during the war	49,923 active
	226,130 reserve
Officers killed in the war	11,367 active
	35,943 reserve

[47]Ibid., p. 48.

[48]Ibid., p. 47.

[49]Ibid., p. 268.

[50]Ibid., p. 54. See also Sauer, "Die Reichswehr," p. 258, fn 99 from Franz Woerts, "Die Vershwörung der Offizier," in Die Tat 22, 1920, p. 612.

[51]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 268.

[52]Ranke-Gesellschaft, "Führungsschicht," p. 116.

[53]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 179.

[54]Demeter, Officer Corps, p. 55.

[55]Grzesinski, Inside Germany, p. 93.

[56]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 714.

[57]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 122.

[58]Ibid., p. 122; Joachim von Stülpnagel to Professor H. J. Gordon, 9 November, 1959, copy in BA/MA, Freiburg im Breisgau, H-08-5/25.

[59]Otto Gessler, Reichswehr politik in der Weimarer Zeit (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlag, 1958), p. 292, hereafter cited Gessler, Reichswehrpolitik.

[60]Ibid., p. 499.

[61]Ibid.

[62]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 123, from Seeckt's order of April, 1920, in the Gessler Nachlass, no. 17, Bundesarchiv Koblenz.

[63]Gessler, Reichswehrpolitik, p. 429.

[64]Schmädeke, Kommandogewalt, pp. 199-200.

[65]Ibid., p. 204.

[66]Ibid., p. 106. See also Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 79; Hossbach, Entwicklung, p. 87; and Sauer, "Reichswehr," p. 251.

[67]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 78; and Benoist-Mèchin, L'Armee Allemande, II, p. 139.

[68]Wohlfeil, "Reichswehr," p. 102.

[69]Hossbach, Entwicklung, p. 87; and Walter Tormin, et., Die Weimar Republik (Hannover: Verlag für Literatur und Zeitgesehehen, 1954), p. 117, who states that Seeckt was responsible for the change in wording and interpretation.

[70]B. H. Liddell-Hart, The German Generals Talk (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1948), p. 12.

[71]Seeckt, Gedanken, pp. 92-93 where the author wrote, "Das Heer deint dem Staat, nur dem Staat; den es ist der Staat." This is an abstract view of the state with no particular form, but as an idea.

[72]Seeckt, Reichswehr, p. 46.

[73]Hans von Seeckt, The Future of the German Empire, Criticisms and Postulates, translated by Oakley Williams (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1930), p. 23, hereafter cited Seeckt, Empire.

[74]Ibid., p. 53.

[75]Hans Herzfeld, Die Weimarer Republik (Berlin: Ullstein Verlag, 1969), p. 29; Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, p. 17; and Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 325; translation in Carsten, Reichwehr, p. 120.

[76]Seeckt, Empire, pp. 118-119

[77]Ibid., p. 121.

[78]Kehr, Primat, p. 239.

[79]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 213.

[80]Ibid.

[81]Ibid., p. 214.

[82]HSA Stuttgart, M 660, Reinhardt Nachlass, letter of December 20, 1924, from General Ritter vom Möhl.

[83]Ibid., letter of January 4, 1926.

[84]Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, p. 170; and Carsten, "Germany," p. 90 in Michael Howard, ed., Soldiers and Governments.

[85]Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 342; and Wheeler-Bennett, Nemesis, p. 109.

[86]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 239.

[87]Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 181.

[88]Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, pp. 186-189.

[89]Gordon, Reichswehr, pp. 237-238.

[90]Ibid., p. 236.

[91]Ibid., from Seeckt Papers, Stück 282.

[92]Kitchen, History, p. 253; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 175.

[93]Rabenau, Seeckt, p. 371; Schüddekopf, Heer und Republik, pp. 185-186; and Carsten, Reichswehr, p. 182.

[94]Rabanau, Seeckt, pp. 367-369.

[95]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 251.

[96]Turner, Stresemann, pp. 124-125.

[97]Harold Gordon, Hitler and the Beer Hall Putsch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 511.

[98]Gordon, Reichswehr, p. 251.

[99]Ibid.

CONCLUSION

The selection of officers in the Reichswehr was a vital concern to both the civilian government and the military during the years from 1918 to 1926. Each realized that the corps of officers would determine the character of the army. However, ideological differences existed between the new regime and the old hierarchy of the Imperial army over the future officer corps and these provided bitter conflicts in the civil-military sphere and among factions in the army itself. The commonly held notion that the officers determined the ethos of an army proved correct, but a more basic question for the civilians should have been what made the officers what they were. The key to the character of the officer corps was not the selection criteria but rather the control of officer education and training. The civilian government left this function to the hierarchy of the army as an internal matter and thereby permitted the maintenance of conservative and traditional ideas in the corps.

After the Prussian Reforms of 1807, officer selection never changed in concept and retained a basic emphasis on technical military education and performance of duty. The process began, as it had since the days of the Great Elector, in each regiment where the aspirant applied as an officer candidate. If the person had prior military experience, such as a Cadet School education, he entered as a Fähnriche and if not,

as a regimental Fahnenjunker who received military training in his unit. Only in the post-World War One period was the title of such officer candidates altered for political reasons to Offizieranwärter. It was a decentralized system which endured until Seeckt established personal control over the policy-making and administrative offices governing officer selection, education and training in the Reichswehr era.

Even though alterations in the officer corps were rare, changes did occur due to expansion in the size of the army, war, and the creation of the Empire in 1871. The leadership of the army endeavored to retain as much homogeneity in social character, philosophy, and political outlook as possible. Tradition was vital in the psychological milieu of the corps and separated the military, especially the officers, from other citizens. When the ruling combination of throne, altar, and sword broke down as the governing triad of the nation, the military aristocrats still employed a tradition-oriented philosophy to segregate themselves from the rest of the nation. The old military aristocrats hated industrialization, urbanization, and modernity in general for destroying their former supremacy in society. Officers such as Seeckt realized these features were necessary in order for the army and nation to keep pace with other nations in technical military expertise. It was possible, however, to insulate the officer corps against outside influences for change through a conservative philosophy and tradition.

To produce the type of officer Seeckt considered necessary for the Reichswehr, the General altered the selection criteria somewhat to emphasize "character" in traditional terms. This meant selecting candidates already conservative in outlook, and reinforcing their ideas while

while in officer training. Tradition companies kept the glories of the past alive while at the same time the future officer could see the chaos and inefficiency of the Republic all around him. Weimar inspired little admiration for either a more democratic philosophy or the parliamentary form of government. Further, most of the officers involved in army education and training were themselves products of the Empire, and their own attitudes representated a large degree of continuity with the past which remained an important part of the Reichwehr.

For the future army and officer corps, serious internal conflicts proved more important than did selection policy or any other factor. Generals Gröner and Seeckt, leaders of the High Command and General Staff, attempted to undermine the military officials of the civilian government in order to obtain control over the army for themselves. These attempts were the result of disputes with Prussian War Minister Reinhardt and General von Braun of the Personalamt over the application of officer selection criteria and particularly over Reinhardt's policy of cooperation with the civilian government in the question of civilian supremacy in military affairs. The problems attained more serious proportions after the Versailles Treaty necessitated a major reduction of the officer corps' personnel. To comply with the military clauses of the agreement, five out of six officers remaining in the service after June 1919 had to be released from the army. The beginning of forced reductions in the corps brought about the Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch which ended with the resignations of both Reinhardt and Reichswehr Minister Noske. In reality, Reinhardt had little time after the signing of the Versailles Treaty to plan, much less to implement, programs that could significantly alter the officer corps.

Even in the relatively short period which Reinhardt served as head of the army, his efforts produced the most promising opportunity for the civilian government to alter its relations with the military. Reinhardt was a reformist conservative who acting out of necessity, protected much of the old while attempting to create a bridge to the new. In spite of being overshadowed by the imposing personality of Seeckt, Reinhardt still had laudable success in dealing with the problems confronting the government and its military system. By the end of his administration, the army had a clear-cut chain of command, its officers had control of their troops, and the threat of radical change in the military establishment had been thwarted. Reinhardt accepted the constitutional authority of the civilian government over the army and helped bring the military under parliamentary control for the first time in German military history. The command structure Reinhardt planned and implemented represented a radical break in civil-military relations because the head of the army became subordinate to a civilian military minister. Along with his insistence upon adhering to the constitution, his policy of cooperation with the government provided the possibility for change of significant proportion within the military if such a position could have been maintained. That it was not, could not be attributed to Reinhardt himself.

The decisive role Reinhardt played, and perhaps could have continued to play, in the critical post-war years of the Republic did not escape the notice of the former General and military historian, Waldemar Erfurth, who stated that "If Reinhardt had stayed longer at its head, then the Reichswehr would have exhibited another character, but would not necessarily have been any better [more efficient]."[1] Another officer,

discipline and policy decisions of the military hierarchy. However, disputes over authority within the highest echelons of the officer corps proved more difficult to solve. The three-way struggle between Reinhardt, Gröner, and Seeckt divided the officer corps like few other questions during the existence of the Reichswehr. Each sought to gain final authority in command decisions, but only the Prussian War Minister had the constitutional right to head the peacetime army. Reinhardt ultimately eliminated Gröner and Seeckt from the contest, but resigned shortly thereafter himself with the officer corps still in upheaval. Later, Seeckt's return to an active role as head of the army culminated in the achieving of unity and a centralized command system where Reinhardt had failed.

The other primary requisite for the restoration of the old position of the army was the securing of independent command initiative without the supervision of the civilian government. Independence in command authority came in practical terms about two years earlier than unity of command. It began with the granting to Reinhardt in September 1919 of a limited degree of unsupervised decision-making and initiative to issue orders without prior approval of the Reichswehr Minister. This was the result of his good relations with the government, but in it lay the possibility of abuse in hands unfriendly to the Republic. With Reinhardt's resignation in March 1920, this supposedly limited power came to Seeckt without checks or reservations placed upon its use. Seeckt immediately began to eliminate the new Reichswehr Minister Gessler from the decision-making processes of the ministry.

Moritz Faber du Faur, expressed even stronger sentiments, writing that "If Reinhardt had remained Chief of the Heeresleitung, the German destiny would have taken a difference course."[2]

In the final analysis, the crux of the disputes and conflicts in the officer corps revolved around the regaining of internal unity in order to achieve independence in military affairs. The officer corps, if it remained a state within a state, could survive and function under any system of government. This, however, was not enough for officers who recalled the days when the army was the elite of the nation and had a significant role in determining the nation's character and goals. Only with independence from control by any outside force, could the army expect to recapture its former position.

To control its own affairs, the army had to achieve internal unity. Only then could the army possess the power to sway the government toward its wishes in military or political affairs. General von Olderhausen's memorandum to the General Staff in late 1918 posed the question of how independence could be obtained and concluded the task would be easily accomplished if the civil government remained divided and weak. The new regime continued to face deep divisions resulting from coalition rule, complicated by the political and economic turmoil of the early days of the Republic. However, at the same time, the army was unable to take advantage of the situation because of barriers to unity within the officer corps itself.

Reinhardt began the process of restoring unity to the officer corps by returning full command authority to the officers of the regular army and eliminating the threat of the soldiers' councils to the

What Seeckt created was an anachronism: technocrats with a feudal philosophy. In the post-war years for the first time since the 18th century, the interests of the state and the officer corps no longer coincided. Officers such as Seeckt were determined, therefore, to ultimately change the state in order to reconcile the institutions. Seeckt wanted a return to at least the philosophy of a time when the Offizierberuff made the officer a very special part of society, to a time when social status and privilege compensated for a life of obedience, duty, loyalty, and sacrifice for the Fatherland. Seeckt's own preference was a corporate, organic structure where the hierarchical social order was unquestioned. The initial steps in the restoration of the outlook of such a time were the purging of alien elements from the officer corps, purifying the character of the corps, instilling in its officers a sense of purpose through service to an abstract state, and ensuring through officer education and training the maintenance of a conservative outlook in the corps.

In the final analysis, though, officer selection qualifications and procedures under both Reinhardt and Seeckt were quite liberal--even revolutionary--in comparison with prior times, the educational programs of the Truppenamt and Seeckt's tradition companies proved to be the deciding factors in the restoration of an independent, tradition-oriented officer corps in Germany. It would be incorrect indeed to view the progression toward military independence as the reflection of a militaristic German character or as forced upon unwilling parliamentarians by a military coup. In the contemporary context of civil war, economic disaster, political disarray, and constant crisis, such an eventuality may have been

unavoidable. However, during the process the civilian ministers and presidents always possessed the constitutional prerogative of removing from office any officer whose views or actions were inconcistent with democratic, parliamentary government. The Reichstag was never compelled against its wishes to pass legislation favorable to the military, but instead contributed to its own demise by permitting the military to retain unsupervised control over internal and administrative affairs in the army. Thus, it was the civilians who allowed the head of the army to determine the character of the officer corps and army--by default.

NOTES FOR THE CONCLUSION

[1]Erfurth, Generalstabes, p. 55, "Wenn Reinhardt länger Zeit an der Spitze geblieben wäre, dann hätte die Reichswehr manche anderen, aber wohl nocht besser Züge angenommen."

[2]Faber du Faur, Macht und Ohnmacht, p. 77, states, "Wenn Reinhardt Chef der Heeresleitung geblieben wäre, hätte das deutsche Schicksal ein anderen Lauf genommen."

A BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

There are many studies of the political and social impact of the army in Weimar Germany. Only a few, however, attempt to deal with methods, procedures, and criteria of officer selection. The topic frequently appears in a work of wider scope with the emphasis and analysis on other matters: for example, F. L. Carsten, The Reichswehr and Politics, 1918-1933; Gordon Craig, The Politics of the Prussian Army, 1640-1945; and John Wheeler-Bennett, The Nemesis of Power. The best description of officer selection in the Reichswehr in English is given by Harold Gordon, The Reichswehr and the German Republic, but the primary thrust here is the political interplay between the military and civilian government. Gordon provides some specific material relating to officer selection but in a number of cases questions arise concerning his conclusions. A sociological view of the officer corps is presented by Karl Demeter, The German Officer Corps in Society and State, 1650-1945 and Martin Kitchen, The German Officer Corps, 1890-1914, with additional statistical data on the immediate post-war period in Lt. Gen. a.D. Constantin von Altrock, Vom Sterben des deutschen Offizierkorps. These remain the standard treatments of the subject.

German scholars in recent years have probed deeper into matters pertaining to the officer corps, as part of government projects or with the support of private agencies, and have produced a number of excellent

studies on the subject. The political relations between the Reichswehr and the Weimar Republic are superbly analyzed by Wolfgang Sauer in K. D. Bracher, Die Auflösung der Weimarer Republik and by Franz von Gaertner, Die Reichswehr in der Weimarer Republik; Ernst Huber, Heer und Staat in deutschen Geschichte, an older but well written study; and Otto-Ernst Schüddekopf, Das Heer und die Republik. Jürgen Schmädeke, Militärische Kommandogewalt und Parlementarische Demokratie is perhaps the best study of the question of military command authority and parliamentary control problems in the Weimar period. Rainer Wohlfeil's contribution to the series published by the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt in Freiburg im Breisgau, Handbuch zur deutschen Militärgeschichte 1648-1939, Band VI, "Reichswehr und Republik, 1918-1933," is an extremely comprehensive effort from various archival records and an outstanding example of the high quality of contemporary German scholarship. Of comparable quality on the development of a military elite is the Jahrbuch II der Ranke-Gesellschaft, Kontinuität und Tradition in der deutschen Geschichte, "Führungschicht und Eliteproblem."

Several periodicals in GErmany regularly present articles of value on military subjects. These include Wehrwissenschäftliche Rundschau, Viertelsjahrhefte für Zeitgeschichte, Wehrkunde and, if care is taken to expurge propaganda, the Militär Geschichte of the Militärgeschichtliches Institut der DDR. Specific articles of importance in this category which deal with officer selection are Friedrich Doepner, "Zur Auswahl der Offizieranwärter im 100,000-mann-Heer," Wehrkunde, numbers 4 and 5, 1973 and Hans Meier-Welcker, "Die Stellung des Chefs der Heeresleitung in den Anfängen der Republik: Zur Entstehungsgeschichte

des Reichswehrministeriums" in Viertelsjahrhefte für Zeitgeschichte, number 4(2), 1956.

Other contemporary studies of note which provide primary material and insight into the inner workings of the officer corps is Jacques Benoist-Mèchin, Histoirie de L'Armee Allemande, I, De Armee Imperial a La Reichswehr (1918-1919) and volumn II, De La Reichswehr a L' Armee Nationale (1918-1919); the books and collected writings of Generals Walther Reinhardt, Wehrkrafte und Wehrwille; Wilhelm Gröner, Lebenserinnergungen; and Hans von Seeckt, Gedanken eines Soldaten, Landesverteidigung, Die Reichswehr, and in translation The Future of the German Empire. Many former officers have contributed to the literature on the period including Moritz Faber du Faur, Macht und Ohnmacht; Friedrich Hossbach, Die Entstehung des Oberbefehls über das Heer in Brandenburg-Preussen und im Deutschen Reich von 1655-1945; Waldemar Erfurth, Die Geschichte des deutschen Generalstabes, von 1918 bis 1945; Hans-Georg Model, Der deutsche Generalstabesoffizier, Seine Auswahl und Ausbildung in Reichswehr, Wehrmacht und Bundeswehr; Fritz Ernst's edited version of Reinhardt's papers, Aus dem Nachlass des Generals Walther Reinhardt; and the cooperative edition of the Militärgeschichtliches Forschungsamt, Beiträge Zur Militär und Kriegsgeschichte, Band IV, "Untersuchungen Zur Geschichte Des Offizierkorps."

Memoirs and biographies relating to persons of importance during the Weimar years are available such as Gustav Noske, Von Kiel bis Kapp and Albert Grzesinski, Inside Germany. These provide valuable insights from the point of view of two prominant Social Democrats in the government who were acquainted with the problems of the immediate post-war

years. Otto Gessler, Reichswehrpolitik in der Weimarer Zeit covers the period from the Kapp Putsch to the end of the period in question but presents a very defensive account of the author's career and relation to the breakdown of civilian-military relations after March 1920.

Of the many biographies regarding military personalities, Hans Meier-Welcker, Seeckt is superior to Friedrich von Rabenau, Seeckt. The latter was the confidente and official biographer of Seeckt, a man he idolized. It is neither objective nor reliable with a bias toward Seeckt in all matters. In similar fashion Dorothea Gröner-Geyer, General Gröner: Soldat und Staatsmann represents the response of an adoring daughter to her father's opponents.

A scarcely used but valuable source are the papers contained in the National Archives MS Series. These were written by leading German officers after the Second World War as part of the interrogation process for prisoners of war. These manuscripts furnish material relating to the operations of the military system and relatively few have appeared in published form. The National Archives also retains on microfilm the records from government ministries and offices. An example of this is the T-120 series, Aktenzeichen der Reichskanzlei whose contents cover such subjects as rearmament, security, national defense and army organization.

The primary material relating to the question of officer selection in the Reichswehr is located in a variety of archives within both the Federal Republic and the German Democratic Republic. The central office for Reichswehr personnel records at Potsdam was bombed during 1944 and access to any records which remain is limited. However, it is

possible to trace the officer selection process through the records of the former state military or Wehrkreis offices which are located in the Federal Republic. Because the Prussian War Minister, and later the Chef der Heeresleitung, was responsible for officer selection throughout the Republic, the regulations and policies of the persons in that position are available as transmitted to the lower echelon offices for implementation. The most complete collection of surviving records are found in the Bayerische Hauptstaatarchiv München for Bavaria, the Hauptstaatarchiv Stuttgart for Württemberg and the Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe for Baden. The Federal Bundesarchiv/Militärchiv in Freiburg im Breisgau has fewer holdings of value on the subject. A number of other locations contain material not included in the study, primarily due to a lack of funding for the project. Among these are the Heeresarchiv Potsdam and Dresden.

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APPENDIX A

OFFICER EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

The following directions came from the Württemberg War Ministry in July 1919 and were concerned with the procedure for reviewing officer's records to determine those suitable for retention in the service. The Reich military authorities later adopted a similar process. An interesting comment appeared on page 2, paragraph 3, where one of the qualifications was stated to be that the officer "have his heart in the right place." These were General Gröner's exact words regarding what he considered a vital part of the selection criteria and which brought bitter conflict between himself and Colonel Reinhardt, the Prussian War Minister, whose office determined the qualification for officers to be retained in the service. The implication borne by Gröner's comment was that officers should be conservative and tradition-minded as in the past.

Source: Hauptstaatarchiv Stuttgart, M 390, Band 289, Württemberg K.ministerium, abt. Gen.Kdo.IIa, M. 6095/19P, Juli 11, 1919. From Chapter IV, p. 125, ff.

Württ. Kriegsministerium
Abt. Gen.Kdo. IIa Nr. 6095/19 P.

Stuttgart, 11. Juli 1919.

Die auf 1. Oktober bevorstehende Armee-Verringerung macht eine Berichterstattung über sämtliche Offiziere notwendig.

Die Berichterstattung soll sich auf alle aktiven Offiziere erstrecken, ausgenommen die, deren Abschiedsgesuche vorliegen bezw. bis zum 1. September zur Vorlage kommen, und zwar dergestalt, daß die Vorlage der Beurteilungen von den Vorgesetzten der Friedenstruppenteile, Behörden usw., denen die betreffenden Offiziere angehören, zu erfolgen hat.

Maßgebend für die Berichterstattung ist die Offiziers-Verteilung vom 10. 12. 18.

Um die infolge der Neugliederung der militär. Verhältnisse und der vielen Verabschiedungen sehr schwierige Berichterstattung überhaupt zu ermöglichen, wird bestimmt:

Es sind die Beurteilungen aufzustellen für

Gren.	119	durch	Oberst	Ströhlin
J. R.	120	durch	Oberst	Flatschlen
J. R.	121	durch	Oberst	Zeller
Füs.	122	durch	Major	Bürger
Gren.	123	durch	Oberst	Frhr. v. Lupin
J. R.	124	durch	Oberst	Bader
J. R.	125	durch	Oberst	Stühmke
J. R.	126	durch	Major	Stockhaus
J. R.	127	durch	Oberstlt.	Schwab
J. R.	180	durch	Oberstlt.	Fleischmann
Drag.	25	durch	Major	Landbeck
Drag.	26	durch	Major	Lauffer
Ulanen	19	durch	Oberstlt.	Kündinger
Ulanen	20	durch	Major	Jobst
F. A. R.	13	durch	Oberst	Frhr. v. Watter
F. A. R.	29	durch	Major	Seeger
F. A. R.	49	durch	Oberst	Erlenbusch
F. A. R.	65	durch	Major	Fuchs
Pion.	13	durch	Major	Bok
Train-Abt.	13	durch	Major	Frhr. v. Gültlingen (Emil)
U. V. A. Ellwangen		durch	Major	Rutkardt
Bell. Amt XIII		durch	Oberst	Bofmayer
Train-Depot		durch	Major	Göttig.
Nachr. Batl.		durch	Hauptm.	Mörr.
4. Kp. Luftsch. Batl.		durch	Hauptm.	Jacobi.

Den betr. Kommandeuren gehen berichtigte Exemplare der Stellenbesetzung vom 10. 12. 18 zu, aus denen die Namen der zu beurteilenden Offiziere ersichtlich sind.

Ueber die berichtenden Offiziere selbst und über die bei höheren Stäben eingeteilten Offiziere erfolgt die Beurteilung in folgender Weise:

Ueber Oberstleutnant Schäfer, Hauptmann Ottenbacher und Hauptmann Rickwolff (Friedr.) stellt Generalmajor Haas die Beurteilung auf.

Ueber Oberstl. Nick, Oberstl. Schwab, Major Bürger, Hauptmann Gnamm: Oberst v. Hoff.

Ueber Oberst Frhr. v. Lupin und Hauptmann Plank: Generalmajor v. Maur.

Ueber Oberstl. Fleischmann, Hauptmann Klein und Hauptmann v. Bünau: Oberst Stühmke.

Ueber Hauptmann Stahl: Oberst Ströhlin.

Ueber Major Deyhle: Oberstlt. Kündinger.

Ueber Major Seeger: Oberst Frhr. v. Mühlen.

Ueber Major Fuchs und Hauptmann Ebbinghaus: Oberst Erlenbusch.

Ueber Oberleutnant Gais: Major Deyhle.

Ueber die übrigen, hier nicht aufgeführten Offiziere werden die Beurteilungen vom Generalkommando aufgestellt.

Soweit die jetzigen Regimentskommandeure hierzu nicht in der Lage sind, haben sie sofort mit den betr. Feld-Regts.-Kommandeuren bezw. den derzeitigen Vorgesetzten der im Grenzschutz, in Reichswehr-, Freiwilligen-, Sicherheits- und sonstigen Verbänden befindlichen Offiziere in Verbindung zu treten.

Ueber die jetzt dem Kriegsministerium oder Generalstab angehörigen oder dorthin kommandierten Offiziere berichten ihre jetzigen Vorgesetzten; ebenso über Offiziere, die im Frieden jetzt aufgelösten Behörden, Anstalten usw. angehörten und solche die während des Krieges aus dem Kriegsministerium und Generalstab herausversetzt sind.

89 Im übrigen ist bei Zweifeln, welcher Dienststelle die Berichterstattung obliegt, nach unmittelbarer Vereinbarung zwischen den beteiligten Dienststellen zu verfahren.

Entsprechend der Tragweite sind die Beurteilungen auf das sorgfältigste aufzustellen und alle Maßnahmen zu treffen, die die Gewinnung eines umfassenden gerechten Urteils ermöglichen. Zur Urteilsgewinnung sind ältere über Personalkenntnis verfügende, absolut verschwiegene und charaktervolle Offiziere zu persönlicher Rücksprache seitens der Vorgesetzten heranzuziehen, die ihr Urteil im einzelnen belegen müßten; allein verantwortwortlich bleiben aber die Vorgesetzten.

Wenden!

Für die Auswahl und Vorschläge der später unter Umständen zum Ausscheiden zu veranlassenden Offiziere werden folgende allgemeine Richtlinien gegeben:

Entsprechend der Schwere und Größe der Aufgabe, der sich das Offizierkorps in Zukunft gegenübersieht, muß es das Bestreben sein, die besten Männer dem Heeresdienst zu erhalten und das staatserhaltende Element, das im Offizierkorps seinen Ausdruck findet, zu tätiger Mitarbeit am Aufbaue des Reiches heranzuziehen.

Auf den Charakter muß entscheidender Wert gelegt werden; in dieser Beziehung bedürfen die bisherigen Qualifikationsberichte, wenn sie auch im Allgemeinen die einzelnen richtig beurteilen, der Ergänzung.

Es kommt nicht nur darauf an, die leistungsfähigsten Offiziere zu behalten, sondern ebenso auch diejenigen, die das Herz auf dem rechten Fleck haben. Nur sie werden den neuen Verhältnissen voll gewachsen und in der Lage sein, die Herzen ihrer Untergebenen zu gewinnen.

Um die Unterlagen für eine gleichmäßige Entscheidung zu gewinnen, ist es notwendig, daß die Beurteilungen nach anliegendem Muster aufgestellt werden.

Ausgefüllte Muster als Anhalt liegen bei.

Im Uebrigen sind für die Berichterstattung die P.- und Qu.-Bestimmungen maßgebend.

Zum 10. 8. 19 sind dem Kriegsministerium

1. die Beurteilungen in zweifacher Ausfertigung,
2. die Listen II, III, IV', V, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII

gemäß Ziffer 18 der Bestimmungen über Personal- und Qualifikationsberichte von den berichtenden Offizieren unmittelbar vorzulegen.

In dem nach Muster C der P.- und Qu.-Bestimmungen aufzustellenden Verzeichnis sind diejenigen Offiziere, die zum Ausscheiden vorgeschlagen werden (siehe Fragebogen Nr. 16 und 17) rot, diejenigen die freiwillig ausscheiden wollen, grün zu unterstreichen.

M. d. F. d. G. d. Kr. Min. beauftragt:
Wöllwarth.
Oberstleutnant.

26. Div. (Verteilung bis Komp.) (Bez. Kdos. je 1)	40
27. Div. (Verteilung bis Komp.)	40
Pl. 13	1
Ers. Fusa. Batl. 13 Ulm	1
Nachr. Batln. 13 mit Korpsnachrichtenpark, Funkenstation Vaihingen	1
Fliegerhorst Böblingen	1
4. Komp. d. Luftsch. B. 4 Friedrichshafen	1
Kea. 13 Stuttgart	1
Train-Abt. 13	1
Zentralleitung der S.-K. Württ. (Verf. bis Komp.)	30
Artl. Depot Ludwigsburg	1
Art.- u. Traindepot Dir. Stuttgart	1
Traindepot Ludwigsburg	3
Württ. Art. Depot Ulm	1
Neben-Artilleriedepot Stuttgart	1
Neben-Traindepot Ulm	1
Linienkommandantur W	1
Kriegsgef.-Lager Ulm und Dulag. Eglosheim, Hohenasperg und Münsingen (je 1)	4
Gouv. Stuttgart	1
Kdtr. Ulm	1
Gouv. Ulm	1
Kdtr. Münsingen	1
Kr. Bekl. Amt	1
Versorgungsamt	1
Festungsgefängnis Ulm	1
U'offz. Lehrkomp. 1—3 (je 1)	3
Sämtl. Abt. d. Kr. Min. (je 1)	20
B (1), A (2), WK (2)	
Freiw.-Abt. Haas	30
Reichswehrbrigade 13	60
Reserve	60

APPENDIX B

OFFICER CANDIDATE INTRODUCTION COURSE

This course was designed primarily for non-commissioned personnel who qualified to attend officer candidate school. Regular officers of subaltern rank were included in the course also, particularly if they were commissioned during the war. Of interest is the speaker on the Peace of Versailles scheduled Monday, January 26, 1920, from 2:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Source: Bayerische Hauptstaatarchiv München, Abt. IV, Band 20, akt. 1(1920), Gr.Kdo. IV, München, 8. Januar 1920. From Chapter V, p. 178, ff.

Reichswehrgruppenkommando Nr 4
Leitung der staatsbürgerlichen Fortbildungskurse 1920.

München, 8. Januar 1920.

Zeiteinteilung für den I. Kurs

(13. 1. bis 31. 1. 20).

Tag	Stunde	Lehrabteilung A	Stunde	Lehrabteilung B
Dienstag 13. 1.	9³⁰ vorm.	Pflichten und Tugenden des Reichswehrmannes als Staatsbürger. (Hauptmann im Generalstab Grün). Ort: Kadettenkorps. Hörsaal 190.	9³⁰ vorm.	Wie Lehrabteilung A.
	2—4⁰ nachm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes. I. Teil: Grundlagen (mit Lichtbildern). Freiherr von Pechmann. Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule (Pappenheimstr.).	2—4⁰ nachm.	Valuta. Papiergeld (Dr. Burger). Ort: Kadettenkorps. Hörsaal 343/344.
Mittwoch 14. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes. II. Teil: Organisation (mit Lichtbildern). Freiherr von Pechmann. Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Vorgeschichte des Krieges (Professor Karl Alexander von Müller). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
	2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im deutschen Museum.		
Donnerst. 15. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes. III. Teil: Ergebnisse (mit Lichtbildern). Freiherr von Pechmann. Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Verfassung des deutschen Reiches (Intendantur-Assessor Barth). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
	2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im deutschen Museum.		
Freitag 16. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Berufskrankheiten und Berufshygiene. I. Teil (mit Lichtbildern) (Obermedizinalrat Koelsch). Ort: Arbeitermuseum, Pfarrstr. 3.	9—11³⁰ vorm.	Führung im Armeemuseum.
	3—6⁰ nachm.	Die Kohlenfrage (Geheimrat Dr. Prinz) (mit Lichtbildern). Ort: Hörsaal 107 der technischen Hochschule.	3—6⁰ nachm.	Wie Lehrabteilung A.
Samstag 17. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Berufskrankheiten und Berufshygiene. II. Teil (mit Lichtbildern), Obermedizinalrat Koelsch. Ort: Arbeitermuseum, Pfarrstr. 3.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Lehren aus den großen Revolutionen der Geschichte. (Professor Karl Alexander v. Müller). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadetten-Korps.
Montag 19. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Valuta. Papiergeld (Dr. Burger). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Volkskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung. I. Teil (mit Lichtbildern). Bezirksarzt Dr. Seyffert. Ort: Arbeitermuseum. Pfarrstr. 3.
Dienstag 20. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Vorgeschichte des Krieges. (Professor Karl Alexander von Müller.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes I. Teil. Grundlagen (Frh. v. Pechmann). (Mit Lichtbildern.) Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule.
	2—4³⁰ nachm.	Führung im Armeemuseum.	2³⁰—5⁰ nachm.	Sozialismus. Bolschewismus, Syndikalismus. (Dr. Burger.) Ort: Hörsaal 190 Kadettenkorps.
Mittwoch 21. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Lehren aus den großen Revolutionen der Geschichte. (Professor Karl Alexander von Müller.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes II. Teil. Organisation (Frh. v. Pechmann). (Mit Lichtbildern.) Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule.
			2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Deutschen Museum.
Donnerst. 22. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Volkskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung. I. Teil. (Bezirksarzt Dr. Seyffert.) (Mit Lichtbildern.) Ort: Arbeitermuseum. Pfarrstr. 3.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die gewerbliche Produktion des deutschen Volkes III. Teil. Ergebnisse (Frh. v. Pechmann). (Mit Lichtbildern.) Ort: Physikhörsaal der Artillerieschule.
	2³⁰—5⁰ nachm.	Kultur und Zivilisation. (Universitätsprofessor Dr. Buchner.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Deutschen Museum.

Tag	Stunde	Lehrabteilung A	Stunde	Lehrabteilung B
Freitag 23. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Volkskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung II. Teil. (Bezirks-Arzt Dr. Seyffert), mit Lichtbildern. Ort: Arbeitermuseum.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Unsere wirtschaftliche Lage und die deutsche Landwirtschaft (Dr. Horlacher). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
	2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung in den Pinakotheken.	2³⁰—5⁰ nachm.	Kultur und Zivilisation (Universit.-Professor Dr. Buchner. Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
Samstag 24. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Unsere wirtschaftliche Lage und die deutsche Landwirtschaft (Dr. Horlacher). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Berufskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung I. Teil (mit Lichtbildern), Ober-Medizinalrat Koelsch. Ort: Arbeitermuseum.
Montag 26. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Verfassung des deutschen Reiches (Intendantur-Assessor Harth). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Volkskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung II. Teil (mit Lichtbildern), Bezirksarzt Dr. Seyffert. Ort: Arbeitermuseum, Pfarrstr. 3.
	4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Arbeitermuseum (Gewerberat Karsch).	2³⁰—5⁰ nachm.	Der Friede von Versailles (H. Hittler). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
Dienstag 27. 1.	9—11⁴⁵ vorm.	Arbeiterschutz I. Teil, mit Lichtbildern (Gewerberat Karsch). Ort: Hörsaal Arbeitermuseum.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die politischen Parteien und ihre Bedeutung (H. Hittler.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
			2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung in den Pinakotheken.
Mittwoch 28. 1.	9—11⁴⁵ vorm.	Arbeiterschutz II. Teil (mit Lichtbildern), Gewerberat Karsch. Ort: Hörsaal Arbeitermuseum.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Reichswehr (Organisation, wirtschaftliche Aussichten) Hauptmann im Generalstab Grün. Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.
	2—5⁰ nachm.	Sozialismus, Bolschewismus, Syndikalismus (Dr. Burger). Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Arbeitermuseum (Gewerberat Karsch).
Donnerst. 29. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Die Reichswehr (Organisation, wirtschaftliche Aussichten) Hauptmann im Generalstab Grün. Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁴⁵ vorm.	Arbeiterschutz. I. Teil (mit Lichtbildern) (Gewerberat Karsch). Ort: Arbeitermuseum.
			2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Nationalmuseum.
Freitag 30. 1.	9—11⁴⁵ vorm.	Die politischen Parteien und ihre Bedeutung. (H. Hittler.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁴⁵ vorm.	Arbeiterschutz. II. Teil (mit Lichtbildern). Gewerberat Karsch. Ort: Arbeitermuseum.
	2—4⁰ nachm.	Führung im Nationalmuseum.		
Samstag 31. 1.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Der Friede von Versailles. (H. Hittler.) Ort: Hörsaal 343/344 Kadettenkorps.	9—11⁰ vorm.	Berufskrankheiten und ihre Bekämpfung. II. Teil (mit Lichtbildern). Obermedizinalrat Koelsch. Ort: Arbeitermuseum.

Bemerkungen: 1. Außerdem findet zu noch festzusetzender Zeit statt: Führung durch einen größeren Zeitungsverlag, Besuch von Theatern und Konzerten.
2. An den von Vorträgen und Führungen freien halben Tagen werden durch besonderen Kursbefehl Arbeitsstunden angesetzt.

Die Kursleitung
Grün
Hauptmann im Generalstab.

I. Geg. Schüler

APPENDIX C

PARTICULARISM AND OFFICER SELECTION: THE BADEN EXAMPLE

From the beginning of the demobilization of the Imperial Army the south German states, especially Baden and Bavaria, sought to retain only native-born officers for their contingents. The following letters, one from 1926 and the other from 1927, show the perniciousness of this effort by Baden military officials. The first letter, dated December 12, 1926, clearly demonstrates that certain officers were unacceptable to Baden officials primarily on the grounds that the person came from outside the Land. The second presents an equally strong reaction in favor of officers who were native Badener - Landeskindern.

Source: Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe, K 7374, microfilm, Badischer Landeskommandant, IIa, Nr. 48/26, Canstatt, den 12.12.1926, "An das Badische Staatsministerium," and Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe, K 7374, microfilm, Badischer Landeskommandant, IIa, 4/27, Canstatt, den 20.1.27, "An das Badische Staatsministerium." From Chapter V, p. 187 ff.

Badischer Landeskommandant.
IIa. Nr. 42/26

Cannstatt, den 12.12.1926.

BAD. STAATSMINISTERIUM
14 DEZ. 1926 13136

An

das Badische Staatsministerium

Karlsruhe.

Dem Staatsministerium teile ich ergebenst folgende Änderung in der Stellenbesetzung der Kommandeure von Badischen Truppenteilen mit:

Oberstleutnant Muff, bisher Kommandeur des II.Bataillons Bad.Infanterie-Regiments 14 in Tübingen, ist mit dem 1.12.26. zur Heeres- Friedenskommission in Berlin versetzt worden.

An seiner Stelle ist Oberstleutnant Noack, bisher im Reichswehrministerium, zum Kommandeur des II.Bataillons Bad. Inf. Regiments 14 ernannt worden.

Oberstleutnant Noack ist nicht geborener Badener.

Ehrenthal

Generalmajor und Badischer
Landeskommandant.

Badischer Landeskommandant.
IIa. Nr. 4/27

Cannstatt, den 20.1.27.

BAD. STAATSMINISTERIUM
22 JAN. 1927 00727

An

das Badische Staatsministerium

Karlsruhe

Dem Staatsministerium teile ich ergebenst folgende Änderung in der Stellenbesetzung der Kommandeure von Badischen Truppenteilen mit:

Oberst Frhr.v.Rotberg, Kommandeur des 14.(Bad.) Infanterie-Regiments ist mit dem 31.1.27 der Abschied bewilligt worden. An seiner Stelle ist Oberst Waenker von Dankenschweil, bisher beim Stabe des 14.(Bad.) Infanterie- Regiments, zum Kommandeur des Regiments ernannt worden.

Oberst Waenker von Dankenschweil ist geborener Badener.

Fährenbach
Generalmajor und Badischer
Landeskommandant.

APPENDIX D

OFFICER SELECTION QUALIFICATIONS

The first letter from Major Werner von Blomberg, Chief of Staff of the 5th Division in Stuttgart of July 2, 1921, to the Baden State Ministry outlined in detail the qualifications for entering the Reichswehr whether as an officer candidate or not. The second presentation, from about 1927, demonstrated that the qualifications and procedures did not change significantly over the intervening years.

Source: Generallandesarchiv Karlsruhe, K 7374, microfilm, 5. D i v i s i o n, Abtlg. IIb Nr. 1408, Betreff: Einstellung im Reichsheer, Stuttgart, den 2. Juli 1921, date stamped 4- Jul 1921 14483 and undated pages from Army Regulations Gazette, circa 1927, entitled "Merkblatt für den Eintritt ins heer." Chapter VI, p. 226 ff.

4-JUL 1921 14488

5. Division

Abtlg.IIb Nr. 1408.

Stuttgart, den 2. Juli 1921.

Betreff: Einstellung in Reichsheer.

Reg.Pr. Akten

G 6/7

Dem badischen Staatsministerium

Karlsruhe.

Zu der Besprechung des Chefs des Stabes der 5.Division mit dem Herrn Staatspräsidenten wird ergebenst mitgeteilt, wie sich im wesentlichen der Gang der Einstellung für die Freiwilligen im Reichsheer vollzieht.

Der junge Mann, welcher in das Reichsheer eintreten will, muß folgende Bedingungen erfüllen.

Er muß 1. gesund sein,
2. im Alter von 17-23 Jahren stehen,
3. die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit besitzen,
4. er soll Lust und Liebe zum Soldatenberuf haben.

Ausgeschlossen von den Eintritt in das Reichsheer sind:

a) wer die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit nicht besitzt,
b) wer nach § 114 des Bürgerlichen Gesetzbuches in der Geschäftsfähigkeit beschränkt ist,
c) wer wegen Ungeeignetheit oder Degradation aus der Wehrmacht, dem früheren Heer, der früheren Marine, der früheren Schutztruppe, den früheren anerkannten Freiwilligenverbänden, der vorläufigen Reichswehr und vorläufigen Reichsmarine oder auf Grund fristloser Kündigung oder infolge Erkenntnis der Wehrberufskammer ausgeschieden ist,
d) wer wegen Bettelns oder Landstreichens wiederholt bestraft ist,
e) wer wegen Vergehens oder Verbrechens mit einer Freiheitsstrafe von 3 Monaten und mehr bestraft ist, ohne Rücksicht darauf, ob die Strafe verbüßt ist oder nicht,
f) wer unter 17 und über 23 Jahre alt ist,
g) wer verheiratet ist.

Zur Anmeldung muß der Freiwillige folgende Papiere mitbringen:

a) Geburtszeugnis,
b) polizeiliches Führungszeugnis oder Leumundszeugnis mit polizeilich gestempeltem Lichtbild,
c) eine polizeiliche Bescheinigung darüber, ob und in welchem Arbeitsverhältnis der Freiwillige in der Zeit von der Vollendung des 17.Lebensjahres bis zu seiner freiwilligen Meldung gestanden hat, insbesondere, ob er etwa bereits früher der Wehrmacht angehört hat, ferner über seine Familienverhältnisse und seinen eigenen Familienstand (ledig oder verheiratet).
d) Zeugnisse der Arbeitgeber, möglichst über die letzten 2 Jahre, von Schüler das Letzte Schulzeugnis,
e) Militärpapiere neben den sonstigen Ausweispapieren, wenn sie bereits im alten Heere, der Marine oder der Reichswehr usw. gedient haben,

№ 14483 Rke. 7. Juli 1921.

z. d. A.

G 7/7

3.

f) Minderjährige: Die schriftliche, amtlich beglaubigte Einwilligung des gesetzlichen Vertreters zum Eintritt in die Wehrmacht (nicht in einen bestimmten Truppenteil).

Der Bewerber meldet sich bei dem Truppenteil, bei dem er einzutreten wünscht oder bei dem ihm zunächst gelegenen Truppenteil, der die Durchführung seiner Bewerbung bei dem gewünschten Truppenteil bewirkt.

Die Anwerbungen erfolgen im Allgemeinen durch die Kompagnie- usw. Chefs, bei denen sich die Bewerber zunächst schriftlich unter Einreichung ihrer Papiere oder persönlich unter Vorlage ihrer Papiere vorstellen.

Die von den Kompagnien usw. vorläufig als geeignet befundenen Angeworbenen werden dem Batl. bezw. Abtlg. zur Durchführung der Annahme zugeführt. Der Annahmeoffizier des Batls. pp prüft die Papiere nochmals.

Je nach dem Ausfall der Prüfung veranlaßt der Annahmeoffizier die Ablehnung des Freiwilligen oder die militärärztliche Untersuchung durch den zuständigen Militärarzt.

Das Untersuchungsergebnis auf Grund beigefügter Richtlinien zur Beurteilung der Tauglichkeit für das Reichsheer kann lauten:

a. tauglich für das Heer,
b. zeitig untauglich für das Heer und
c. untauglich für das Heer.

Zeitig Untaugliche können ihre Meldung erneuern und werden hierauf hingewiesen.

Die zur Annahme Geeigneten werden unter Angabe des Untersuchungsbefundes in Listen eingetragen und haben den Verpflichtungsschein zu unterschreiben, der zu den Akten kommt.

Die als geeignet Befundenen erhalten sodann einen vorläufigen Annahmeschein.

Den mit dem vorläufigen Annahmeschein versehenen Freiwilligen wird eröffnet, daß sie die Entscheidung ihrer Einstellung abzuwarten haben und Wohnungsveränderungen dem Annahmetruppenteil laufend mitzuteilen haben.

Bei Untersuchungen für einen anderen Truppenteil übersendet der Truppenteil, bei welchen die Untersuchung vorgenommen wird, einen

Auszug

Auszug an den Werbetruppenteil.

Für die badischen Freiwilligen kann der großen Entfernungen halber nur Donaueschingen, Villingen und Konstanz für Südbaden, Ludwigsburg für Nordbaden in Betracht kommen.

Es ist geprüft worden, ob eine Untersuchung außerhalb des Truppenteils bei einen Vertrauensarzt, etwa beim Versorgungsamt Heilbronn erfolgen kann. Leider muß davon abgesehen werden, weil diese Erweiterung der Bestimmung sicherlich vom Feindbund als Mobilmachungsvorbereitung ausgelegt und verboten werden würde.

Die Einstellungen erfolgen, abgesehen von einzelnen Ausnahmen, Anfangs April und Oktober jeden Jahres.

Die Freiwilligen der Infanterie-, Pioniere-, Nachrichten-, Fahr-, und Kraftfahrtruppen werden zunächst bei einem Ausbildungsbatl. 1/2 Jahr infanteristisch, die der Reiter-Regimenter und Artillerie bei den Ausbildungs-Esk. und Batterien ausgebildet.

Die Beorderung der Freiwilligen zum zuständigen Ausbildungstruppenteil erfolgt seitens des Annahmetruppenteils mittels Gestellungsaufforderung. Beim Eintreffen wird der Freiwillige nochmals militärärztlich untersucht.

Er erhält dann den Verpflichtungsschein ausgehändigt und ist von diesem Zeitpunkt ab der Beginn der Heereszugehörigkeit erfolgt.

Den sich bei der Division meldenden Freiwilligen wird beifolgendes Merkblatt und Garnisonverzeichnis mitgegeben bezw. mitgeschickt.

Nach Verabschiedung des Wehrmachtsversorgungsgesetzes ist eine Neuaufstellung des Merkblattes beabsichtigt.

V. s. d. Division
Der Chef des Stabes

Oberstleutnant

3

Merkblatt
für den Eintritt ins Heer

Zeitpunkt der Einstellung.

Jederzeit, in der Hauptsache am 1. 4. und 1. 10. jedes Jahres. Meldung jederzeit, zweckmäßig mehrere Monate vor 1. 4. und 1. 10.

Alter.

Vollendetes 17. bis vollendetes 23. Jahr, bevorzugt 19- und 20jährige Freiwillige.

Bedingungen.

12jährige Dienstverpflichtung, körperlich tauglich, unbescholten, mindestens 1,54 m groß, unverheiratet. Größere Freiwillige werden in erster Linie berücksichtigt.

Meldestellen.

Man meldet sich bei dem Truppenteil, bei dem man zu dienen wünscht. Wer einen solchen nicht kennt oder dort nicht angenommen werden konnte, meldet sich bei den Divisionskommandos. Standorte der Divisionen sind:

1. Division Königsberg,	6. Division Münster i. W.,
2. „ Stettin,	7. „ München,
3. „ Berlin	1. Kav.-Division Frankfurt a. O.
4. „ Dresden	2. „ „ Breslau
5. „ Stuttgart	3. „ „ Weimar

Ausweispapiere.

Geburtszeugnis; polizeiliches Führungszeugnis oder Leumundszeugnis mit polizeilich gestempeltem Lichtbild; Zeugnisse der Arbeitgeber, möglichst über die letzten 2 Jahre; von Schülern das letzte Schulzeugnis.

Freiwillige unter 21 Jahren müssen daneben die amtlich beglaubigte Einwilligung des gesetzlichen Vertreters (Vater oder Vormund) zum 12jährigen Dienst im Heer beibringen.

Form. 88a. Druckerei Wehrkr.Kdo. V Stuttgart.

Die polizeilichen Zeugnisse müssen sich darüber aussprechen:

a) Ob und welche Strafen vorliegen;
b) ob Umstände bekannt sind, die Zweifel an der geistigen Zurechnungsfähigkeit begründen (z. B. Freispruch aus § 51 R. Str. G. B.);
c) ob der Bewerber einer Hilfsschule angehört hat oder Fürsorge- und Zwangszögling gewesen ist;
d) ob der Freiwillige ledig oder verheiratet ist,
e) daß der Freiwillige sich politisch nicht in verfassungsfeindlichem Sinne betätigt hat.

Dienstlaufbahn.

Einstellung erfolgt als Schütze usw. Aufrücken findet nach Maßgabe der Fähigkeiten statt.

Die Freiwilligen können nach 2 Jahren zum Oberschützen, Oberreiter usw. ernannt und bei freien Stellen nach mindestens 4jähriger Dienstzeit zum Gefreiten und nach mindestens 6jähriger Dienstzeit zum Obergefreiten befördert werden.

Nach einer Dienstzeit von 3 Jahren können sich die Freiwilligen einer Prüfung zum Unteroffizier unterziehen. Wer sie besteht, wird zum Unteroffizieranwärter ernannt und gleichzeitig zum Gefreiten befördert, wenn Gefreitenstellen frei sind. Wenn Stellen frei sind, kann der Unteroffizieranwärter dann nach 4jähriger Gesamtdienstzeit zum Unteroffizier, nach 2jähriger Dienstzeit als Unteroffizier zum Unterfeldwebel, nach 4jähriger Dienstzeit als Unteroffizier zum Feldwebel befördert werden.

Wer Oberfeldwebel werden will, muß neben der Unteroffizierprüfung eine besondere Prüfung ablegen. Wer sie besteht, kann nach 3jähriger Dienstzeit als Unteroffizier zum Oberfeldwebel befördert werden.

Wer die nötigen Kenntnisse und Fähigkeiten nachweist, kann sich zur Ableistung der Offizieranwärterprüfung melden und wenn er sie besteht, nach Besuch der Waffenschulen Offizier werden. Voraussetzung für die Zulassung zur Offizieranwärterlaufbahn ist der Besitz des Abgangsreifezeugnisses einer 9klassigen höheren Lehranstalt (Abiturientenexamen) oder der Nachweis einer entsprechenden Bildung durch Ablegung von Prüfungen.

Gebührnisse.

Die Soldaten sind in das Reichsbeamtenbesoldungsgesetz einbegriffen. Sie werden besoldet:

als Schütze usw. nach Gruppe I.
als Gefreiter und Obergefreiter nach Gruppe II,
als Unteroffizier und Unterfeldwebel nach Gruppe III,
als Feldwebel nach Gruppe IV,
als Oberfeldwebel nach Gruppe V.

3.

Daneben werden freie Bekleidung, freie ärztliche Behandlung, freie Kranken-Hauspflege sowie freie Heil- und Kurmittel gewährt.

Unterkunft und Verpflegung werden vom Staat gewährt. Für sie wird ein Abzug von der Besoldung gemacht.

Das Mindesteinkommen eines Leutnants entspricht dem eines Oberfeldwebels.

Die Familienmitglieder verheirateter Soldaten haben in Krankheitsfällen Anspruch auf freie militärärztliche Behandlung.

Vorbereitung für den bürgerlichen Beruf.

Während der Dienstzeit erhalten Unteroffiziere und Mannschaften eine weitere Schulausbildung und eine fachliche Sonderausbildung, die ihnen den späteren Übertritt in den Beamtenberuf oder einen gewerblichen Beruf erleichtert. Bei der Infanterie, Kavallerie, Artillerie und der Fahrtruppe findet eine Vorbereitung auf die Beamtenlaufbahn und zum Teil auch auf den Beruf als Kaufmann oder Landwirt statt. Durch Abkommandierung auf eine Heereshandwerkerschule kann auch eine Ausbildung zu einem der gebräuchlichsten Handwerke bis zur Meisterprüfung erfolgen. Bei den technischen Truppen wird nur die Möglichkeit geboten, eine Ausbildung als Handwerker, wie auf den Heereshandwerkerschulen, eine Ausbildung für freie technische Berufe und eine solche für technische Beamte zu erlangen. Es empfiehlt sich, daß der Freiwillige sich vorher erkundigt, welche Möglichkeiten sich zur Vorbildung für den späteren Beruf bei dem Truppenteil seiner Wahl bieten.

Die aus der Landwirtschaft kommenden Soldaten können sich in landwirtschaftlichen Schulen, denen bäuerliche Betriebe angegliedert sind, weiterbilden. Wer sich als selbständiger Landwirt ankaufen will, kann zur Beschaffung von Darlehen von der Reichsbürgschaft Gebrauch machen. Zur Ansiedlung werden niedrig verzinsliche Kredite gewährt. (Siehe auch letzte Seite).

Urlaub.

Jeder Soldat erhält während der ersten 2 Dienstjahre jährlich 14 Tage Erholungsurlaub, vom 3. Jahre ab 21 Tage. Daneben wird Sonderurlaub

a) zu Sportzwecken,

b) in dringenden Familienangelegenheiten und

c) an den Festtagen

gewährt.

Wohlfahrtseinrichtungen.

In Kameradschaftsheimen, Lesezimmern und Büchereien ist Gelegenheit geboten, die dienstfreie Zeit in zwangloser Weise zu verbringen. Auch bestehen Einrichtungen, die den Bezug von Lebensmitteln zu angemessenen Preisen ermöglichen sollen.

Versorgung.

Unteroffiziere und Mannschaften, die nach Ablauf ihrer zwölfjährigen Dienstverpflichtung sowie solche, die vorher aber nach einer Dienstzeit von mindestens vier Jahren wegen Dienstunfähigkeit entlassen werden, haben Anspruch auf:

1. Übergangsgebührnisse, deren Dauer und Höhe von der Länge der Dienstzeit und dem zuletzt zustehenden ruhegehaltsfähigen Diensteinkommen abhängig ist,
2. einen Zivildienstschein zur Erlangung einer Beamten- oder Angestelltenstelle,
3. eine Zulage zu den Übergangsgebührnissen wenn der Zivildienstschein nicht erteilt worden ist,
4. Kinder-, Frauen- und Teuerungszuschläge zu den Übergangsgebührnissen,
5. eine einmalige Übergangsbeihilfe, deren Höhe von der Länge der Dienstzeit abhängig ist,
6. eine einmalige Umzugsentschädigung.

Den vorbezeichneten Unteroffizieren und Mannschaften soll auf Antrag gewährt werden:

1. Ein Vorschuß bis zur vollen Höhe der Übergangsgebührnisse und der Zulage hierzu, wenn der Zivildienstschein nicht gewählt worden und es zur Begründung oder Sicherung des wirtschaftlichen Fortkommens nötig ist und die nützliche Verwendung gewährleistet erscheint.
2. Eine Reichsbürgschaft zur Erleichterung der ländlichen Ansiedlung, wenn der Zivildienstschein nicht gewählt worden ist.

   Voraussetzung für eine Bürgschaft des Reichs ist der Nachweis des Antragstellers, daß er sich zur ländlichen Ansiedlung eignet. Das Reich bürgt bis zum doppelten Betrage der von den beneffenden Unteroffizieren und Mannschaften aus eigenen Mitteln (Privatvermögen und gewährter Vorschuß) bereitgestellten Summe. In besonderen Fällen bürgt das Reich für Siedlungszwecke bis zu 90 v. H. des Taxwertes des Siedlungsgutes. Der ländlichen Ansiedlung wird der Erwerb einer kleinbäuerlichen Wirtschaft (Ackernahrung) gleichgestellt.

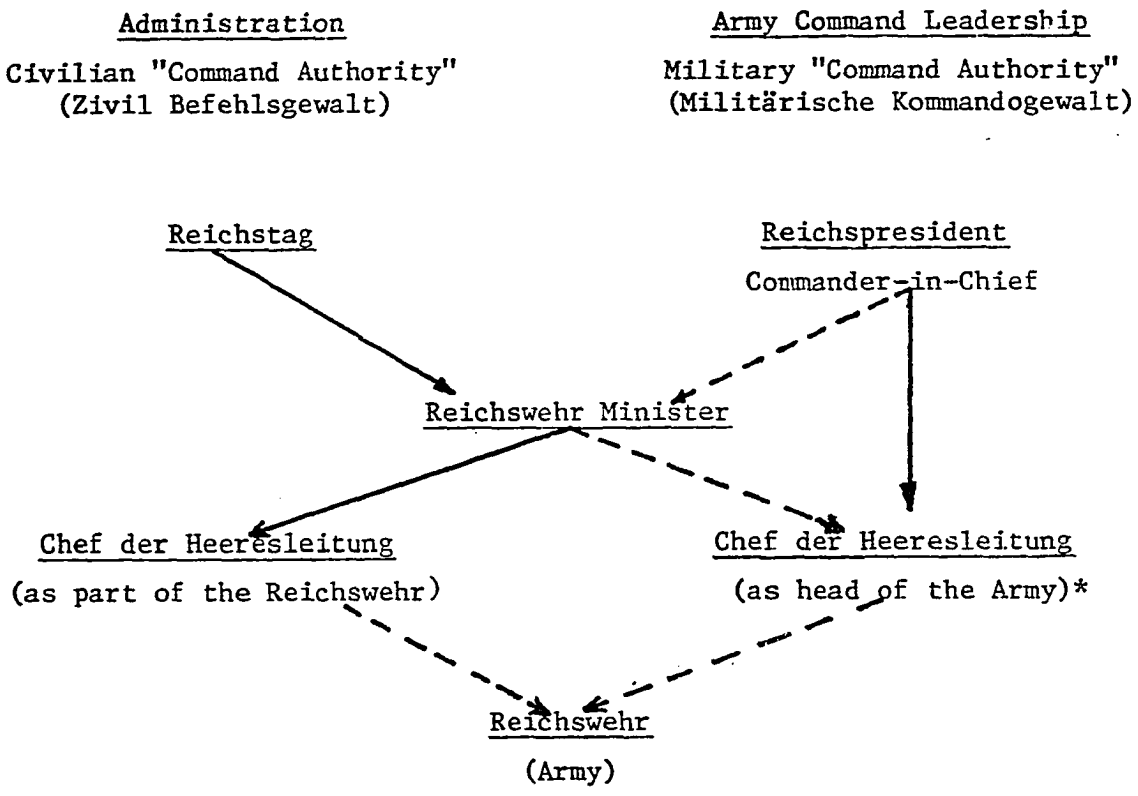
Beim Vorliegen von Dienstbeschädigung finden auf die eingangs erwähnten Unteroffiziere und Mannschaften außerdem die Vorschriften des Reichsversorgungsgesetzes (Rentengewährung, Heilbehandlung usw.) Anwendung. Liegen Gesundheitsstörungen vor, die nicht auf eine Dienstbeschädigung zurückzuführen sind, so werden $^2/_3$ der nach dem Reichsversorgungsgesetze zustehenden Beträge gewährt.

Auf Unteroffiziere und Mannschaften mit kürzerer als vierjähriger Dienstzeit finden lediglich die Vorschriften des Reichsversorgungsgesetzes (Rentengewährung, Heilbehandlung usw.) Anwendung.

Für die Hinterbliebenen von Soldaten ist gesorgt.

APPENDIX E

THE COMMAND STRUCTURE OF THE REICHSWEHR, 1923



*After March 23, 1921, direct commands from the President to the army required the countersignature of the Reichswehr Minister.

APPENDIX F

EXAMPLES OF THE VORPRÜFUNG AND NACHPRÜFUNG

The Vorprüfung and Nachprüfung were administered in April and October of each year to candidates attempting to establish their educational qualifications for officer candidate school. Successful completion of the examinations brought the candidate to the level of a secondary school matriculant. The first example depicted subject areas and the appropriate time limits for individual examinations. The second was more comprehensive and provided instructions for the materials required to take the examinations, the actual schedule for the tests, and indicated a number of persons in charge of the various subject areas.

Source: Bayerische Hauptstaatarchiv München, Abt. IV, Band 144, Akt.4, Gr. Kdo.IV, IIa No. 2189, Berlin, den 24, Februar 1922, Reichswehrministerium, J n s p e k t i o n des Erziehungs-und Bildungswesens. Nr. 383/2.22. Jn.1 I., Betr: Vor= und Nachprüfungen gem. Ziffer III der Off.Erg.Best. and Bayer. Wehrkreiskommando VII, Hpt. Nr. 8991/ IIa Nr. 2189, München, den 9 März 1922, "Entwurf," Betreff: Vor= und Nachprüfungen nach Ziffer III der Offizierserganzungsbestimmungen. From Chapter VI, pp. 233-235.

IIa Nr. 2189. „Entwurf"

Bayer. Wehrkreiskommando VII

Mpt. Nr. 8931 / IIa Nr. 2189

München, den 9. März 1922.

Ofg. XX Gl. 1

v. 9. 3. 22

An

den Infanterieführer der 7. Division, München
das Infanterieregiment 19, München
das Infanterieregiment 20, Regensburg
das Infanterieregiment 21, Nürnberg
das Pionierbataillon 7, München — das Reiterregiment 17 Bamberg
den Artilleriefführer der 7. Division, München
das Artillerieregiment 7, Nürnberg
die Nachrichtenabteilung 7, München
die Kraftfahrabteilung 7, München
die Fahrabteilung 7, München
die Infanterieschule München
die Pionierschule München
die Kommandantur von München
die Kommandantur von Ingolstadt
die Kommandantur von Gräfenwöhr.
Wehrkreiskommando: VII
Abtlg. I, IIb, IIc, IV, Nachr, Pi, Kr, Ind. Abt.
Divisionsstabskommandant, IIa (2)
Bayer. Kom. Amt. II — Wehr. Inspekt. Ingolstadt — Lehrschmiede München

Betreff:

Vor- und Nachprüfungen nach Ziffer III der Offiziersergänzungsbestimmungen.

Die wissenschaftlichen Vorprüfungen nach Ziffer III der Offiziersergänzungsbestimmungen finden in diesem Jahre vom 19. bis 22. April, die wissenschaftlichen Nachprüfungen vom 24. bis 28. April statt.

Ort: München, früheres Kriegsministerium, Eingang Schönfeldstr. 7, Sitzungssaal ZimmerNr.....

I. Vorprüfungen:

a) Die Prüfungsfächer sind:

1. Deutsch, 2. Geschichte, 3. Erdkunde, 4. Rechnen,

Ia II C

5. Raumlehre, 6. Physik, 7. Chemie.

Die Prüfungsfächer ~~unter~~ 1. - 7 sind verbindlich.

Außerdem können sich die Prüflinge zur Verbesserung des Ergebnisses einer Prüfung im Französischen oder Englischen unterziehen.

In den Fächern 1, 2, 4 und 5 und in der Fremdsprache findet eine schriftliche und eine mündliche Prüfung statt, in den Fächern 3, 6 und 7 nur eine mündliche Prüfung.

b.) Zeiten- und Reihenfolge

Vorprüfungen:

19.4. Deutsch Niederschrift, 45 Minuten, 8 Uhr - 8,45 Uhr

Deutsch Aufsatz, 3 Stunden, 9 - 12 Uhr vorm.

Fremdsprache Diktat, 1 Stunde, 3 - 4 Uhr nachm.

Übersetzung, 1 Stunde, 4 - 5 Uhr

20.4. Rechnen und Raumlehre

schriftl. Aufgaben, 3 Stunden, 8 - 11 Uhr Vorm.

Geschichte Aufsatz, 2 Stunden, 3 - 5 Uhr Nachm.

21.4. und 22.4. } mündliche Prüfung nach näherer mündlicher Anordnung des Divisions-Unterrichtsleiters.

c.) Prüfungsausschuß

1. Vorsitzender: Divisionsunterrichtsleiter für den allgemeinen wissenschaftlichen Unterricht

2. Mitglieder des Prüfungsausschußes:

Mitglieder des Prüfungsausschußes:

~~Hauptamtlich bürgerlichen Wehrmachtunterricht verwendet.~~ Oberreallehrer Kraus für Deutsch

Häusle für Rechnen, Raumlehre und Erdkunde

Lehrer Dr. Mertl für Geschichte

Landwirtschaftsrat Reiter für Physik u. Chemie

Studienrat Dr. Grimmeis für die Fremdsprachen.

d) Über die Einberufung der Prüflinge folgt noch ~~Entscheidung~~ Bescheid, sobald alle Anmeldungen aus Österreich beim Wehrkreiskommando vorliegen.

Um ungehende Vorlage der Anmeldungen Staatsbeamten zum Amt wird daher gebeten.
Beilagen: Stammrollenauszüge, Dienstleistungszeugnisse und etwa vorhandene Schulzeugnisse.

II. Nachprüfungen:

a) Die Prüfungsfächer sind:

1. Deutsch, 2. Geschichte, 3. Erdkunde, 4. Mathematik, 5. Physik, 6. Chemie, 7. Fremdsprachen.

In allen Fächern findet eine schriftliche und mündliche Prüfung statt.

b) Zeiten und Reihenfolge

24.4. Deutsch Aufsatz, 3 Stunden, 8 - 11 Uhr Vorm.

Geschichte Aufsatz, 2 Stunden, 2,15-4,15 Uhr Nachm.

Chemie schriftl., 1 1/2 Stunden, 4,30-6 Uhr

25.4. Mathematik schriftl. Aufgaben, 4 Stunden, 8 - 12 Uhr Vorm.

Physik schriftl. Aufgaben, 1 1/2 Stunden, 3,30-5 Uhr Nachm.

26.4. Erdkunde Aufsatz, 2 Stunden, 8 - 10 Uhr Vorm.

Englisch Übersetzung, 2 Stunden, 10 - 12 Uhr "

Französich " , 2 Stunden, 3 - 5 Uhr nachm.

27.4. und 28.4. Mündliche Prüfung nach näherer mündlicher Anordnung des Divisionsunterrichtsleiters.

c) Prüfungsausschuß:

1. Vorsitzender: Divisionsunterrichtsleiter für den allgemein wissenschaftlichen Unterricht.

2. Mitglieder des Prüfungsausschußes:

~~Hauptamtlich im bürgerl. Heeresunterricht verwendet~~

Lehrer Dr. Merl ..... für Deutsch

Lehrer Fischer ..... " Geschichte

Oberreallehrer Kraus .... " Erdkunde

Landwirtschaftsrat Reiter für Mathematik Physik und Chemie

Studienrat Dr. Grimmeis. für die Fremdsprachen

d) Über die Einberufung der Prüflinge folgt noch ~~Entscheidung~~ Bescheid, sobald alle Anmeldungen zur Nachmeldung beim Wehrkreiskommando vorliegen.

Um umgehende Vorlage an das Wehrkreiskommando spätestens zum 1. April wird gebeten.

Beilagen: Stammrollenauszüge, Dienstleistungszeugnisse und etwa vorhandene Schulzeugnisse.

III. Allgemeines.

a) Die auswärtigen Teilnehmer treffen am 18.4. und 23.4.22 in M ü n c h e n ein und werden von der 2. Komp. Pionierbataillons 7 in der Eisenbahnerkaserne untergebracht und verpflegt.

Die Rückfahrt in den Standort erfolgt am 23.4. und 29.4.22.

b) Die Prüflinge bringen folgendes Material mit:

Zirkel, Lineal mit cm und mm Einteilung,

Transpotteur, Logarithmentafel (nur bei der Nachprüfung)

Papier (liniert und empfohlen),

einige Bogen quadrierten Papeers,

Schreibmaterial ausschließlich Tinte.

Für Bereitstellung von Tinte und des Prüfungszimmers sorgt der Kommandant des Divisionsstabsquartiers.

Die Anfertigung von Entwürfen bei den Prüfungsarbeiten ist nicht nötig.

Zur Papiererspanis ~~dürfen~~ können die Arbeiten nicht auf halbgebrochenen Bogen angefertigt werden, es genügt ~~ein~~ 1/4 Bruch für die Anbringung der Korrekturen.

Muster für die äußere Form der Arbeiten wird durch den Divisionsunterrichtsleiter aufgelegt.

c) Zu den Vorprüfungen kommandiert I / 19

zu den Nachprüfungen Pionierbataillon 7

1 Oberleutnant oder Leutnant, der die militärische Aufsicht führt. Der betreffende Offizier erholt sich am 18.4. und 23.4. telefonisch nähere Weisung beim Wehrkreiskommando (Abtlg. IIa).

Der Aufsichtsführende öffnet unmittelbar vor der Prüfung im betreffenden Fach die von der Inspektion übersandten Umschläge mit den Aufgaben; nach Schluß der schriftlichen Prüfung in den einzelnen Fächern übergibt er die eingesammelten Arbeiten dem Divisionsunterrichtsleiter.

IV. Zum 25.4. melden die Truppenteile Zahl und Namen der Freiwilligen mit Reifezeugnis, die bis Juli 1922 ihre 1 1/4 jährige Dienstzeit nach Offiziersergänzungsbestimmungen Ziffer II vollenden und ~~deshalb~~ voraussichtlich zur Offiziersanwärterprüfung zugelassen werden.

Der Befehlshaber

Generalleutnant.

Zum Akt: Offiziere XX Band 1
An Pers 1 zurück.

Of, M. 3.22 Gi.

Ia Nr. 2189.

Reichswehrministerium.
Inspektion
Erziehungs- und Bildungswesens.
383/2.22. Jn.1. I.

Berlin, den 24. Februar 1922.

Betr. Vor- und Nachprüfungen gem. Ziffer III der Off.Erg.Best.

Off. XX Gl. 1
v. 9.3.22

Die wissenschaftlichen Vorprüfungen gem. Ziffer III der Off.Erg. Best. finden in diesem Jahre vom 19. bis 22., die wissenschaftlichen Nachprüfungen vom 24. bis 28.4. bei den Divisionen statt.

Zeiten und Reihenfolge:

Vorprüfungen:

19.4.	Deutsch Niederschrift	45 Min.
	" Aufsatz	3 Stdn.
	Fremdsprache Diktat	1 Stde.
	" Uebersetzung	1 Stde.
20.4.	Rechnen und Raumlehre	
	Schriftliche Aufgaben:	3 Stdn.
	Geschichte Aufsatz	2 Stdn.
21.4.) 22.4.)	Mündliche Prüfungen nach näherer Anordnung der Divisionen.	

Nachprüfungen:

24.4.	Deutsch Aufsatz	3 Stdn.
	Geschichte Aufsatz	2 Stdn.
	Chemie Schriftl.	1½ Stde.
25.4.	Mathematik Schriftl. Aufgaben	4 Stdn.
	Physik Schriftl. Aufgaben	1½ Stde.
26.4.	Erdkunde Aufsatz	2 Stdn.
	Fremdsprache Uebersetzung	2 Stdn.
27.4.) 28.4.)	Mündliche Prüfungen nach näherer Anordnung der Divisionen. Die Kav. Div. haben die Prüfungen bereits mit dem 27.4. zum Abschluss zu bringen.	

Wehrkreis-Kdo. I-VII je 2 = ...14
Kav.Div. 1 - 3 je 2 = ...6
Jn.1 - 7 je 2 = ...14

H.L. P.A. T A W.A. V A Staatssekr. je 1 = ...6

Vorrat.....10
50 Abdr.

Die

Ia

Die nähere Zeiteinteilung für die Prüfungen (Beginn, Pausen usw.) ordnen die Divisionen an. Die gegebene Reihenfolge ist jedoch inne zu halten.

Die von der Inspektion zu stellenden Aufgaben gehen den Divisionen rechtzeitig in verschlossenen Umschlägen zu; sie sind erst unmittelbar vor der Prüfung in dem betr. Fach vom Aufsichtsführenden zu öffnen.

Die durch Einberufung und Rücksendung der Prüflinge und durch die Bestellung des Prüfungsausschusses entstehenden Kosten sind möglichst zu beschränken.

Den vollbeschäftigten hauptamtlich angestellten Leitern und Lehrern kann für die Prüfungstätigkeit und die Durchsicht der Prüfungsarbeiten eine besondere Vergütung nicht gewährt werden. Die Heranziehung nebenamtlicher Hilfskräfte ist möglichst zu beschränken.

Für die Durchsicht der Prüfungsarbeiten dürfen keine besonderen Tage angesetzt werden. Die Prüf.Tage sind voll auszunutzen.

Wegen Heranziehens auswärtiger Lehrkräfte usw. s. Offz.Erg.Best.Anl. 1. Abschn. E.

Bayer. Wehrkreis VII

(I.V.)

ompf. 2. 3. 1932 No. 8991 II a Nr. 2189

— 1 Anl. —

APPENDIX G

THE WEHRKREISPRÜFUNGEN

Sample questions from the various Wehrkreisprüfungen from 1922 to 1932 in each subject area were as follows:

Formal Tactics

What advantages and disadvantages persent themselves in the transportation of a division by motorized vehicle as opposed to foot march? (1927)

Applied Tactics

Normally several problems were presented to the candidate concerning the operations of a reinforced Infantry regiment to be evaluated from the position of a regimental commander with dispositions of troops, orders, implementation of a solution and the reasons for such actions.

Weaponry and Equipment

A wide variety of questions were given which the candidates from the Infantry, Artillery and Cavalry were required to answer. A number of these related to other service areas.

Infantry

Why does the Infantry require the Infanteriegeschütze (integral artillery) and what dispositions must be made for their employment? (1924)

Cavalry

Technical engineering problems of a modern Army cavalry. Is our German cavalry sufficiently equipped and prepared for it? (1923)

Artillery

How can the artillery with the advent of a new structure combat enemy artillery? What firing procedures are changed as a result? Short review of success probability. (1923)

Pioneer

What dispositions are necessary in the new times for a combat bridging apparatus? How would you order its installation? (1923)

Communications

What possibilities are produced from the technical characteristics of the 20-watt apparatus for utilization in the area of high and middle command leadership (in the field)? (1927)

The non-military questions on the Wehrkreisprüfung were equally broad-based and included:

History

Describe the influence of the foreign situation on the course of the French Revolution. (1922)

Discuss German unification-aspirations in the 19th century. (1924)

Civics

The legal (staatsrechtliche) position of the Reichstag after the old and new Reich constitution. (1929)

The legal position of the Reichspresident after the constitution of 11 August, 1919, compared with that of the German Kaiser after the constitution of 16 April, 1871. (1928)

Economic Geography

Discuss Germany's waterways and their importance for commerce. (1924)

Physics

Describe a method for measuring heat. (1923)

Chemistry

Describe the manufacture of sulphuric acid. (1922)

Mathematics

One to three problems in algebra, geometry, trigonometry and higher mathematics.

Source: Hans-Georg Model, Der deutsche Generalstabesoffizier, Seine Auswahl und Ausbildung in Reichswehr, wehrmacht und Bundeswehr (Frankfurt am Main: Bernard & Graefe Verlag für Wehrwesen, 1968), p. 37ff. From Chapter VI, p. 236ff.

APPENDIX H

THE WEHRKREISPRÜFUNG PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

(FIELD TRIAL)

Source: Bundesarchiv/Militärarchiv Freiburg im Breisgau, RH 37, v. 778, Bayer. Wk Kdo VII (Bayer.7.Div.) Nr. 8721/Id 1231, München, den 25.3.1924, Betr.: Wehrkreisprüfung 1924. From Chapter VI, pp. 237-38.

284

Bayer.Wehrkreiskommando VII
(bayer.7.Division)
Nr.8721/Id 1231.

München, den 25.3.1924

Betr.: Wehrkreisprüfung 1924.

Verteilt:

Inf.Führer VII	1	Kommandatur München	1
Art.Führer VII	1	St.O.Aelpester Nürnberg	1
J.R.19,I./19,II./19,I./18	4	Inf.Schule	1
J.R.20,I./20,II./20	3	W.K.K.: Id,Obstlt.Stollberger	
J.R.21,I./21,II./21,III./21	4	" v.Bauer	
R.R.17,1.2.6./R.R.17	4	" Schrott	
Art.Rgt.7,II.,III./A.R.7	3	" Haselmayer	5
Pi.Btl.7	1	Sämtliche Prüflinge	31
Fahrabtlg.7	1	Die aufsichtführenden Offiziere	15
Kraftfahrabtlg.7,2./Kr.F.Abt.7	2	Reserve	12
			90

- 1 Beilage -

Mit Beziehung auf Ziff.5 des Rw.Min.Erl.v.5.2.24 Nr.59 geh. 24, T 4 II - W.Kdo.Verf.v.11.2.24 Nr.4140/Id 556 - wird nunmehr die geh. Anlage zu vorstehendem Rw.Min.Erl. verteilt.

Für die Richtigkeit:

Major im Generalstab.

Von Seiten des Wehrkreiskommandos:
Der Chef des Stabes:

gez. von [illegible]

Anlage zu Nr. 59 geh 24 T 4 II

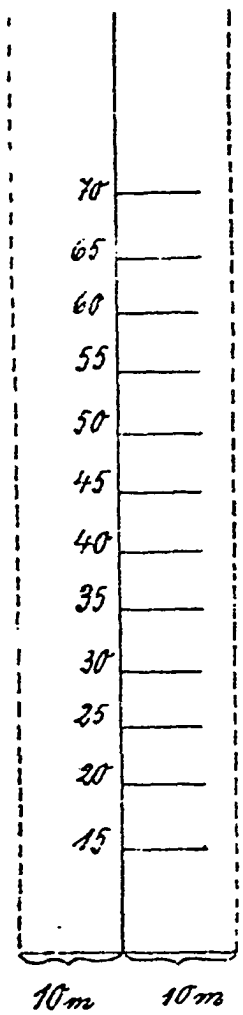
Noch nicht allgemein ausgeben!

Über Verteilung siehe Ziffer 5 obiger Verfügung.

Wehrkreisprüfung in Leibesübungen.

I. praktische Prüfung.

1). Handgranatenweitwurf.



Geworfen wird mit scharfen Handgranaten, aus denen Zündpillen und Abzugsvorrichtungen entfernt sind. Anlauf beliebig. Wurf mit Umdrehung nicht gestattet.

Wertung:

bis 15 m - ungenügend 1.
" 20 m - fast ungenügend 2.
" 25 m - mangelhaft 3.
" 30 m - mittelmäßig 4.
" 35 m - genügend 5.
" 40 m - ziemlich gut 6.
" 45 m - gut 7.
" 50 m - sehr gut 8.
" 55 m und darüber vorzüglich 9.

Die Wurfbahn ist wie folgt anzulegen: Mit Tressierband, Kalkmilch oder Gips wird von einer 3 - 4 m breiten Abwurflinie eine Senkrechte festgelegt. An diese sind von 15 m bis 55 m, in Abständen von je 5 m, Querstreifen zu ziehen. Die Wurfbahn ist von der Senkrechten nach rechts und links auf je 10 m begrenzt. Ein Überschreiten der Abwurflinie beim Abwurf, oder ein Überfliegen der Handgranate aus der Wurfbahn macht den Wurf ungültig. Der beste von drei Würfen wird gewertet. Gemessen wird der erste Aufschlag.

2.) Weitsprung mit Anlauf.
(ohne Brett).

Wertung:

von 3,80 m bis 4,00 m - 1
" 4,00 " " 4,20 " - 2
" 4,20 " " 4,40 " - 3
" 4,40 " " 4,60 " - 4
" 4,60 " " 4,80 " - 5
" 4,80 " " 5,00 " - 6
" 5,00 " " 5,20 " - 7
" 5,20 " " 5,40 " - 8
" 5,40 " " 5,60 und darüber - 9.

Gemessen wird nach der Vorschrift f. Lb. Heft III Ziffer 33.

3.) Geländelauf 3 000 m.

Wertung:

Wertung:

Wertung:

von	15. Min.	bis	14,30	Min.	-	1
"	14,30	"	" 14	"	-	2
"	14	"	" 13,30	"	-	3
"	13,30	"	" 13	"	-	4
"	13	"	" 12,30	"	-	5
"	12,30	"	" 12	"	-	6
"	12	"	" 11,30	"	-	7
"	11,30	"	" 11	"	-	8
"	11	"	" 10 und besser		-	9.

4.) Geräteübungen:

a) Reck (sprunghoch)

1.) Kniaufschwung, (Lb.H.V.S. 9.Ziff.8.) Zurückspreizen des Sitzbeines in den Seitstütz vorlings, (Lb.H.V.S.10 Ziff. 8c.) Felgabzug ab. (Lb.H.V.S. 17. Ziff. 14.)

2.) Felgaufzug (Lb. H.V.S.17.Ziff.14.) Wende ab. (Lb. H. V. S. 24 Ziff. 24.)

Wertung: Lb. H. V. S. 7. Absatz 1.

Die Übungen 1 und 2 werden einzeln gewertet. Der Durchschnitt ergibt die Note.

b) Barren (schulterhoch).

1.) Armbeugen und Strecken im Streckstütz dreimal (Lb. H. V. S. 28 Ziff. 27) Ausgrätschen rückwärts (Lb. H. V. S. 34. Ziff. 31 Nr 2.)

2.) Eingrätschen zum Grätschsitz vor den Händen, (Lb. H. V. S. 32 Ziff. 29a) Einschwingen zum Streckstütz, Zwischenschwung (Lb. H.V.S. 30 Ziff. 28a) Wende ab.(Lb.H.V.S. 33 Ziff. 30).

Wertung: siehe Reck.

c) Pferd (brusthoch)

1.) Aus dem Seitstand vorlings Sprung in den Streckstütz. (Lb.H.V.S. 48 Ziff. 45a) Einspreizen links mit Lüften der linken Hand, mit einer Vierteldrehung in den Reitsitz.(Lb. H.V.S. 50 Ziff. 48a und b) Schwingen rückwärts zweimal, Wende ab. (Lb. H.V.S. 50 letzter Absatz.)

2.) Hocke mit Anlauf (Lb.H.V.S. 48 Ziff. 46.)

Wertung: s. Reck.

Die praktischen Prüfungen sind in der Reihenfolge: Handgranatenweitwurf, Weitsprung, Geräteübungen, Geländelauf abzuhalten.

Anzug für sämtliche Übungen: Sportanzug.

II. Theoretische Prüfung.

II. Theoretische Prüfung.

Ausgabe der Aufgabe an die Wehrkreise erfolgt nach Ziffer 6 der Hauptverfügung.

III. Vorbereitungen.

Für die Vorbereitungen: - Aussuchen, Abmessen und Kenntlichmachung der Geländelaufbahn und Wurfbahn, Gestellung von Messbändern, Stoppuhren und Geräten sind die Divisionen verantwortlich.

Zur Durchführung der Prüfungen sind von den Divisionen je nach Anzahl der Prüfungsorte, ein oder zwei Prüfungskommissionen aufzustellen. Diese setzen sich zusammen aus je einem älteren sachverständigen Offizier als Leiter, für jedes Übungsfach 2, für den Geländelauf 3 Offiziere als Richter.

Es sind nur wirklich geeignete Offiziere hierzu auszuwählen, die möglichst einen Lehrgang für Leibesübungen mit Erfolg besucht haben.

Übernahme der Richtertätigkeit in mehreren Übungsfächern durch denselben Offizier ist gestattet.

Die Divisionen melden bis zum 15.2.24 die Namen und Anschriften der Leiter und Richter an Reichswehrministerium (Heeresausbildungsabteilung.)

IV. Gesamtbewertung.

Für die Gesamtbewertung zählt das Durchschnittsergebnis der praktischen Prüfung zweifach, das der theoretischen Prüfung einfach. Die hierbei erzielte Summe ergibt - geteilt durch 3 - die Note in Leibesübungen.

Die theoretischen Arbeiten werden ohne Vorkorrektur von den Wehrkr. Kdos. dem Rw. - Min. übersandt, wo sie bewertet werden. Die Wehrkr. Kdos. stellen somit nur das Durchschnittsergebnis der praktischen Prüfungen fest. während das Gesamtergebnis im Rw. - Min. ermittelt wird.

Für die Ermittlung des Durchschnittsergebnisses der praktischen Prüfungen sind die Übungen am Reck, Barren und Pferd einzeln als Übungsfach zu bewerten. Das Durchschnittsergebnis der praktischen Prüfung ist in einer Liste im Sinne der Anlage 3 D.V.Pl. 52 zugleich mit den theoretischen Arbeiten dem Rw. - Min. vorzulegen.

Befreiung von einzelnen Übungen kann nur auf Grund eines vom Truppenarzt erstellten und vom Wehrkreisarzt überprüften ärztlichen Zeugnisses von den Wehrkr. - Kdos. genehmigt werden. In diesem Fall findet keine Feststellung des Durchschnittsergebnisses der praktischen Prüfung statt, es sind vielmehr unter Vorlage des ärztlichen Zeugnisses lediglich die von dem betreffenden Teilnehmer noch etwa erzielten Einzelergebnisse dem Rw.-Min. zu melden; Gesamtbewertung der Leibesübungen behält sich dann das Rw. - Min. vor.

V.

- 4 -

V.) Eine Bekanntgabe der praktischen Prüfungen soll nur insoweit erfolgen, als nur die Prüfungsfächer, nicht aber die zur Prüfung ausgewählten Übungen vorher bekannt gegeben werden.

I. Batl. (Bay.) Infanterie-Regt. 19
eingel. 27. 3. 24. No. [illegible]
Beilagen ..... Abt. I.

An K. R. zum ihm. Fall
Mit der Bitte um Kenntnisnahme.

1. Die vorgesetzte Verfügung wird mit Abt. Befehl v. 44 Ip. v. 14. 2. im ihm Fall bekannt gegeben.
2. Ad 18 b.

München, 27. 3. 1924

Bayr. Reichsw. Inf.-Regt. No. 19
I. Komp. eingelaufen am 28.3.24. [illegible]
— Beilagen.

Zum I. Abt. zur Kenntnisnahme.
Würzburg 29. 3. 24
[illegible]
[illegible] d. R. F.

APPENDIX I

THE OFFICER CANDIDATE'S EXAMINATIONS FOR THE INFANTRY

Source: Bayerische Hauptstaatarchiv München, Abt. IV, Band 144, Akt. 4, Gr. Kdo. 4, Reichswehrministerium. Heeresleitung. Nr. 1159. 3. 22. Jn. 2. IIa., Berlin W. 10, den 6. April 1922. Bendlerstr. 14. Handwritten note-IIa No. 3666, Betr.: Offizieranwärterprüfung bei der Jnfanterie. Vorgang: D. V. B. Nr. 29 Offz.-Erg.-Best. IV S. 18 and Reichswherministerium. Heeresleitung. Inspektion der Infanterie. Nr. 908.6.22. Jn 2 IIa geh., Betreff: Offizieranwärterprüfung Jnfanterie. Offiz.Erg.Best.Anl.4., Vorgang: Rw.Min.H.Ltg.Nr.1159.3.22 Jn 2 IIa vom 6.4.22. From Chapter VI, p. 238 ff.

Ia № 3666.

Reichswehrministerium.
Heeresleitung.
Nr. 1158. 3. 22. In. 2. IIa.

Berlin W. 10, den 6. April 1922.
Bendlerstr. 14.

Kg. XX Gd. 1
v. 28.4.22

Betr.: Offizieranwärterprüfung bei der Infanterie.

Vorgang: D. V. E. Nr. 29 Offz.-Erg.-Best. IV S. 18.

Die Offizieranwärterprüfung der Infanteristen gem. D. V.-E. Nr. 29 Anl. 4 findet vom 6. - 8. Juli bei den Divisionen unter deren Leitung statt. Die Divisionen bestimmen die Prüfungsausschüsse.

1.) Nachstehende Zeiteinteilung ist für die schriftlichen Prüfungsfächer bindend, für die mündliche Prüfung bleibt sie den Divisionen überlassen:

6.7. Vorm.	Heerwesen schriftl.	1½ Std.
	Waffenlehre "	1½ "
	Dienstunterricht	
Nachm.	Leibesübungen.	
7.7. Vorm.	Felddienst und Geländekunde	
Nachm.	Prakt. Prüfung als Gruppenführer	
	Schießen mit Gewehr	
8.7. Vorm.	Heerwesen mdl.	
	Waffenlehre mdl.	
	Pionierdienst	
	Nachrichtendienst.	
Nachm.	gegebenfalls noch Nachzuholendes.	

2.) Die Aufgaben für die schriftlichen Prüfungsfächer in Heerwesen und Waffenlehre sowie für die Meldekartenaufgaben in Felddienst und Geländekunde gehen den Divisionen

An
1. - 7. Division.

Reichsministerium: Abschrift. Berlin, den 22. Juni 1922.

Inspektion der Infanterie.

Nr. 2.22 Jn 2 IIa geh.

Betreff: Offiziersanwärterprüfung Infanterie.
Offiz. Erg. Best. Anl. 4.

Vorgang: Rw. Min. H. Ltg. Nr. 1159.3.22
Jn 2 IIa vom 6.4.22.

Schriftliche Aufgaben.

1.) Heerwesen: Was enthält das Wehrgesetz über die Pflichten und Rechte der Angehörigen der Wehrmacht?

2.) Waffenlehre: Angaben der Hauptteile des l.M.G. und ihrer Aufgaben. Wie wird das l.M.G. auf dem Marsche und im Gefecht befördert?

3.) Felddienst: Den Prüflingen, die als Patrouille zu denken sind, ist im Gelände ein Bild vorzuführen oder zu beschreiben, (etwa einige Reiter auf der Höhe, am Dorfrand Schützen und an einem Geländepunkt ein feuerndes M.G.). Der Prüfling hat über das, was er sieht, eine Meldung auf Meldekarte anzufertigen.

4.) Geländekunde: Die Aufgabe hat sich je nach dem Gelände zu richten, in dem die Prüfung stattfindet. Der Rahmen ist nicht zu groß zu wählen, z.B. Erkundung eines Weges für 1 Inf. Komp. mit ihren Fahrzeugen oder Erkundung eines feindlichen M.G.-Nestes mit Vorschlag über den Angriff dagegen.

Im Entwurf gez. v. T a y s e n.

F. d. R.

gez. W i t o k

H a u p t m a n n.

W e n d e n !

sionen ~~Anfang Juli zu~~.

3.) Anforderungen an die Prüflinge:

a) Die Leistungen in der praktischen Prüfung als Gruppenführer sowie in den Leibesübungen müssen zum Bestehen der Prüfung mindestens "genügend" sein.

b) im Schießen ist nur die Schießfertigkeit mit Gewehr zu prüfen, es sind 3 Schuß 150 m stehend freihändig auf die Kopfringscheibe abzugeben (1 Probeschuß ist gestattet) und für die Beurteilung ist neben dem Treffergebnis der Anschlag und das Verhalten des Prüflings auf dem Schießstand zu bewerten.

c) auf die Deckblätter Nr. 8, 9 und 10 zu S. 36 u. 37 der D. V. E. Nr. 29 wird hingewiesen.

4.) Die Prüfungsausschüsse der Divisionen ermitteln das Prüfungsergebnis nach D. V. E. 29 Abschn. D S.39 und reichen es mit den beurteilten schriftlichen Aufgaben, Meldekarten und Skizzen dem Reichswehrministerium, Inspektion der Infanterie zum 15. 7. 22 ein.

Wenn der Prüfungsausschuss für einen der Prüflinge die Reife zum Offizieranwärter nicht vorschlägt, so hat er sich zu äussern, ob die Leistungen des Betreffenden den Anforderungen der Unteroffizieranwärterprüfung entsprechen.

Im Entwurf gez.
Im Auftrage
v. Taysen.

Beglaubigt:

Ministerial - Kanzleiobersekretär.

OFFICER SELECTION IN THE REICHSWEHR, 1918-1926

By: WILLIAM ALEXANDER ROBERTSON

Officer selection in the Reichswehr was a vital concern to both the government and the military. To the civilians, it was the key to the democratization of the army, and to the military it was a means to maintain their power and privileges in society. Ultimately, the military regained an ideological homogeneity in the officer corps based upon conservatism and the traditions of the past.

This study describes in detail the officer selection process during the 1918-1926 years along with the formation of recruitment policy. It also clarifies the extent to which selection procedures were instrumental in producing an anti-republican officer corps. Other significant problems discussed include the question of command authority between the army and civilian officials, training programs for officers and officer candidates, and efforts by the old Imperial command hierarchy to regain independence in military affairs following the imposition of civilian controls over the army at the end of hostilities in 1918.

Particularly important were the attitudes and values of the officer corps, its highest leaders, and their reaction to possible changes in the traditional system. Since officers of a tradition-bound, conservative nature controlled officer education and training from the outset, selection criteria and policy had less effect in shaping the character of the future officer corps than was apparent at the time. The civilian government, in fact, had an excellent opportunity to maintain control over the military, but misused the chance by not supporting the head of the army, Colonel Walther Reinhardt, during the rightist-inspired Kapp-Lüttwitz Putsch. Thereafter, the military conservatives possessed a superior position in their relations with the civil government and political parties virtually by default.