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THE FAILURE OF PRIME MINISTER SCHWARZENBERG'S BUND
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DRESDEN CONFERENCES

DISSERTATION
Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By
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* * * * *

The Ohio State University
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INTRODUCTION

At the battle of Sadowa (Königgrätz) in 1866, the Austrian Imperial Army was defeated by the more modern Prussian one under the command of General Hermann von Moltke. The Habsburgs decisively lost their historic right to leadership of Central Europe; the next step was Prussia's final unification of a German Empire. Nineteenth century historians, especially German ones, stressed this battle as the crucial turning point in the Austro-Prussian fight for supremacy in Germany. Many of these same historians noted that earlier (1848-50) Prussia had attempted to replace Austria as German leader, but that Prussia had been defeated by Austria's superior diplomacy at Olmütz in 1850. Credited with this alleged Austrian victory was Prime Minister Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg. Such historians further maintained that after 1850 Austria was in control of that political organization common to the German states—the German Confederation or the Bund. Austria reputedly regained this control at Olmütz where the politics

1 Many of the German historians who saw Sadowa as the turning point in the Austro-Prussian struggle for supremacy were members of the so-called "Prussian school." One of the most important members was Heinrich von Sybel who expressed the above belief in such work as The German Nation and the Empire.
of Schwarzenberg allegedly prevented Prussia's attempt to force Austria to surrender her interests in Germany.

This powerful Prime Minister in the Autumn of 1848 had assumed control of Austria's government at a time when the Austria Empire was in the throes of revolution and had saved the empire for the Habsburgs. Schwarzenberg then allegedly restored to Austria full authority over Prussia within the Bund. Prussia's hour was delayed until 1866, according to these nineteenth century historians.

This interpretation, however enhancing to Schwarzenberg's reputation, is basically misleading. That the Prussian victory at Sadowa—perhaps one should use Königrätz in honor of the victor—was the final blow which removed the Habsburgs from Germany is correct, but to maintain that Austria had been in control of the Bund from the Olmütz confrontation in 1850 until Sadowa in 1866 is not. Some European historians of the early Twentieth century revised the older interpretation by re-examining the history of the Bund, particularly the Crimean War period (1854-56) and the period of the wars for Italian unification (1859-61). These more recent studies paid special attention to the failure of Austrian diplomats to

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2 One major historian who saw the seeds of Austria's defeat before the battle in 1866 was Heinrich von Treitschke. Although his History of the Bund ended with the year 1847, his general views on the reasons for the Prussian victory are found in many of his other works.
obtain any Bund support in defense of Austrian Balkan interests or Bund military aid to defend Austrian territory in Northern Italy. In both instances, active opposition to Austrian policies was prominent and dominated by Prussia. This younger generation of writers cited the failures of Austria to obtain Bund support in 1855 and 1859 as conclusive evidence that Austria had already lost effective leadership of the Bund, and therefore of Germany, long before her defeat in 1866. In fact, the military defeat of the Austrian Empire at Sadowa was seen as the logical result of her earlier failures.

Even though the interpretations tracing the shift in Bund leadership after 1855 from Austria to Prussia are more convincing than traditional nineteenth century views, the new theories in my opinion fail to go far enough in their revision. A few even more recent writers\(^3\) have also partially re-examined the Olmütz affair, and concluded that this historic meeting was not the great diplomatic disaster for Prussia as it had earlier been assumed. I agree, and believe that Olmütz was more an Austrian defeat than a victory since Schwarzenberg’s policies failed in their primary purpose, that is, to secure Austria’s full control

\(^3\)Two leading historians of the new generation who believed that Austria’s failures could be traced, to some degree, to before 1855 were the German historian, Friedrich von Meinecke, and the Austrian historian, Heinrich von Srbik.
over Bund members. This approach to Prussia's eventual
victory owes much to the writings of Friedrich von Meinecke.
Olmutz was viewed by him as much a defeat for the grandiose
plans of Schwarzenberg and Austria as it was for Prussia's
attempt to capture Bund leadership from Austria. However,
even such a fine historian as Meinecke continued to believe
that Austria had at least reclaimed most of her leadership
and had thereafter maintained it until 1855. Meinecke's
conclusion can be accepted only if one does not take into
account Schwarzenberg's total plan for Austria which he had
formulated in 1848. I believe, therefore, that a re-examina-
tion of the period 1848 to 1852 as relating to Schwarzen-
berg, the Bund, and the Austro-Prussian struggle for
supremacy in Germany—to borrow a phrase from the Austrian
historian, Heinrich Friedjung—may prove, though the
complicating factors are many, very enlightening.

At the time, the Austrian Empire's position in Europe
was one of many problems facing Vienna. It not only raised
numerous questions in the minds of her statesmen, but also
produced real problems since then for historians who have
tried to assess the Habsburg's ultimate failure to retain
leadership of Germany. The Austrian historian, Heinrich
von Srbik, was perfectly correct when he wrote that the
Austrian Empire was caught between two very strong forces;
the image of her old, traditional position within Germany
and the idea of a historic mission outside of Germany—
especially in the Balkans where she would confront Russia and the Ottoman Empire. Unfortunately quite often the two forces were in conflict with each other. Already in 1848-49 such a conflict of vital Austrian interests was clearly evident. At that time many Austrian Germans, such as Anton Ritter von Schmerling, wanted to bring Austria even closer to Germany, while many Hungarian Magyars wanted Austria to place her Balkan interests above her German ones. Simply, the Austrian Empire was one of two leading German powers, was the leading middle-European and Balkan state, and was also a Great Power. When the driving, and often destructive, force of nationalism came to complicate Vienna's affairs, the Habsburgs were unable to decide which orientation—the traditional German or the historic mission—should be the basis for governmental policies.

This inability to select and pursue a single course produced great indecision at Vienna, the worst thing possible for any Great Power. It would have been better for the Habsburgs to have chosen either the pro-German policy or to have left the Bund and become the dominant Balkan state. To have chosen the latter would have meant surrendering Austria's historic German leadership to Prussia—a policy which Schwarzenberg summarily rejected.

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One German historian, a delegate to the Frankfort Assembly, George Maitz, was already very aware of the acute dilemma which faced Austria. He wrote that the 1848 Revolutions in Germany had destroyed the concept of the 1815 Bund and had replaced it with a nationalistic movement which demanded an organization composed only of German states. Maitz predicted, moreover, that Austria would eventually lose both her leadership of Germany to Prussia and her territory in Italy. She would become the German-Magyar Balkan Empire which indeed she became in 1867 after her defeat at Sadowa. The unanswered question that he raised, one of which Schwarzenberg was aware, concerned the future of Germany. Would the removal of Austrian power in Central Europe permit either France or Russia to dominate German affairs, or would these two Great Powers refrain from any interference here? Fortunately for Austria, Russia's Tsar Nicholas I, as Schwarzenberg had anticipated, was more interested in a conservative, non-nationalistic Germany than in any rewards Russia might gain from interference in Germany. Therefore, Russia tended to support Austria in her fight for German leadership, since a Prussian victory might produce a much more liberal, nationalistic and therefore less desirable Germany.  

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5 Ibid., pp. 375-376.

As the 1848 Revolutions spread throughout Europe, the place of the conservative 1815 Bund was usurped by the more liberal Frankfort Assembly. The majority of delegates elected to the Assembly were middle class and represented the more progressive elements of the German class structure, but it also represented that portion of the populace which seemed to demand a united Germany. One of the main questions that had to be considered at Frankfort regarded the geographical limits of Germany—whether a unified Germany would be kleindeutsch or grossdeutsch. If the delegates had decided upon a national state including only German areas, then the polyglot Austrian Empire would need to have been broken up. Even excluding the problems of French Alsace and the Danish Holstein and Schleswig areas, the

7The concept of Kleindeutschland simply meant that a Germany should consist of only those areas in which the majority of the population was German. As such, the new unified German state would include the areas of Schleswig-Holstein since the ruling local class and the majority of the population was German although the two areas were ruled by the Danish King. Also, the concept would include German Austria, but not the Balkan or the Italian areas of the Habsburg Empire since the German people were in a distinct minority. The concept of Grossdeutschland implied that a unified German state should be composed of all areas which were made up of a majority of German people or which were ruled by a German dynasty such as the Habsburgs. As such, unified Germany would include all the areas of the Deutsche Bund and the entire Austrian Empire—with the non-German areas of the Empire as sub-members controlled directly by Vienna.
German national movement threatened to release waves of nationalism against many areas of Europe, and especially against the Austrian Empire. If this European, pan-nationalistic movement were successful, then changes brought about would have completely upset the power equilibrium which had been established at Vienna in 1815. With the apparent victory of liberal, constitutional forces in Germany and Prussia and with the outbreak of revolutions within the Austrian Empire, it seemed that the remaining stability of the Congress System and the organization of the 1815 Bund were ruined beyond restoration. Nevertheless, Austria still claimed sole leadership in Germany, while engaging in a war in Italy and grappling with the more serious revolt of the Magyars in Hungary. These encounters sapped the military and diplomatic strength of Austria, so that Vienna was unable to impose her will upon the Bund states or to contend with Prussia until internal Austrian revolts had been contained.

It is my contention that Austria, through the failures and not the successes of Schwarzenberg's policies—of pursuing both German and Balkan goals—already had lost effective Bund leadership by 1852—that is, before the more apparent failures of her Crimean War policies. The failure of Austria to secure Bund support for her aggressive Balkan

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8Mosse, The European Powers, p. 2.
policies against Russia at the time was but one failure in a long list of Austrian setbacks in the Bundes. Austria, in reality, never had effective control over Bund members--certainly not over Prussia--after the Revolutions of 1848. The attempt to force Prussia to submit to Habsburg policies under the Austrian presidency of the Bund actually began at the cabinet meeting of 2 December, 1848, when Prime Minister Schwarzenberg assumed direction of Austrian affairs. Indeed the basis of Austria's foreign relations for the next six years was formulated essentially in that period from December of 1848 to June of 1849. However, in pursuing foreign policy goals, Schwarzenberg and Austria met either with defeat or with only partial success, such as at Olmütz. If Austrian policies were defeated finally by Prussia in the Bund during 1854-56, they had certainly already suffered serious setbacks before those years. In reality, it seems to me that the Austrian defeat on the battlefield of Sadowa in 1866 had begun already on 2 December, 1848.

The 1848 Revolutions in Germany threatened the limited stability of the Congress System, which had performed so well in preventing major conflicts between the Great Powers, and this naturally concerned other major European states. England, as in 1815, was still interested in an organization of German states which would serve as a buffer between France and Russia. Aside from those few
elements in England which accepted the principle of German self-determination and unification, London sought to avoid a direct Austro-Prussian conflict for a total victory in Germany. Such a confrontation, England believed, would only serve to weaken further or even completely destroy what remained of the Vienna settlement. The official policy of France was more complex. France, for the protection of her own vital interests, opposed any complete unification of Germany, but was willing to accept partial unity. Paris would support Italian unification for it would decrease Austrian power. Similarly Paris was willing to support a moderate increase in Prussian power for the same reasons, but France was completely opposed to Prussian claims to sole leadership in Germany. Louis Napoleon might have been willing to accept a division of the 1815 Bund into a northern one led by Prussia and a southern one led by Austria, but the French government would never have accepted, without a struggle, the Prussian ideas of Kleindeutschland.

However concerned England and France may have been with the possible collapse of the Bund and with the dangerous ideas of the Frankfort Assembly on German unity,

10 Ibid., pp. 11-12.
neither would be as directly affected by any major changes in Germany as would Russia. For both Tsar Alexander I and Tsar Nicholas I, the 1815 organization constituted a conservative, legitimist association which protected Russia's borders from "revolutionary" France. The threat to unify Germany—which implied that a more liberal and western-European oriented policy could prevail—presented Russia with two dangers. For one, the liberal, nationalist movement in Germany might be carried from Prussian Poland into Russian Poland as it had in 1830. Moreover, a second, and a far more serious danger, would arise if Austria were pushed out of Germany by a Prussian victory. Such a defeat, in Russia's opinion, could force Austria to increase her interests and power in the Balkans where Russian interests were vital. Therefore, it was simply in Russia's national interests to preserve some type of a Bund and to maintain established Austro-Prussian balance.¹¹

When the Frankfort Assembly convened in the church of St. Paul on 28 May of 1815, the Deutsche Bund of 1815 was thought to be officially dead. Not only had the power balance between Austria and Prussia changed in these years, but even the purpose of the new German organization was to be different from the old.¹²

¹² The one great difference between the 1815 and 1848 German organizations was that the former (the Bund) was formed by the ruling dynasties to maintain control over a
established in 1815 by the Federal Act of 8 June as part of the larger Vienna settlement—it was revised and enlarged in 1820. Initially it had been created and was controlled by the various German ruling dynasties with but passing regard for the wishes of the German people. The Bund's purpose was to preserve the "independence and inviolability" of the member states and to maintain the "internal and external security of Germany."\(^{13}\) The security of Germany was to be safeguarded by virtue of the Bund being a buffer state between two European Great Powers, France and Russia, and by the balance of power within the Bund between Austria and Prussia. Metternich and other diplomats at Vienna would have been, and later many were, quite proud that the Bund had performed generally as expected until the European Revolutions of 1848 overtook it. When the revolutions began that year, the Bund was a logical target for attack. In Germany for example, the revolutionaries had two general goals: one, to end the absolutism of German dynasties and replace it with constitutional government; two, to attain some degree of national unity. Since the old organization was a Staaten-Bund (a divided Germany and to prevent the victory of liberalism and nationalism. The Frankfort Assembly was a representative body which expressed clear constitutional and nationalistic aspirations.

federation of states), the Frankfort Assembly and most of the revolutionaries wanted a Bundes-Staat (a federated German state) where representatives of the people would rule. Although the delegates at Frankfort were deeply concerned with questions of religion, the military, and the proposed constitution; these issues soon became secondary to the struggle for power and leadership between Austria and Prussia.

While the majority of the delegates assumed, though incorrectly, that dynastic German governments had been defeated and that the revolutions had been victorious, it was aware that the power balance between the two leading German states had been seriously disrupted and this could very easily lead to civil war. Fearing that Austria or Prussia might take the opportunity to force their will upon Bund states by military force, some of the larger states attempted to create a "third Germany" made up largely of the four middle kingdoms--Bavaria, Saxony, Württemberg, and Hanover--to counter-balance both Austria and Prussia. This attempt was well within the sovereign rights of the member states. The "third Germany" concept was based only


15Kraehe, History of the German Confederation, pp. 6-8.
upon an informal agreement to protect its members in case of a military threat by one of the two German Great Powers. Consequently, the "alliance" was simply an extension of the basic principles of the Vienna settlement and of the 1815 Bund. The agreement, however, was not formally binding on any of the states; therefore, it did not constitute a violation of Article XI of the Federal Act of 1815 which prohibited any formal alliance of Bund states if the proposed alliance was directed against any other member of the 1815 Bund. 16 It was later in 1850 that legal questions as to the binding nature of Article XI played an important role in the Austro-Prussian conflict. 17

By the summer of 1848, the internal security of the German states had been seriously disrupted by revolutions which overthrew many absolutistic governments and even overthrew the 1815 Bund itself. More important than the individual revolts and the ineffective debates of the Frankfort Assembly were changes in the power balance between Austria and Prussia and in the make-up of the respective governments at Vienna and Berlin. While Austria was dealing with revolutions within its empire, she was temporarily forced to withdraw from position of

17 See below, Chapter IV.
command in Germany. Prussia's position with Austria removed, was strengthened. That Prussia attempted to tie her recently increased strength to the liberal, nationalist movement was not fully unexpected, but what was unexpected were the strong policies of Vienna to recapture Austria's leadership in Germany--policies formulated and implemented by the Austrian Prime Minister, Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg. These policies by 1852 would be failures caused primarily by Austria's defeats in the conferences at Olmütz and Dresden.
CHAPTER I

THE ORGANIZATION AND POLICIES OF SCHWARZENBERG'S MINISTRY

The many revolutions within the Austrian Empire were to have both direct and indirect affects upon the policies of the Austrian government. While the revolutions in France and Germany primarily sought to change the political system from absolutistic monarchies to parliamentary regimes run by the middle classes, the revolutions in the Habsburg territories threatened to dismember the very structure of the empire. Both the movement in Hungary for political autonomy and the rebellion in the Piedmont especially challenged the weak and confused court at Vienna. Added to these dangers to the conservative Austrian government was the movement for German unity already expressing itself by the calling of the Frankfort Assembly. This challenge by the German liberals, who were supported by certain leaders within official circles of the Prussian government, was not wholly unexpected, but nevertheless it was a most serious threat to the position of the Habsburgs in Germany. Simply stated, the Austrian government had to reform itself to be able to reassert control over the Hungarians and the
Italians, and it had to recapture its historic leadership in Germany. By November of 1848, it was apparent that the conservative, hold-over government of March was not imaginative enough to solve these problems.

If the Austrian Empire required new and forceful Imperial policies, then a new and forceful chief Minister certainly was needed to implement those necessary policies. On 21 November, the elderly von Wessenberg who was the chief Minister in the hold-over government was succeeded by Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg, the brother-in-law of General Windischgrätz and an advisor to Marshal Radetzky.\(^1\) This ministerial change was first announced to members of the Austrian cabinet on 19 November. Wessenberg simply informed the other ministers that Schwarzenberg had been asked in the name of the emperor to assume charge of the Austrian government.\(^2\) The new Prime Minister—actually the only Prime Minister the Austrian Empire ever had—was a firm believer in hard handed tactics and power. A. J. P. Taylor writes of Schwarzenberg that he had the belief that force was everything and traditions did not merit any special respect if they interfered with Realpolitik. Schwarzenberg believed the revolutions could be defeated completely only


\(^2\)Ministerial Report #2588, 19 November, 1848 (unpublished), Haus, Hof, und Staatsarchiv, Vienna. Hereafter listed as Report, Staatsarchiv.
by using military force—regardless whether this force was Austrian, German, or eventually even Russian. Although a man of fair intellect, Schwarzenberg appeared to have very few original plans of his own aside from the general desire to defeat the revolutions and regain for Austria her position in Germany. However, Schwarzenberg was open-minded enough to accept counsel from his ministers, and to mesh their ideas with his own. The advice of these men—particularly that of Baron von Bruck, the Minister of Commerce—enhanced the strength and prestige of Schwarzenberg and his ministry. As a member of the government formed by Schwarzenberg on 21 November, Bruck had had many years of financial experience as a private banker and also as the head of the Austrian Lloyd, the large steamship and trading company. Although Bruck later would be quite important in the reorganization of Austria's desperate finances, especially the tax structure, his most important contribution to the political revival of the Austrian Empire was his daring plan to merge the entire Empire with the German Bund to form an empire of seventy million—Mittel-Europa—a concept which originated as early as 1846. Actually, Bruck's plan was born out of his desire to be the statesman

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3Taylor, Habsburg Monarchy, p. 77.

who could restore Austria to its rightful place within greater Germany, and out of his large degree of optimism—an optimism that the more cynical Schwarzenberg seldom shared. Other ministers would certainly have agreed that Bruck was a commercial genius, but few had any respect for his political know-how.

It would be quite incorrect to disregard Bruck's plan as completely unrealistic, for the idea of an empire of seventy million would benefit not only Austria but all Germany as well. The commercial implications of such a unit were the key to Bruck's thinking. He wanted to expand the very successful Prussian Zollverein of 1834 which had brought about an increase in Prussian power and influence in northern Germany by joining the Bund with the entire Austrian Empire into one common middle-European customs union. If implemented, Austria would be forced to accept ideas for an expanded, rapid industrialization program both for Austria and Hungary. This, in turn, would produce increased taxes for the centralized state and also a corresponding increase in the power of the Austrian government. The plan, however, had to consider the strong feelings of opposition of both the feudal-like Magyars of Hungary and the inherent opposition to any quick industrialization from Emperor Francis Joseph. If the concept of

6 Ibid., p. 296.
the one large empire were put into operation, Magyars in Hungary would be confronted with a program of German-
ization which would result in a definite decrease in their power. Thus, for the protection of their own vested political and economic interests, the opposition of the ruling class in Hungary would be certain. Bruck's plan, to the Magyars, was but another example of a program of Germanization directed from Vienna against the special rights claimed by Hungary within the Austrian Empire—and certainly the revolution in Hungary originally had been designed to protect those special rights. While Bruck could point to similar plans by Maria Theresa and Joseph II to obtain one common commercial policy for the Austrian state along with a stronger centralized government at Vienna, the opponents of the concept could also point to the very strong and successful Magyar opposition to both of the earlier attempts. 7

On 27 November, the Prime Minister called the newly formed Austrian cabinet together to discuss, among other things, the problem of regaining Austrian leadership in the Bund. Included in the general discussion was a brief explanation of Bruck's plan of the seventy million empire. It was apparent that this commercial-political plan for

7Ibid., pp. 298-299.
German unification could only be the brain child of a commercial genius such as Bruck, but it was just as apparent that Schwarzenberg was deeply interested in the concept and considered it possible as an Austrian policy. Since the purpose of the meeting was primarily to explore different plans, Bruck's concept was not discussed in any great detail. The initial reaction had been quite acceptable, and with the tentative support from Schwarzenberg, Bruck was free to develop his concept more fully. From the time of the first cabinet meeting until the end of the Hungarian revolt, Bruck's plan remained a possible policy for the government.

Schwarzenberg's later introduction of Bruck's concept of Mittel-Europa was based on a two-part policy which envisioned both the political and economic dominance of the German states by Austria. Although the Prime Minister was more interested in the immediate or short-term political results implementation of the plan could bring Vienna by re-asserting Austria's predominance within the Bund, Bruck was more concerned with the long-range economic possibilities of his plan. The enlarged Zollverein would provide the lagging Austrian economy with new stimulus. The key difficulty with creating a larger economic unit related to fundamental economic philosophy for the new Zollverein. The 1834 Prussian system was based upon a high
degree of free trade which benefited Prussian manufacturers, leading export merchants, and agricultural interests. If Austria were able to secure the adoption of Bruck's plan, free trade would have to be replaced by a system of protective tariffs. These tariffs would be directed especially against Prussian agricultural producers in competition with those of Hungary who were favored with lower costs. The assumption was that Prussian interests would suffer, thereby producing strong opposition to the plan from these interests.

The question of agricultural competition was not the only economic problem facing the Bruck plan. Bruck correctly judged that the rapidly-expanding heavy industry in Prussia would soon come into difficult competition with British products, and surmised that these Prussian industrialists would demand protective tariffs for their products. While this assumption was primarily correct, Bruck erred in not realizing that the Prussian industrialists in the early 1850's did not have the political influence to combat pressures from interest groups for the manufacturers and merchants. Bruck hoped that the need for protective tariffs for Prussia's industrial products would match the similar needs of Austria's struggling industries and those

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8 Helmut Böhm, Deutschlands Weg zur Grossmacht (Köln, 1966), pp. 13-17.
of the South German states' textile factories. However, the governments of these states, even though many were pro-Austrian in their political outlook, could not ignore the full economic power of Prussia. While certain industries might have profited more from protective tariffs, the majority of the states' economies would have been injured by them. Because of strong economic ties to Prussia, the political leverage of these smaller states was at a minimum. When Schwarzenberg failed to break this connection, Austria was forced in 1853 to drop temporarily its insistance on the enlarged Zollverein. By 1860 when Austria applied for admission into the Prussian system, the latter's hold over the economies of the German states was too great to accept Austria's program. In fact, only Mecklenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and three free cities in addition to Austria remained outside the Prussian economic sphere after 1854. Bruck's concept would he destined to fail along with Schwarzenberg's policies.

Bruck's basic plan was presented to the reading public in two articles; the first in the Wiener Zeitung of 26 October, 1849, and the second in the Denkschrift of 30 December, 1849. In these two articles, Bruck attempted to avoid the disruptive confrontation of the Kleindeutschland and Grossdeutschland concepts. If the Zollverein for

\[\text{Ibid.}, \text{pp. 13-17.}\]
an empire of seventy million was to work well, then Austria and Prussia had to work together to arrive at a compromise position which would protect the vital interests of both nations. Schwarzenberg and Minister Bruck had agreed that before the commercial-political plan could be promoted, the actual attempt by Vienna to propose the concept to the Bund as a serious idea had to wait until the revolutions in Hungary and Italy were ended. Only after Austria had been victorious would Vienna be able to reform the Bund and propose joining the Bund and the Austria Empire to form the larger empire. However, in the 1849 articles, Bruck had begun to expand upon his original thesis. If it were possible to merge the entire Austrian Empire into the German Bund, then it should also be possible--by using the same commercial arguments--to join other non-German areas to the proposed empire to form an even larger European empire and customs union. After the major opposition of the German Bund members to the inclusion of the non-German areas of the Austrian Empire within the new middle-European state had been met, then the next logical step would be to expand this German-Austrian state into the ultimate concept of a commercial-political unit of Mittel-Europa. With the obvious economic power of this large

Zollverein, other smaller states such as Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland might be asked to join. Their acceptance into the large empire would certainly increase the power of the two leading German states who would control the policies of the multi-national empire. This great increase in the power and prestige for a greater Germany would be very acceptable to pan-nationalists as Baron Bruck. The political dangers to France and Russia that the new empire would present appeared not to bother Bruck, but the attitude of the two Great Powers, especially Russia, certainly was a vital concern to Schwarzenberg who would have to deal with any opposition.

As mentioned above, one major purpose of the cabinet meeting on 27 November was to consider what were the proper policies for Austria in face of the liberal, nationalist movement at the Frankfort Assembly and the Prussian attempt to force Austria to renounce her leadership in the Bund. Schwarzenberg honestly wanted Austria and Prussia to be able to settle their political and ideological differences quickly so that the 1815 Bund could either be renewed or reformed. Armed with this renewal of traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation, Schwarzenberg was prepared, as the first step in his long-range plans, to seek the admission of the entire Austrian Empire into

the Bund, and thus Vienna would be in a strong position to embark upon Bruck's concept of Mittel-Europa. Of course, this renewed policy of co-operation assumed that Prussia would adhere to Austria's traditional position as German leader. Because of his desire to return to the normal pre-1848 policy of co-operation, it would be easy to view Schwarzenberg as a follower of one part of the Metternich tradition, but this evaluation of the Prime Minister would be only partly correct. As one who did not give undue attention to any Austrian tradition, but as a firm believer in Realpolitik, Schwarzenberg simply judged that co-operation between the two German Great Powers would be the best policy. The old, conservative, traditional ideas worked well for the Austrian Empire under Metternich, and now Schwarzenberg faced serious threats to that Empire by the growing power of nationalism. He decided that military and diplomatic forces were the only sure methods by which Austria could regain the internal security within the Empire and the means by which Vienna could regain leadership within the Bund.\(^{12}\)

On 27 November, the government at Vienna, through the Austrian delegates at Frankfort, presented to the Assembly its case for supremacy in Germany. It was stressed

that Austria had been the leader of Germany for almost five hundred years, and that the Revolutions of 1848 had done nothing to deny Austria its historic rights. Vienna sincerely hoped that Prussia would join Austria in defeating the liberal forces within Germany which Schwarzenberg viewed as an equal danger to the principles of the Prussian monarchy as they certainly were to the rights of the Habsburgs. This appeal for support from the Assembly was made with the idea in mind to defeat the two major plans for German unification then under discussion at Frankfort: Kleindeutschland and Grossdeutschland. The latter plan of 17 October represented the concept of a large Germany led by an Austria which would be stripped of the non-German parts of her Empire. The dangers of a small Germany to Austria's position as the traditional leader were quite clear—Austria would be forced to withdraw from Germany and to allow the leadership of a united German state to pass to Prussia. Certainly no responsible Austrian Prime Minister could have been expected to agree to the voluntary withdrawal of Austria from the Bund—much less a Prime Minister with the determined ideas of Prince Schwarzenberg. An Austrian alternative to the Klein-
deutschland policy of Prussia was hardly unexpected.

\footnote{14} Friedjung, Österreich, I, p. 171.
When the Prussian government proposed the plan of an entente cordiale which would divide the Bund into northern and southern parts, Schwarzenberg announced that he was just as fully opposed to this brand of dualism as he was to the idea of a small-Germany. The Prussian entente concept also rejected the historic role of the Habsburgs as the sole leader of the Bund. On 28 December, 1848, Schwarzenberg notified the Prussian government that the Austrian Empire was absolutely opposed to the entente concept. The reason offered was that the Prussian plan was a drastic revision of the 1815 Bund structure, and therefore, would require the acceptance of the plan by all the German states and not just a bilateral agreement between Austria and Prussia. From the first days of his ministry, Schwarzenberg had viewed the many attempts by Prussia to wrest leadership of Germany from Austria in the same light as the Magyar's threats to the unity of the Austrian Empire. Both seemed to be different sides of the same revolutionary coin.

Just as Schwarzenberg was determined to defeat Magyar attempts to prevent a centralized and unitary empire, he was also fully prepared to deal with Prussia's ideas of a

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"new Germany" without Austria. In fact, Schwarzenberg had already denounced the 13 December statement of King Frederick William IV which had called for a reform of the Bund in order to increase Prussian power in the Bund. This challenge from Berlin had to be defeated by any and all means available to Austria—including military force.\(^{16}\)

In the Prime Minister's opinion, the survival of a strong Austrian Empire was both a European and a German problem. The obvious need to reconstruct the Bund was accepted by Vienna, but the government was prepared only to accept a reconstruction which would serve to further Austrian interests, not to reduce them.\(^{17}\)

The imperial speech from the Habsburg throne in January of 1849 was really a public State-speech by Schwarzenberg to announce Austrian governmental policies. The speech was directed primarily to the Prussian Ambassador, Count Bernstorff, who had earlier argued in support of the Prussian concept of dualism. In a very straight-forward manner, Schwarzenberg put the Government of Austria on record as determined to protect all of Austria's historic rights in Germany and to regain her primary position over the Bund members. The speech even contained a veiled hint that Austria was willing

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\(^{17}\) Srbik, *Deutsche Einheit*, I, p. 390.
to use military force to gain her foreign policy objectives. The actual diplomatic conflict for supremacy in Germany had begun.  

Even before the Austrian cabinet meeting of 28 December and the subsequent State-speech, certain liberal groups within the Prussian government and at the Frankfort Assembly had already opened the attack upon Austria's rights of leadership. Since Austria was burdened by revolutions within her Empire and could not offer effective leadership at Frankfort, it was only natural that the nationalist, liberal delegates turned toward Prussia. The unofficial leader of the Prussian anti-Austrian faction was General Joseph von Radowitz, an intimate friend of Frederick William IV. An earlier Prussian attempt to arrange a liberal reform with Austria in regard to the Bund had been ruined by the 1848 Revolutions. Radowitz concluded on the basis of the Austrian responses to the revolts that Vienna would have rejected the liberal reforms, and thus decided to use the Austrian internal difficulties to advance Prussian interests by pressing for liberal reforms under Prussian leadership in the Bund. However, by early October of 1848, Radowitz had neither the governmental position nor the full support of the Prussian King.

Friedjung, Österreich, I, pp. 178-179.
to embark upon his ambitious plans. For the necessary power, he had to wait until the summer of 1849.

Following the election of delegates to the Frankfort Assembly and its subsequent convocation in St. Paul's, the members of this national German parliament undertook to establish an executive necessary for the accomplishment of the Assembly's goals—as yet undecided. The selection of the Habsburg Archduke John as Reichsverweser (Regent) for the Reich followed the traditional belief that a Habsburg should head any all-German organization. On 19 May, Heinrich von Gagern, the leading representative from Hesse-Darmstadt, was chosen as President of the Frankfort Assembly. Gagern, recently appointed chief minister for Hesse-Darmstadt, had already declared publicly his support for the German national unity movement. His election can be judged partly as a compromise between the two hundred-odd delegates from Prussia and Northern German states and those two hundred-sixty-odd from the Southern German states. In his opening address, Gagern called for the unity of one German Reich ruled according to the will of the German people. In essence, the presidential speech was really a public appeal to the Frankfort Assembly to provide a moderate course between radical revolution and a reactionary preservation of the pre-1848 system. In later speeches,

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Gagern continued to promote a loose organization of German states which would have a moderate-liberal constitution and be accountable to the people.  

The key delegate to Frankfort, Heinrich von Gagern, as President of the Frankfort Assembly, could venture a liberal attack upon Austria. Backed by the liberal, nationalist faction of the Assembly, Gagern on 19 October pushed through a proposal which would greatly reduce Austrian power in Germany, and perhaps even force Austria to withdraw from the Bund altogether. This proposal called for the personal union of the German states with Austria. However, the Habsburgs, in order to attain this rule over an united Germany, had to separate German Austria from the rest of the Austrian Empire. Surprisingly, this proposal had little direct opposition from the delegates (it passed by a vote of 330 to 69), but it did encounter the complete opposition of the Vienna government. While few of the delegates had opposed the plans, few also had much hope that the Habsburgs would voluntarily surrender most of their Empire for the honor of ruling an united Germany. By 26 October, the reform plan had been

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20Ibid., pp. 33-37.
rewritten into its final form, and the important clauses which called for the separation of Austria from her non-German territories were contained in the second and third paragraphs. Yet, the plan did not contain any clear method of how the Habsburgs were to unite Germany, or what the fate of the remnants of the Austrian Empire would be. It was a highly idealistic plan which had more effect in increasing the determination of Austria to reclaim her historic rights of leadership than of having any real chances of success.  

Perhaps Gagern's greatest task as leader of the Frankfort Assembly was to construct a program which would fulfill the nationalists' demands for a strong, united German state while not producing a direct conflict with Austria. This difficult, if not impossible, task was made even more difficult by Schwarzenberg's announced policies for Austria. After the 26 October proposals had been accepted in their tentative form, Gagern had to head off Vienna's strong protests. The Assembly's President had expected Schwarzenberg to oppose the proposals, but was not prepared for the determination the Prime Minister showed in his December speeches. In this regard, Gagern's surprise at Austria's reaction was much the same as Prussia's disbelief. Additional problems for Gagern were

caused by the aggressive, but confused, policies of the "Kamarilla" in Berlin. The selection of Prince Brandenburg to the Prussian Prime Ministership was judged to some degree by Gagern as the beginning of a counter-revolution by Prussian reactionary forces. The appointment of Schwarzenberg as Austrian Prime Minister increased the belief that the conservative pre-1848 groups had reformed and were prepared to attack the Frankfort Assembly and its goals.24

The official reaction of Vienna was both swift and clear—Austria was absolutely opposed to the proposed plan in any form, and was willing to use all possible means to preserve the territorial integrity of the Empire. After the 28 December cabinet meeting, Schwarzenberg announced that he would never accept the 19 October Assembly proposal. On the same day, he also announced Austria's opposition to the newer Prussian idea of a Directory for the Bund.25 In rejecting the Assembly's proposal, Schwarzenberg again argued that the survival of the Austrian Empire was a European problem. In this regard, he was quite correct. The Prime Minister agreed that the proposed plan, on paper, would accomplish much

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25 Srbik, Deutsche Einheit, I, p. 397 and Ministerial Report #3056, Staatsarchiv, 28 December, 1848.
in solving the German problem were it acceptable to Austria, but the plan would do little in solving the greater European problem. In fact, the proposal could increase the dangers of war by decreasing Austria's power in middle-Europe and in the Balkans. Although not immediately apparent at the time, the Austrian Empire was really faced with only two choices; a complete reform of the 1815 Bund or Bruck's concept of an empire of seventy million. This latter concept appeared to Schwarzenberg to be the only reform plan which would solve both the Austrian and the European problems. However, since Prussia would eventually reject Bruck's concept and since a complete reform of the Bund proved impossible, Austria was left by 1851 with only a slightly reformed Bund.

While the Frankfort Assembly was debating and passing the 19 October proposal, the Prussian government was preparing a counter-plan of its own in anticipation of the Austrian rejection of the Assembly's proposal. In a governmental note to Frederick William IV of 21 November, Radowitz suggested dividing Germany into two Bünde. Austria would remain the leader of the southern one, and

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26 Ibid., I, p. 389.
28 Srbik, Deutsche Einheit, I, p. 391.
Prussia would lead the more progressive northern one. This Directory concept was attractive because it kept Austria within Germany and also protected vital Prussian interests. In long-range terms, Radowitz hoped that with Prussia leading the Bund states economically, the members of the southern half would bow to Prussia's political leadership just as most of the northern states had done after the 1834 Zollverein was formed. Schwarzenberg vetoed the Assembly's proposal on 28 December, and also indicated that the Directory concept was unacceptable to Austria. The objective of the Prussian plan was very obvious to the Prime Minister—it was but another attempt by Berlin to decrease Vienna's power in Germany and to increase the power and influence of Prussia. In the rejection of 28 December, Schwarzenberg was careful however not to close the door entirely on the idea of some type of dualism or Directory. What exactly he had in mind when he suggested that a compromise with Prussia might be possible was not explained. However, it is likely that Schwarzenberg was not really serious, but only playing for time.

Any questions that Gagern might have had concerning the exact attitude of Austria toward the revolutionary

movement had been cleared up by Schwarzenberg's speech of 2 December which placed Vienna on record as fully opposed to the *Kleindeutschland* concept (the Assembly's 26 October proposals) and determined to crush the revolution in Hungary. Schwarzenberg's determination indicated to Gagern that the Assembly could not expect any support from Vienna for the proposed moderate-liberal reforms in Germany. On 18 December, Gagern was elected chief minister of the Frankfort Assembly while Eduard Simson, a Prussian delegate, was selected as the new president. In an attempt to placate Austria's opposition, the new chief minister presented the *Gagern'sches Program*. This program called for the unification of the German states without the inclusion of Austria (*Kleindeutschland*), but with Austria connected to the new unified German state by a loose union. By such a plan, Gagern hoped to satisfy the demands of the nationalists while maintaining traditional connections with Austria. Vienna's refusal to accept any liberal changes brought about by the 1848 Revolution later forced Gagern to modify his proposals to depend more heavily upon Prussian support. Gagern thus pinned his hopes for German unity on a divided Prussian cabinet unable to decide how or if to assume the vacant leadership of

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31 Wentzcke, Heinrich von Gagern, pp. 41-42.
Germany offered to it by the 1848 Revolution and Austria's temporary withdrawal from the Bund. 32

While Schwarzenberg was quite determined in his policy of restoring Austria to the position of leader in the Bund, he was still intelligent enough not to press Austria's historic claims until the revolutions in Hungary and Italy were ended. Nevertheless, with the proposal passed by the Frankfort Assembly in October, he was forced not only to reject this plan but also to take the diplomatic offensive at Frankfort. It was, perhaps, because Minister-President Gagern appeared to have been the moving force behind the Assembly's action that pushed Schwarzenberg into the attack. 33 In his dispatches from Berlin, Count Trauttmansdorff, the Austrian charge, often made note of the part which Gagern played at Frankfort. Trauttmansdorff accused the Minister-President of having, at least, nominal support from Frederick William IV in the attacks upon Austria. In the same reports, the charge also offered his opinion that General Radowitz was already deeply involved in the German national movement within Prussia, and that he appeared committed to pursue the nationalistic goals regardless of any opposition from Vienna. The result of the Assembly's proposal then was the

32 Ibid., pp. 45-46.

33 Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 61.
official declaration of 28 December by Schwarzenberg refusing to accept the Frankfort plan.\textsuperscript{34}

If Schwarzenberg had entertained any hopes that his State-speech would persuade Berlin or Frankfort to abandon the diplomatic attacks upon Vienna, he was soon disappointed. The chief Austrian delegate at Frankfort, Ritter von Schmerling, wrote in his dispatches that Gagern and his supporters appeared just as determined to push through the anti-Austrian proposal (in January of 1849) as before the Prime Minister's speech. Schmerling, of course, had informed Gagern of Schwarzenberg's objections to the plan, but Gagern had rejected them.\textsuperscript{35} Included in the 5 January report was a copy of a letter from Gagern to Schmerling. The Minister-President argued that Austria no longer had any special rights to be the sole leader of the Bund. At the same time, he implied that Prussia would never accept the entrance of the entire Austrian Empire into the Bund, but would continue to work for a complete separation of the Bund from Austria. Gagern also wrote that he found the Austrian opposition to the German national movement incorrect, and again rejected the suggestion of a return to

\textsuperscript{34}Preussia Archiv, III, #31 (unpublished), Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1848), December 2, 4, and 7, 1848. Hereafter referred to as Preussia Archiv, Staatsarchiv.

\textsuperscript{35}Deutsche Bund, #10 (unpublished), Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv, January 4-6, 1849. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Bund, Staatsarchiv.
traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation. As a final note, he repeated the October 19 proposal to Schmerling, and made it quite clear that this plan was the only one which the Prussian government supported. 36

However, as much as Gagern wanted to demonstrate to Schmerling that his Assembly's proposal was backed fully by Berlin, this was not true. Count Trauttmsandorff reported several times during January that the Prussian government was divided over what policy to follow at Frankfort. In a report of 12 January, the Austrian charge noted that Gagern was struggling against Prime Minister Brandenburg over a continuation of the strong anti-Austrian policy. As events proved, the Prussian government was pursuing two courses—one supported by Gagern at Frankfort which was anti-Austrian and a second course led by Brandenburg in Berlin which appeared to be more moderate in the opposition to Vienna. This conclusion by Trauttmansdorff at Berlin was seconded by Schmerling from Frankfort. The latter reported on 5 January that Gagern had rejected Schwarzenberg's objections of the Assembly's proposal, and that the Minister-President was renewing the attacks upon Austria. 38 Schmerling also referred to

36 Ibid., January 5, 1849.
37 Preussia Archiv, #31, Staatsarchiv, January 11-17, 1849.
38 Deutsche Bund, #10, Staatsarchiv, January 12-14, 1849.
General Radowitz whom he accused of supporting or even encouraging Gagern in these attacks. Schmerling's evaluation of Radowitz received dramatic confirmation on 18 January. In the dispatch of that day, he forwarded a copy of a speech which Radowitz had delivered to a meeting of Prussian provisional delegates in Berlin. In this speech, Radowitz attacked the Austrian Empire for preventing the 1848 Revolutions from achieving their goals, and of preventing the attainment of German unity by the national movement led by Prussia. He further accused Austria of having no organic ties to the Bund but many to the Austrian Empire. Radowitz proclaimed that an alliance between Austria and the new Germany would be a good policy, but first called for the complete separation of Austria and the Bund forever. 39

Although the meaning of the Austrian throne speech was quite clear, Berlin chose to ignore it when, on 23 January of 1849, it sent a circular-note to the German princes suggesting that the best way to reform the Bund was to accept the concept of Kleindeutschland. Added to this idea was the Prussian plan for all the German states to sign a multilateral treaty to protect German interests from any non-Bund nation—including the Austrian Empire.

39 Ibid., January 18, 1849.
Prussia claimed the right to lead a small Germany by virtue of her successful efforts at protecting the German states from Louis XIV and Napoleon. The note suggested the "historic leadership" of Austria had failed, but that Prussia had then rescued Germany. A copy of the note was sent to Vienna by Trauttmansdorff. In it, Berlin argued for a continuation of the attempt to attain an united Germany, for the creation of a new central-authority in the Bund, and laid great stress upon the claim that Prussia had encouraged German nationalism which had helped save Germany.

The Prussian circular-note was but another reason for Schwarzenberg to take the offensive in the policies for Austria. Just as the Prussian government was hardly surprised at the Austrian rejection to split the Empire, Schwarzenberg was not surprised at this newest attempt to force Austria out of the Bund. Bruck's plan for creating an empire of seventy million had already been discussed by the full cabinet, and seemed to Schwarzenberg as the best immediate policy for Vienna. If the Bund members could be pressured into accepting all the Empire into membership, then this would certainly shift the old

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40 Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 114.
41 Preussia Archiv, #31, Staatsarchiv, January 29, 1849.
balance-of-power between Austria and Prussia to the former's favor. The overwhelming support the rest of the Empire was supposed to give Vienna would decrease Prussian power in the Bund. Perhaps, this change might even deprive Prussia of the economic leadership of the Zollverein—assuming that the Bund would accept an enlarged customs union. Since Schwarzenberg foresaw some opposition from the middle and smaller states, he was quite willing to compromise on the principle of leadership. The Prime Minister was considering the creation of a Directory which would be composed of five states, of which two would lean toward Austria for protection against any aggressive actions by Prussia. This group would, in addition to Austria and Prussia, certainly have included Bavaria and Württemberg. Thus Austria would be assured a majority in the Directory.\(^2\)

The official announcement of the new Austrian plan was delayed by Schwarzenberg until the Austrian Constitution of Kremsier was written. He had given an indication of his policies on 27 November when he had addressed the all-Austrian assembly at Kremsier. At this meeting, Schwarzenberg promised to keep the entire monarchy intact, but also hinted that he would attempt in some manner to join the Empire to the Bund.\(^3\) The task of presenting the Austrian

\(^2\) Holborn, *History of Modern Germany*, p. 81.

\(^3\) *Ibid.*, p. 82.
plan to Frankfort was facilitated by two developments. The first was that the 23 January Prussian note had met with major opposition from many of the middle German states. The balance between Prussia and Austria had been created partly as a means of protecting the sovereignty of the smaller German states from both of the former; if then, Austria were forced out of the Bund, the middle and small states would be in a difficult position vis-à-vis Prussia. Therefore, many of the Bund states had decided in early 1849 to oppose the plan of forcing Austria out of Germany, and became more receptive to new Austrian policies. The second factor which lightened Schwarzenberg's task was the announcement on 9 March of a revised Kremsier Constitution, since joining Germany to the Austrian Empire would be much easier if the Empire were a federated state. When Schmerling, the leading Austrian delegate to Frankfort, announced the new Austrian Constitution, he also revealed—but did not propose—the Austrian plan to create Bruck's empire of seventy million. Austria and Schwarzenberg were on the offensive.

Regardless how determined Schwarzenberg was to meet Prussia's attack on Austria's rights in Germany, he was

\[\text{44} A. J. P. Taylor, \text{The Course of German History: A Survey of the Development of Germany Since 1515} \ (\text{New York, 1962}), \ p. \ 91 \ \text{and} \ \text{Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 213.}
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\[\text{45} \ \text{Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 107.}\]
unable to meet this challenge with any significant strength until Austria solved three problems. The first problem of governmental reorganization had been met by the Constitution of Kremsier and by the establishment of an unitary, federated state. The remaining two problems were closely related. They were the Piedmont-Austrian war in Italy resulting from the 1848 Revolutions, and the Hungarian Revolution—both of which threatened to destroy the very fiber of the Austrian Empire. To recover the historic position of Austria in Germany, Schwarzenberg had to defeat these two revolutions militarily. In spite of these problems, the Prime Minister wasted no time informing Berlin and Frankfort that Vienna would not be forced to withdraw from Germany. Certainly the speeches of 26 December and 19 January made Austria's position quite clear.\footnote{Adolph Schwarzenberg, Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg: Prime Minister of Austria, 1818-1832 (New York, 1945), pp. 114-115.} There was, however, a great difference between announcing a strong foreign policy and implementing it. Schwarzenberg was fully aware that "Austria had neither the force nor policy to spare for the affairs of Germany; she stood aside, asserting her rights, but not defending them, intending to reconquer her position in Germany when her internal strength had been consolidated.\footnote{Taylor, Course of German History, p. 89.}
While Schwarzenberg formulated his opposition to Prussia, the Austrian "envoy" in Italy, Marshal Radetzky, was slowly winning the Austro-Piedmont war. Schwarzenberg had assumed, quite correctly, that an Austrian victory would increase his power both within the Austrian Empire and within Germany. The wisdom of this assumption was borne out in early 1849 when the Austrian envoy at Munich, Count Rechberg, wrote that the position of Vienna vis-à-vis Prussia in the eyes of the various German rulers had greatly improved. Rechberg, like Schwarzenberg, hoped that military victory would aid Austria in the struggle against both the Hungarians and the Prussians. 48

As reassuring as the Austrian victory over Charles Albert's Piedmont forces was, and as important as it was to bolster sagging Austrian prestige and influence, the more serious revolt in Hungary still continued. Kossuth and his supporters had dropped their earlier demands for autonomy and, by April of 1849, proclaimed full independence from the Austrian Empire. Schwarzenberg realized what a grave danger the Hungarian revolt was to the Empire, but he also knew that his plans for Germany would be held up until Vienna could finally end this revolt. While preparing for the next military attempt against the Magyars, the Prime Minister took advantage of Vienna's

increased prestige in Germany, resulting from the victory in Italy, to announce the concept of the empire of seventy million. However, even though Austria officially had taken the diplomatic offensive against Prussia and would do fairly well at first, Schwarzenberg knew that any progress would be worthless unless Kossuth and his rebels were defeated soon. To the Austrian leader, the revolt in Hungary had always been the most dangerous of problems, but Vienna had been unable to defeat the Magyars. Even the spring offensive of three separate Austrian armies failed in its purpose.

It was at this point that Russia assumed an important role in these affairs. Schwarzenberg was aware that the "arch-foe of revolutions," Russia's Tsar Nicholas I, was willing to help Austria defeat the Hungarian revolt. For the Russians the fight of the Magyars was not only illegal, but it also was a direct threat to the principles of legitimacy and monarchial rule. Nicholas's view that a strong, conservative Austrian Empire was a necessity for Russia was shared by his Foreign Minister, Count Nesselrode. In a letter of 15 January, 1849, Nesselrode wrote that the survival intact of the Habsburg monarchy was of vital Russian interest. A successful revolt by the Magyars

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against Austria might moreover invite revolts of the various nationalities within the Russian Empire. This possibility was especially strong in the case of the subjected Poles. The failure of Austria to defeat the Magyars in early 1849 left Schwarzenberg with no other realistic choice but to call upon Russia for aid. The advance into Hungary of nearly two hundred thousand Russian troops sealed the doom of Kossuth, his small army, and the Hungarian revolt. In seeking foreign aid, Schwarzenberg had only two options. The first was the use of Russian troops, obviously placing Austria in the position of owing Russia a diplomatic or military favor. The other option was to seek assistance from the Bund members, especially from Prussia. Schwarzenberg had vetoed this option for two reasons. First, the Bund nations could produce, on such short notice, only about fifty thousand men, and this number was believed to be too few to defeat the Magyars; in addition using Russian troops attacking from the east and north while the Austrians attacked from the west and south would entrap the rebels. The second reason was more important to Schwarzenberg’s future plans. To seek Bund aid would demonstrate the military weakness of Austria, just as seeking Russian aid did, but the former was more

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dangerous. It was quite possible that Prussia would have demanded concessions in Germany before providing Vienna with the necessary troops. Quite likely, these concessions would have involved a type of dualistic sharing of the leadership of Germany. Schwarzenberg, of course, was unwilling to grant such a concession to Prussia as the price of Prussian military aid. The Russian support would not cost the Austrian Empire anything except an unwritten promise of future support, and this promise could be, and eventually was, broken when Austrian foreign interests were at stake. Thus, Schwarzenberg had solved the military problems by the summer of 1849, but before doing so, the Prime Minister had to revise the Kremsier Constitution.

When the ministry of Prince Schwarzenberg was formed in November, 1848, the Austrian state was faced with many serious demands—of which the demand of a constitution was only one. The middle-class ministers whom the new Prime Minister selected were determined to instill new life and energy into the disunified and rebellious Habsburg state. In fact, the desire of the great majority of the Austrian bureaucracy was for an unitary and centralized state, but the possible use of that unitary state divided them into two groups. The more cosmopolitan and European oriented liberals, still influenced by the French Revolution,  

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wanted an united state which could provide both for industrial progress and a sharing of political power. These liberals hoped that a constitution which established a Diet would be the first step in the movement to transform the Austrian Empire into a parliamentary one similar to that of England. The second group consisted of those people who looked to the ideas of Mittel-Europa as the means to save Austria and even to increase its power. This group found its leaders at Vienna in Baron Bruck, the originator of the concept, and in von Schmerling at Frankfurt. Armed with the military, administrative, and financial strength of an unified state, Austria would be able to recover her position of leadership within Germany, and remain both a Balkan power and an European Great Power.52

However impressive and sincere were the thoughts and desires of the first two political groups, they had very little in common with the ideas of the Prime Minister, Schwarzenberg, when he assumed office, had accepted the general demand for a constitution to produce some type of a unitary state. Nevertheless, he believed as did General Windischgrätz that a strong parliament, as England had and as the liberals wanted, would be quite impossible for a multi-national Austrian state. His antipathy toward the

52Ibid., I, pp. 378-379.
constitutional movement and even toward those liberal delegates who were clamoring for a parliament was hardly unexpected in view of his conservative training in the Habsburg army and administration. Even so, Schwarzenberg was realistic enough to know that November of 1848 was not the time to oppose the constitutional movement. Since his major problems were the revolts in Hungary and Italy and the diplomatic rebellion of Prussia against Austrian leadership in Germany, he realized that he had to play to the popular demands of the moment in order to secure sufficient support for his military and diplomatic policies. His thinking was immediately clear when he appointed two "democratic" ministers to the cabinet—Graf Franz Stadion and Dr. Alexander Bach. Schwarzenberg assumed that the Austrian liberals would support his policies while they pinned their hopes for a "people's" constitution to the efforts of Stadion and Bach in Vienna and at Kremsier. This is exactly what did happen. Thus, Schwarzenberg had a comparatively free hand to direct Austrian foreign policies.

Although Schwarzenberg was willing to allow the delegates at Kremsier to debate and formulate a constitution, he was unwilling to agree to the proposed draft if

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54 Ibid., I, p. 330.
it contained any provision which reduced the authority of the central government in favor of parliamentary rule. The Prime Minister wanted a constitution from Kremsier which would place great authority in the Prime Ministership—thus more power in his own hands. The reason why this increased power was necessary was quite clear—it would improve the position of Austria within the Bund and enable Schwarzenberg to put his German policies into effect. Thus, he would be able to defeat Prussia and restore sole Bund leadership to Vienna.\(^5\) With the Kremsier Reichstag already in session since 27 November, Schwarzenberg was unable to exert much influence on the debates, since the delegates had been chosen before he assumed office. From November of 1848 until March of 1849, Schwarzenberg did not seriously attempt to control the constitutional movement, but attempted to develop a policy which would benefit from the support of the movement and yet not be restricted by it. In simple terms, the Prime Minister had to produce a policy which would prevent any serious reductions in the power of the emperor, would increase the authority of the Prime Ministership, and would allow for a strong, unitary state.\(^6\) Even for a Realpolitiker, this was not an easy task.

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55 Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 110.

56 Redlich, Das Österreichische Staats- und Reichsproblem, I, pp. 332-333.
The almost inevitable conflict between the constitutional movement and the absolutistic ideas of the Prime Minister developed over the concepts contained in the first paragraph of the proposed constitution. This paragraph was meant as a general preamble to the document. The liberal delegates had stipulated that popular vote should elect the delegates to the next Diet. The influence of the French Revolution in the paragraph was unmistakable. Schwarzenberg was prepared to oppose implementation of the doctrine of popular sovereignty, and thus either the Kremsier Reichstag or the Prime Minister had to give way. Schwarzenberg sent Graf Stadion to Kremsier to negotiate a compromise, but the "democratic" minister failed. The Prime Minister was determined not to accept the concept of an Austrian "Reich" since that term implied sovereignty of the people, but wanted the delegates instead to accept the more traditional concept of the Austrian Empire as the lands joined together by the person of the Habsburg emperor. Therefore, all power within the state—and all power the Prime Minister held—came not from the people but from the head of the dynasty which had gathered together the various parts of the Empire. Schwarzenberg was adamant, and believed by early March that he had enough to force

57Ibid., I, pp. 332-333.
the Reichstag to back down. On 4 March, Francis Joseph gave his approval to a meeting between the delegates at Kremsier and the ministry for the purpose of promulgating a constitution for the Austrian Empire.

While Schwarzenberg was progressing in his course of opposition to the concept of popular sovereignty, the delegates were split into three major groups. Each was attempting to get its ideas adopted as a basic outline for the constitution. The first group supported the general philosophy of the French Revolution, and thus argued that all authority had to originate with the people. This group wanted the Empire to be a unitary state with a two-house parliament whose members would be elected by universal male suffrage. Although the exact details of the election of members to the new Diet, the powers of that Diet, and the powers of the central government were open to compromise, the basic principle of popular sovereignty was not open to any debate or compromise. On 20 January, 1849, this group of delegates had gathered enough support from the other two divisions at Kremsier to attain approval of their philosophy. The period until March was concerned with translating this approved philosophy into the appropriate constitutional language.

58 Ibid., I, pp. 340-341.
When, on 4 March, Francis Joseph gave his permission to Schwarzenberg for the meeting with the Kremsier delegates, most of those delegates assumed that the Prime Minister was ready to compromise. However, they were rudely awakened when Schwarzenberg tore up the proposed constitution and issued his own version. Since he was still fully opposed to the philosophy contained in the Kremsier draft, as was the emperor, he could never have agreed to any compromise without losing face. Given the fact that he rejected the original version, Schwarzenberg still needed a constitution which would provide legal basis for his power. Therefore, he approved a restructured draft of the document which would allow for the unitary state he desired and also serve as the means to enable him to join the Austrian Empire to the Bund. This improvised constitution had very little effect on how the Empire was to be ruled for the simple reason that it was never followed by the government. It was fated to be merely the sham constitution for Schwarzenberg's absolutistic rule until December of 1851 when it was discarded.\textsuperscript{59} It rejected the hopes of a federated government of the minorities and also the concept of popular sovereignty. Schwarzenberg was now free of any restrictions on his

\textsuperscript{59}Taylor, \textit{Course of German History}, p. 92.
power, and thus could and did demand that Frankfort accept the entire unitary Austrian Empire into the Bund. On paper, the Schwarzenberg ministry had finally, for the first time in Austrian history, transformed the polyglot Empire into a unified, centralized state which was controlled from Vienna. However, as the Prime Minister and Vienna were to learn, the improvised constitution really did little to make the Empire a truly unified state, nor did it aid Schwarzenberg in his plans regarding the merger of Austria with the Bund.

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60 Holborn, History of Modern Germany, p. 84.
CHAPTER II

FROM 1849 TO THE BEGINNING OF THE RADOWITZ MINISTRY

(JUNE, 1849)

Schwarzenberg's rejection in March 1849 of the Kremsier Constitution produced a governmental crisis in Austria, and also created difficulties at Frankfort, given Austria's attitude toward the Assembly's 19 October, 1848 proposal. The few liberal pro-Austrian delegates at Frankfort had hoped that with the promulgation of the liberal Kremsier Constitution Vienna might be willing to settle the struggle over Germany by compromising with Prussia. On the other hand, the great majority of delegates had never entertained any real hope Schwarzenberg would accept the 19 October plan to split Austria from the rest of the Austrian Empire. Although the pro-Austrian faction, headed by von Schmerling, had not argued too strongly nor too long against the proposal, it was not done from weakness. Rather, it was common knowledge that Schwarzenberg would, no doubt, veto the Assembly's plan and then offer his own proposal. This pro-Austrian faction desired that the Austrian plan would be accompanied by an announcement of a liberal, unitary Constitution from Kremsier. Both the
delegates at Frankfort and Kremsier were unprepared for the Constitution's rejection, and much less prepared for Schwarzenberg's substitute document. This rejection made clear that the government in Vienna still was not willing to surrender any power within the Empire, and implied that a similar attitude would guide policy in Germany.

The full effects of Austria's decision would not become apparent at Frankfort until May when Schwarzenberg rejected still another Prussian plan, announcing at the time his determination to restore Austrian historic rights to leadership in Germany. Until that time, Schmerling found himself in a most difficult position. As the person first appointed by Vienna to support Austria's policies and to defend the interests of the Austrian Empire against the Prussian diplomatic attacks at Frankfort, Schmerling was forced into the unenviable position of supporting governmental policies which he had little influence over and with which he often disagreed. In late 1848, Schmerling had warned Schwarzenberg that Germany might very well go its own nationalistic way, showing as little regard for Austria's historic rights as Schwarzenberg did for Prussian interests. Schmerling seemed to recommend that Austria compromise with Prussia on the principle of leadership to

attain the greater goal of the empire of seventy million. He had been, however, fully opposed both to the idea of Kleindeutschland and to the Assembly's 19 October proposal. Thus, because of his official position as the chief Austrian delegate, Schmerling was the logical leader at Frankfort—until Rechberg arrived—to oppose the pro-Prussian leader and President of the Assembly, Gagern. In fact, the position of Schmerling vis-à-vis Gagern was much like the conflict between Metternich and vom Stein at Vienna in 1814-1815. At that time, the saying, "as Austria goes, also Prussia," had a basis in truth. However, in 1849 this was no longer true even though it appeared at times that Austrian foreign policy was still based on the assumption that Prussia would have to follow Austria's lead.²

Government policies in Vienna regarding the Kremsier Constitution and Austria's rightful position in Germany had the effect of dividing the delegates at Frankfort even more than they had been before March. Those delegates who were pro-Austrian and those who were liberal but neutral found that they could no longer support Vienna. The only course open to many of them was joining other liberal, nationalistic (and often pro-Prussian) delegates

²Ibid., p. 404.
in open opposition to Schwarzenberg and Vienna. Old differences between a democratic and authoritative Bund, between the Kleindeutschland and Grossdeutschland concepts, and between German interests and Slavic-Austrian (Austrian Empire) were again renewed. The enemies of Austria claimed once again that the Habsburgs, if restored to pre-1848 leadership, would place the vital interests of the Austrian Empire before those of Germany. To Prussia, it appeared the interests of northern Germany and Prussia would be better protected by equality of leadership between Austria and Prussia. One only has to consider the attempts of Austria to force Bund support of aggressive Austrian policies during the Crimean War—in areas which Germany had no vital interests—to realize Prussia's fears were well founded.

The faction which supported the Kleindeutschland concept was naturally led by Prussia which had the most to gain by excluding Austria from Germany. Prussia was already economic leader of Germany due to her primary position in the 1834 Zollverein. If Austria were pushed out of Germany, then the only political leader left would be Prussia. With combined political and economic leadership, Prussia would be in an excellent position to unite Germany and perhaps become the major Great Power in Europe.

3 Ibid., pp. 404-407.
After the Austrian rejection in December of the Assembly's 19 October proposal, Berlin responded at Frankfort with a rather vague plan to limit the Bund to six large, united areas—of which the non-German parts of the Austrian Empire were not included. This, in effect, was but a restatement of the October plan. According to the plan, however, many smaller states and free cities would be required to join the middle kingdoms and Prussia; therefore the plan encountered strong opposition. Austria opposed it for the same reasons as she had the October proposal, but many smaller states and free cities also opposed the plan too. Nevertheless, the Assembly voted general approval 261 to 224. Reducing the number of sovereign German states from thirty-nine to only six could only increase Prussia's chances to effect that unification—especially if Austria were forced to withdraw from Germany.

While the faction supporting the Kleindeutschland concept was quite united due to the dominant position of Prussia, the supporters of the Grossdeutschland concept were divided. Compared to the Prussian policies which were based primarily upon more realistic approaches to solving the German question, it appeared that the anti-Prussian factions were still influenced by romantic reveries of a Holy Roman Empire or the 1815 concept of the balance-of-power

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4Ibid., p. 411.
between Austria and Prussia. It was natural for the smaller states to resist the Prussian plan as they did, but Prussia was supported by the middle states which is hard to understand. The only effective protection of their sovereignty until then had been the balance-of-power between Austria and Prussia as established in the 1815 Bund. To do anything to upset that delicate balance more than the Revolutions of 1849 had already done was to invite disaster in the form of a forced unification of Germany by Prussia. Yet, the middle kingdoms of Hanover and Saxony did support Prussia for much of 1849—it was almost as if they were blind to the obvious dangers to their very existence.

One of the middle kingdoms was aware of the dangers, and did offer a compromise to both the Klein- and Gross-deutschland concepts. The Bavarian Wittelsbach, King Maximilian II, in early 1849 instructed the Bavarian delegates at Frankfort to propose a Directory to rule Germany. This Directory, which would be composed of the three leading German states, was to possess full authority of the executive in a reformed Bund, just as Austria had had complete executive power in the 1815 Bund. The Bavarian plan was divided into three large areas. The northern half of the Bund was to be led by Prussia, and the southern half by Bavaria. The third area was to include the entire
Austrian Empire of which German-Austria would be the third member of the Directory—this plan was quite similar to Bruck's concept.  

The reasoning behind this plan was simple. If the sole leader of a small Germany were Prussia, then the middle states would be at the mercy of Berlin and their vital interests and sovereignty could be threatened. If Austria were restored to full power as sole leader, Germany could be too weak to protect its interests against those of the Austrian Empire—here it appears Bavaria was accepting the Prussian argument that Vienna would subjugate German interests in favor of Austrian ones. However, if there were three leaders, then the vital interests of the middle states and small states also could be protected. The external security of this large empire still would be safeguarded largely by Austria and Prussia against France or Russia. The original balance-of-power within Germany as established by the 1815 Congress of Vienna would still be intact. This plan, Bavaria hoped, would satisfy Berlin's desire for protection and Schwarzenberg's desire to merge the Austrian Empire with Germany. But Bavaria did not understand that Vienna was opposed to any sharing of leadership, and that policies in Berlin were shifting—the plan in effect was doomed.

Strong Prussian opposition to the policies of Austria was evident not only at Frankfort, but also in Vienna. Prussia's Ambassador to the Habsburg court, Count von Bernstorff, was the person charged with defending Prussian interests and with persuading Prime Minister Schwarzenberg to agree to a reform plan acceptable to Berlin. The diplomatic struggle between Vienna and Berlin was quite taxing upon Bernstorff due to Schwarzenberg's haughty attitude toward Prussian reasons for reform. Austria's Prime Minister often took out his displeasure of Berlin upon Prussia's Ambassador. On numerous occasions, Schwarzenberg would reject the newest attempt to decrease Austria's power by launching a direct attack on Bernstorff for suggesting the proposal. Even when Bernstorff was performing his official duties—which he did well—Schwarzenberg would often forget the plan under discussion was not Bernstorff's but Berlin's. Given this unfortunate attitude of Schwarzenberg, Bernstorff was a credit to the Prussian diplomatic service. On a few occasions, he even showed a greater understanding of Schwarzenberg and Austrian foreign policy than did Berlin. 6

In January of 1849, Prussia's leading ally at Frankfort, Gagern, proposed that one possible course for Prussia

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was to "buy off" Austrian opposition to the reform plans by inviting Austria to join the Zollverein. Since Prussia would still enjoy economic leadership of the customs union, Gagern saw little danger to Prussian interests. Vienna's desire to join the Zollverein was well-known, but Schwarzenberg was more concerned with creating a middle-European customs union according to Bruck's empire of seventy million than with tying Austrian interests to the Prussian controlled Zollverein. Schwarzenberg did not care to separate the economic and political parts of this long-range plan for some dubious short-term benefits.7

When Bernstorff learned of Gagern's proposal, the Ambassador was opposed to the idea. In a report of 27 December, 1848, Bernstorff suggested Austria might want to join the Zollverein at a future date, but for the time being she should be refused entrance. The Ambassador felt the best way to protect Prussia's economic and political interests was to maintain full control over the customs union. If Austria were allowed to join, then Prussia would be less able to protect her vital concerns since leadership would be shared with a Vienna, promoting her own interests.8

7Friedrich Meinecke, Radowitz und die deutsche Revolution (Berlin, 1913), pp. 258-269.
Berlin obviously agreed with Bernstorff concerning the dangers of including Austria in the customs union for Gagern's suggestion was never implemented.

The first major open conflict between Bernstorff and Schwarzenberg occurred in December when Austria rejected the Frankfort Assembly's plan and also Prussia's concept of Dualism. In doing so, Schwarzenberg had been very careful to emphasize the historic rights of Vienna. In discussions with Bernstorff, he repeated this argument many times, and even denounced the Prussian concept of Dualism as a poorly conceived plot to deny Vienna her traditional rights. Although Bernstorff attempted to answer Schwarzenberg's charges, the crux of the disagreement between the Great Powers was actually the sharing of the Bund's executive authority. Against Schwarzenberg's accusations that Berlin was attempting to deny Vienna her rights, the Ambassador countered with the just claim that Vienna's policies were based more upon Austrian rights as leader of the defunct Holy Roman Empire than upon a realistic view of the balance-of-power between the Austria and Prussia of 1849. In his reports to von Bülow, Bernstorff repeated the answers given Schwarzenberg, and insisted Prussia had certain rights in Germany that had to be defended against Austrian encroachments. If Austria had special rights, then Prussia, as a Great Power, had
rights of her own to protect. Bernstorff was quite correct in this view, but Schwarzenberg would never publicly acknowledge this viewpoint, since it would destroy his plans to increase Austrian power in Germany and Europe at the expense of Prussia. For once, this Austrian disciple of Realpolitik was purposely blind to political reality since it suited his policies.

The second major conflict between the two diplomats came after Prussia had pushed through the Frankfort Assembly the plan of dividing (or uniting) Germany into six large areas. This proposal which was passed in January of 1849 had even less chance to be accepted by Vienna than the 19 October plan. Since this proposal was not an official one from Berlin but rather from Frankfort, Bernstorff did not have to be overzealous defending it. The expected Austrian rejection was received by Bernstorff in early February. However, Schwarzenberg took the opportunity to suggest unofficially that one possible Bund reform might be the creation of a three state Directory to share the executive authority. This concept was not new to the Ambassador since a similar idea had been discussed within official governmental circles in Berlin and also was quite similar to the proposal of the Bavarian government. Actually the Austrian Prime Minister was not yet willing to

\[9\text{Ibid., p. 91.}\]
commit the Empire to the idea. The suggestion was mainly a "trial balloon" to see what Berlin's reaction would be. Bernstorff, in his report to Berlin, suggested Prussia give serious consideration to the idea. In the discussions with Schwarzenberg, Bernstorff gave the unofficial response to the unofficial proposal. Vienna was informed that Berlin was willing to consider a Directory composed of Austria, Prussia, and a third state—a middle kingdom. The problem which quickly became evident was not on deciding which of the middle states would be asked to join the Directory, but the presidency of the Directory. Prussia wanted the chief executive's position shared equally between Austria and herself, but Schwarzenberg was firmly opposed to this idea. A sharing of the presidency with Berlin would imply equality of the two nations, and thus a denial of Vienna's historic rights. When Bernstorff suggested the idea of an alternating presidency, Schwarzenberg replied that Austria had always been the sole leader in Germany, and that this position would never be shared. Thus, even before an official proposal to create a Directory was proposed by Prussia rather than by Austria, it was clear that Schwarzenberg would reject it if the plan contained Prussia's claim to the sharing of the presidency. Prussia did make the official proposal in
late April, and Schwarzenberg did reject it on 7 May. 10

The period from early January until late May of 1849 was a very active one for Prussia in terms of the number and variety of reform proposals suggested. While this activity showed a large degree of imagination and energy in Berlin and at Frankfort, it also showed a distinct lack of direction for Prussian foreign policy. Without becoming too deeply involved in Prussian internal history, the simple truth is that Berlin had no definite policy toward the Bund question. No leader of any faction within the government had enough support—until Radowitz became a major leader in April—to pursue a strong and well conceived Prussian foreign policy. In the absence of a strong leader, Frederick William IV steered Prussian policy. Unfortunately for Prussia, Frederick William lacked the character to resist pressures from political factions, and this resulted in a vacillating foreign policy. Against the determined Austrian policy directed by Prime Minister Schwarzenberg, this inability of Berlin to maintain a strong, consistent foreign policy proved to be a most important reason for her failure by 1852 to gain equality with the Habsburgs in Germany.

As noted above, the first major Prussian proposal for the Bund in 1849 was to create six German areas,

10 Ibid., p. 83.
hopewfully a first step in eventual unification. Although
this proposal, as it was passed by the Frankfort Assembly,
used the term "division" to explain the reorganization of
the Bund, it was actually a method to unify the Bund since
the number of sovereign states was decreased by annexing
the smaller states and free cities to the middle kingdoms
and Prussia. In rejecting this plan, Vienna offered a new
version. Instead of annexing the smaller states to produce
the six areas, Austria suggested the Bund's voting blocs
be reduced from thirteen to only six. In this way, no
state would lose its independence, but would be required
to vote with a middle state. When Prussia realized the six
areas or voting blocs would be gerrymandered so that
Austria could be assured a majority, Berlin vetoed the
concept. Thus, Prussia appeared less interested in reform­
ing the Bund than in increasing its power at the expense
of the smaller states. Clearly Vienna had not been "taken
in" by Prussia's original proposal.¹¹

Schwarzenberg was next to propose a plan for the Bund
when he made his unofficial suggestion of creating a three
member Directory to rule the Bund. Both Vienna and Berlin
were surprised at the reception the Directory concept
received. Schwarzenberg was pleased with the quick response

¹¹Adolph Schwarzenberg, Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg:
Prime Minister of Austria, 1848-1852 (New York, 1945),
pp. 116-119.
of Berlin to the principle of the Directory—Berlin had informed Vienna of its acceptance in February—and was prepared to negotiate details. Prussia, on the other hand, was also pleased since it assumed that Austria was willing to share its executive authority. Both sides seemed optimistic until negotiations on the details were begun in Vienna and soon broke down. Bernstorff, and Berlin, had incorrectly assumed that Austria was giving serious consideration to compromising with Prussia. Why should Schwarzenberg suggest the Directory if this were not true? On 25 February, Schmerling had informed Vienna that Berlin appeared fully satisfied with the unofficial Directory plan. Even the Prussian delegates at Frankfort believed this proposal would be an excellent central authority for the Bund and a solution to the struggle between the two states. Berlin, in fact, was so anxious to obtain equality in Germany with Austria that admission of the entire Austrian Empire (Gesamteintritt) was perhaps acceptable—even given the obvious dangers to vital Prussian interests.

The acceptance by Berlin of the joining of the Bund and the Austrian Empire was completely dependent upon


Vienna's acceptance of an alternating presidency within the Directory. When Schwarzenberg later refused to make this vital concession to Berlin, then Prussia had no alternative but to refuse the Gesamteintritt. Bernstorff had the difficult, if not the impossible, task of negotiating a compromise with Austria which would allow both German Great Powers to accept the Directory concept. With Austria's firm refusal to share the Bund's presidency, Bernstorff arrived at the same conclusions as Berlin. If Prussia did not have the right of veto, then perhaps it was best the Directory idea collapse. Bernstorff, in his reports to Berlin, correctly judged that the only effective protection of Prussian interests was an alliance between the monarchy and army. However, since the Directory concept was still the best possible solution to the German problem at that time, Bernstorff was instructed to continue his negotiations with Vienna.14

A new stage in these talks was reached when the Prussian envoy suggested the Directory's membership be expanded from three to six. If Prussia could obtain a reasonable voting arrangement in this enlarged executive, then she might be willing to concede Austria's sole right to the presidency. What Berlin desired was the power to select two of the additional four members. In this way,

14Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, p. 103.
both Prussia and Austria would be reasonably assured of being able to control three votes. Thus, Prussia could defend her interests, veto any Austrian attempt to endanger her position, and she would have achieved a degree of equality with Austria. Unfortunately for Bernstorff and Berlin, Schwarzenberg also was aware of what the expanded Directory could mean to Prussia. In March of 1849, he informed Bernstorff the Prussian proposal of a six member executive would only serve to decrease Austria's authority, and therefore was unacceptable to Vienna. Against this, Bernstorff could do very little except to warn Schwarzenberg that Prussia would never allow Austria to endanger her position in northern Germany. The Prime Minister was further warned that a Germany without an Austria was a distinct possibility but one without Prussia was impossible. Schmerling, on 15 March, referred to Prussia's change of attitude when he enclosed a copy of the Assembly's protokoll #186. In this document, Berlin had violently accused Austria of rejecting all proposals to reform the Bund, since Vienna was only interested in increasing her power--this dramatic attack appeared to result from the breakdown in the negotiations in Vienna.

15 Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 201.
16 Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, pp. 107-109.
17 Deutsche Bund #10, Staatsarchiv, 15 March, 1849.
One particularly keen observer of the Austro-Prussian struggle and especially of the Directory concept was the Russian Ambassador to Berlin and later to Vienna, Peter von Meyendorff. The Russian envoy, as well as the Russian government, was vitally interested in the outcome of the struggle between the two German Great Powers. As noted above, Russia desired the Frankfort Assembly and its nationalism be ended so that the Bund could return to its pre-1848 policies. As part of his duties, Meyendorff had to keep abreast of policies originating in Berlin, Vienna, and Frankfort. However, he had been instructed not to interfere nor to take sides in the struggle. St. Petersburg reserved the right to initiate policy decisions. In 1849 Meyendorff, then, served more as a source of information for the Russian government than as an active participant in the struggle. As such, his observations are very useful in arriving at a balanced view of the Austro-Prussian discussions.

In a report to St. Petersburg on 5 January of 1849, Meyendorff discussed the recent proposal by the Frankfort Assembly to unify Germany into six areas. He was most anxious to note that Gagern wanted the ultimate authority of this united Germany in the hands of a constitutional assembly. To this idea, Francis Joseph, and Nicholas I, were fully opposed. Meyendorff also noted Austria was expected to reject this plan, and then to offer a counter-
plan— the three member Directory. When discussions between Bernsdorff and Schwarzenberg stalemated due to Vienna's refusal to share the Bund's presidency and to Prussia's insistence on obtaining equality with Vienna, Meyendorff offered some very sound advise to the Austrian chargé d'affairs in Berlin, Count von Bansen. It was the Russian Ambassador's opinion that Austria had to defeat every Prussian attempt to gain equality, and never share executive authority with Berlin. Meyendorff implied that if Austria ever agreed to share her authority in Germany then she would lose her primary position to Berlin. Somewhat prophetically, he guessed that attempts to reform the Bund probably would fail, and that Austria would accept the 1815 Bund structure. The Russian Ambassador little realized how well he had analyzed the situation.

While Vienna was involved with finishing the Italian war against Piedmont, with the construction of a constitution, and with the increasingly serious rebellion in Hungary; Berlin remained beset by its own problems of disorganization. The different proposals from Berlin and Frankfort for solving the German question were honest and sincere attempts to reach a just settlement with Austria, 


19 Ibid., pp. 153-154, 159-160.
but the same proposals may also be viewed as evidence of a Prussian government unsure of the direction and leadership of its foreign policy. To defeat Austria, Prussia needed more than just good plans and the support of the Frankfort Assembly. To deal with Schwarzenberg Prussia needed a statesman who had a strong, determined, and realistic foreign policy. Then, and perhaps only then, could Prussia really hope either to win equality or to force Austria from her leadership in Germany and thus become the sole leader of Kleindeutschland. Without a strong leader, Prussia was doomed to failure.

Much of the delay in appointing a strong man to contest with Austria was due to the indecisiveness of King Frederick William. Although the King was often at odds with many of his advisors, he had no effective, comprehensive program of his own to oppose those of his major ministers. Finally, Frederick William decided to recall to Berlin an old friend, General von Radowitz. On 25 April of 1849, Radowitz joined the Berlin cabinet as its new Foreign Minister. Although the cabinet was still headed by Prime Minister Prince von Brandenburg, Radowitz had fairly effective control of Prussia's foreign policies since he had the general support of the King. One possible

reason for this appointment was Radowitz's attitude concerning co-operation between Austria and Prussia. Although a firm believer in Prussian power, Radowitz seemed to be more pan-German than just pro-Prussian, more moderate than liberal, and more deliberative than ready to resort to violence. Many of these attributes would either change or disappear as the struggle against Austria intensified.

Finally at Olmütz, the Prussian King had to choose either his friend Radowitz and war or Prime Minister Brandenburg and a diplomatic setback. 21

Because of the final developments in the struggle between Austria and Prussia, Radowitz often has been judged as the leader of a Prussian government willing to wage war against Austria in an effort to remove Austria from Germany. To judge Radowitz's program in this light is basically incorrect. While it is true that at the end of his ministry in 1850 Radowitz was willing to resort to war, he saw himself fighting not only for Prussia but also for many of the ideals of the 1848 Revolutions, German nationalism, and the unification of Germany. The Prussian Foreign Minister's program closely resembled Bruck's concept of Mittel-Europa. Radowitz divided his plan into two parts: a small union of

German states, and a larger one of middle-European states. The former was actually the *Klein*deutschland concept. In this confederation of only German states, Prussia would be the sole leader. The Prussian King would have a veto over the Diet's proposals, have full command of the confederation's army, and have the power to appoint and dismiss governmental ministers. The small union would be invested with a fairly liberal constitution, two houses of parliament with members elected by universal male suffrage, and an advisory council to the King composed of six leading German princes. By virtue of this small union, Radowitz hoped to satisfy the demands of the liberal delegates at Frankfort and also the Prussian nationalists.22 The second part of his plan was the creation of a federated state composed of the small German union and the entire Austrian Empire. Prussia and Austria would each have one vote in the executive of the larger union while the leaders of the smaller states would share two votes. A majority of three votes would be required before any major program could be instituted. In Radowitz's plan, Prussia would be the sole leader of a united Germany and share power equally with Austria in the larger unit while Bruck's concept of *Mittel-Europa* gave leadership to Austria in both units.23

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23 Ibid., p. 91.
A second reason why Frederick William selected Radowitz was his willingness to tie Prussian interests to the German national movement. Given the romantic dreams of the King to create a "new Germany," Radowitz's sincere belief that Prussia had a historic claim to unite Germany had an important effect on the King. By 1849, it was obvious to the nationalistic elements at Frankfort that Vienna was determined to prevent German nationalism from obtaining its goal. The only government possibly strong enough to accomplish the desired unification was Prussia. However, until Radowitz assumed the direction of Prussia's foreign policy, the nationalists were disappointed with Prussia's response to his opportunity. Radowitz appeared as willing to support the nationalists' goal, and thus increase Prussian power, as Schwarzenberg was determined to prevent the unification of Germany by Prussia. The Austrian Ambassador to Prussia, Prokesch-Osten, informed the Austrian Prime Minister in a report of 31 March that the Berlin government was considering giving active support to the nationalist elements in Germany. This proposed aid by Prussia for the "German Revolution" was regarded as a drastic challenge to Austria's claims of sole leadership. 24

Gagern's appraisal that Prussia was the only major German state possibly willing to lead the national unity movement was strengthened by Radowitz's public statements and the future Foreign Minister's involvement in Berlin politics. On 21 March, 1849, Gagern's proposal that the Frankfort Assembly offer the hereditary leadership of a united Germany to Frederick William as Prussian King was rejected by the delegates. Although he resigned in protest, Gagern continued to press for his proposal's adoption. The Assembly did indeed pass the proposal on 28 March and offer the German crown to Frederick William by a vote of 290-248.\footnote{Paul Wentzcke, Heinrich von Gagern; Vorkämpfer für deutsche Einheit und Volksvertretung (Berlin, 1957), p. 50.} The Prussian King refused to accept the offer since it came from a popular assembly rather than from the German princes. After the Prussian rejection and the dissolution of the Frankfort Assembly, Gagern left Frankfort in May and returned to Hesse-Darmstadt. With the Assembly's offer refused, both Austria and Prussia withdrew accreditation for their respective delegations at Frankfort. The departure of these delegates prompted similar action by other states. When the free city of Frankfort withdrew its approval of the Assembly, about one hundred and thirty-five delegates (mostly from Southern German states) went to Stuttgart. This "rump assembly" refused to end the struggle, and vowed
to continue the revolutionary movement. However, on 18 June, the Württemburg government expelled the delegates and thus ended the 1848-1849 assembly.

In the following report to Schwarzenberg on 1 April, the Ambassador noted his inability to understand exactly what Berlin wanted in Germany or how her policies were to be accomplished.²⁶ One constructive decision by Austria in April, arising from difficulties Vienna had in following indecisive Prussian policies, was Schwarzenberg's suggestion to send Count Rechberg to Berlin as his personal representative to the Prussian government. His instructions were to negotiate Berlin's approval of Vienna's dominant position in Germany and to obtain a general formula of Bund reform. Rechberg arrived at his temporary post on 10 April.²⁷ On 3 April, Berlin answered many of the questions in Prokesch-Osten's mind by sending a circular-note to the various German governments. Prussia proposed reforming the 1815 Bund by adding a constitution, a Reichstag for the people, and by sharing executive authority between herself and Austria. The expected Austrian response to the note reached Berlin on 8 April. The Austrian Prime Minister was upset that Vienna had not received a copy of the circular-note

²⁶ Prokesch-Osten, Aus den Briefen, p. 23.
²⁷ Deutsche Bund #10, Staatsarchiv, 12 April, 1849.
before the other states, and denounced the plan as another attempt to decrease Vienna's power in Germany. As Schwarzenberg correctly noted, the German princes were still the rulers of the Bund and only they, and not the Prussians nor the Nationalists at Frankfort, could reform the Bund. Vienna was not the only one to take note of this circular-note and the aggressive Prussian policy. The Russian Ambassador informed St. Petersburg of the note's contents and its explicit rejection by Vienna. In addition, Meyendorff wrote that certain leaders in Berlin were endeavoring to tie German nationalism to Prussian state interests. If this were done, then Prussia would be in a much stronger position vis-à-vis Austria in the struggle for German supremacy and could even endanger Russian interests.

Regardless of Austria's opposition to any Prussian reform plan, Radowitz was determined to attempt negotiations directly with Schwarzenberg. The new Prussian Foreign Minister decided to travel to Vienna in an effort to explain his reform program to the Prime Minister. If the two German Great Powers could reach an agreement, then the Austro-Prussian meeting would truly be a historic moment. Radowitz was completely sincere in his desire to end the disruptive

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28 Prokesch-Osten, Aus den Briefen, pp. 26-27.
29 Meyendorff, Ein russischer Diplomat, Vol. II, p.188.
rivalry between the two states by creating a united Germany although he did think in terms of Prussia leading Germany from within while Austria led from without. Actually by the spring of 1849, there was little chance Schwarzenberg would accept the Prussian proposal, but nothing could be lost in making the attempt. Radowitz felt confident since he regarded his proposal compatible with Bruck's concept of the empire of seventy million, which Schwarzenberg seemed to support. The only major difference appeared to be the question of equality between the two Powers, but Radowitz believed he could persuade Schwarzenberg to accept a modified position. Radowitz was anxious to join the energy of German nationalism to Prussian power to achieve complete unification. This connection between nationalism and Prussia's self interests was stronger in northern Germany, but Prussia was not the only state willing to use this alliance. In fact, the chief minister for Hanover, Peter von Struve, was also amenable, if in the process Hanover could annex some of the small German states. This willingness of Prussia and other northern states to use nationalism to increase their individual power was opposed by Austria. 

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30 Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 277.
31 Ibid., p. 290.
The conference between Radowitz and Schwarzenberg in Vienna produced no positive results. Schwarzenberg had been informed by Ambassador Prokesch-Osten of Prussia's plans prior to the conference, and the Prime Minister had decided not to accept them. The arguments put forth by Radowitz had been impressive: Germany finally could be united, the danger of civil war between the two Great Powers ended, the strength of both states increased, and the Revolutions of 1848 with its Frankfort Assembly completed. To accomplish these goals, Prussia was seeking only equality of leadership with Austria. Most of the negotiations were conducted between Radowitz and Prokesch-Osten who had returned to Vienna, but the philosophy of Austria's opposition was unmistakably Schwarzenberg's. The talks soon were transferred to Berlin, but by late May they had accomplished very little. Russia's Ambassador Meyendorff noted this lack of success, and compared the conference to earlier failures. With the discussions stalemated, three important middle states were asked to join the talks. The admission of Bavaria, Hanover, and Saxony quickly changed the negotiations from stalemated to complete failure. Bavaria rejected Radowitz's unification plan since Bavaria would lose much of her sovereignty.

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When Bavaria announced she would never accept the plan, Austria joined her in withdrawing from the conference. Prokesch-Osten stated that Vienna saw no reasons for continuing the discussions in view of Bavaria's complete rejection of Prussia's plan.33

The Prussian response to Austria's withdrawal caught Vienna unprepared. Austria had believed its withdrawal would force Prussia to admit defeat and end the conference, but Schwarzenberg had underestimated the determination of Radowitz—an error he did not repeat. Discussions among Prussia, Hanover, and Saxony continued, and on 26 May the three German states signed the Dreikaiserbund (three king's league) or as it was more commonly called—the Prussian Union. Since it was assumed that many other northern German states would join, the Union established a central authority to direct the basic foreign policies of the member states toward the completion of Radowitz's plan for unification. By late summer, Austria, Bavaria, and Württemberg were the only major German states in full opposition to the Union.34 The alliance establishing this Union was sent to the respective governments on 28 May, and eventually ratified in June of 1819. Although minor

33 Kraehe, A History of the German Confederation, pp. 10-12.
34 Holborn, History of Modern Germany, p. 92.
changes were demanded by Saxony and Hanover to protect certain vital interests, Prussia was only too happy to accept these changes. The only major attempt to revise the Union came in July when certain small states suggested the power of the central authority be reduced to allow a greater degree of autonomy to the individual Diets of the member states, but Prussia refused to accept the pro-offered changes. To Prussia, and especially to Radowitz, the Prussian Union was to be the instrument to defeat Austria and to obtain leadership in a united Germany.  

When Schwarzenberg was informed of the Prussian Union he immediately judged the Union was in direct violation of Article XI of the 1815 Bundestag Acts. This article prohibited any alliance among Bund members if that proposed alliance was directed against another member. In Schwarzenberg's opinion, the Union was obviously directed against Austria, and thus illegal. He accused Berlin of establishing the Union to obtain military support, and further accused Radowitz of preparing to use that military force in a war against Austria to gain the leadership of Germany.  

Radowitz countered Austria's diplomatic attack by arguing that the 1815 Bund and its laws had lapsed when

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the 1848 Revolutions occurred and when the Frankfort Assembly was formed. If the Bund were no longer in existence, then Prussia had every legal right to sign the alliance with Saxony and Hanover. However, Schwarzenberg reasoned that the Bund had been created by the princes of the German states and only they, and not a popular revolution, could dissolve the Bund. As for the argument that the Frankfort Assembly had replaced the Bund, the Prime Minister reminded Radowitz Vienna had never agreed that the Frankfort Assembly was legal or competent to change the Bund's laws. Therefore, the Bund was legally still in existence and its laws in effect. Austria, as president of the Bund, had the right and obligation to enforce the laws even if military force had to be employed. Here then was the crux of Austria's opposition to the Union, and the legal basis for the military threats against Prussia. This same type of legalistic reasoning would prove to be very successful in obtaining Russian support in the struggle against Prussia. In the final stages of the struggle however, the arguments of Vienna were proven correct—not because of their legal merit, but because of the diplomatic support and the pledged military support Russia offered Austria.

The legality of Schwarzenberg's arguments did little to change the direction of Prussian foreign policies. The

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37 Taylor, The Course of German History, p. 90.
establishment of the Union did not end the struggle for power within the Berlin cabinet which Prokesch-Osten often noted in his reports of June through September. Prime Minister Brandenburg, the leader of the more moderate wing in the Prussian government, wanted to follow a more traditional, pro-Austrian, conservative foreign policy while Radowitz headed the revolutionary, anti-Austrian wing. The Austrian Ambassador correctly noted in the report of 9 June that the apparent success of the Prussian Union had increased Radowitz's influence over Frederick William. The Foreign Minister had attempted to convince the King that Prussia could attain her highest degree of power and fulfill her rightful position as German leader only by defeating Austria. If, as Prokesch-Osten warned, the King ever reached full agreement with Radowitz's radical views, then the chances for an Austro-Prussian war would be greatly increased. Confronted by this possibility of war, the Berlin cabinet directed its attention toward Russia to ascertain St. Petersburg's thoughts concerning the intra-German struggle. Russia's Ambassador Meyendorff informed his government on 26 May that Brandenburg was considering sending an envoy to Russia to explain the objectives of Prussia's foreign policy. The person selected for this difficult diplomatic mission was the Prince of Prussia, the

38 Prokesch von Osten, _Aus den Briefen_, pp. 71-73, 91.
future William I. Since Tsar Nicholas I was planning to be in Warsaw in the summer of 1849, Brandenburg proposed to Meyendorff that Prince William meet with the Tsar. St. Petersburg was warned by Meyendorff that Prince William would probably attempt to obtain a Russian pledge of neutrality in the event of an Austro-Prussian war. Thus, the existence of the Union with its resulting increased fears of war would force Russia to assume a much more active role in the German question—a role which would eventually be most important in the temporary victory of Austria over Prussia.

Just as Prussia's vacillating foreign policy for Germany had caused problems in Berlin, it also presented problems for Vienna. Although Schwarzenberg was in full control of the direction of Austria's foreign policies, the absence of any single policy or leader in Berlin caused the Prime Minister to be somewhat hesitant in enforcing his Austrian policies. If, as it was the case, there were two opposing factions within the Prussian government, then an Austrian policy which was too strict and demanding might allow the anti-Austrian faction to gain control. On the other hand, an Austrian policy which was too loose and compromising might be interpreted as weakness and thus

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discredit the pro-Austrian faction while making the anti-
Austrian group too confident of Prussia's strength. The
problem which Schwarzenberg encountered was in deciding
how quickly to support his policies. Schwarzenberg, just
as Frederick William, was unable to decide who was the
actual leader of the Berlin cabinet. If Prime Minister
Brandenburg was the leader, then the enforcement of
Austrian objectives could be made less authoritarian and
slower. However, if Radowitz were the leader, then
Schwarzenberg had to act quickly and with sufficient
strength to obtain the desired control in Germany.

This evaluation of the situation in Berlin was
supported by the Russian Ambassador. In a report of 13
April, Meyendorff wrote that while Prokesch-Osten continued
his objections to any liberal solution of the German
problem, there existed within the Prussian cabinet a faction
which was pressuring Frederick William into accepting a
radical Prussian foreign policy against Austria even at the
cost of a complete diplomatic rupture with Vienna.\textsuperscript{40} Although the Prussian King was fully aware of the dangers
involved in permitting such an aggressive policy, it
appeared he was finally willing to take some of the risks.
Radowitz was attempting to convince the King the protection
of Prussia's vital interests demanded a strong policy to

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., pp. 186-187.
defeat all Austria's efforts to recover her sole leadership in Germany. This much Frederick William was prepared to grant, but he was also receiving warnings from Prime Minister Brandenburg that such an aggressive policy as advocated by Radowitz might force Vienna to declare war. The King had to decide whether Prussian interests in a united and nationalistic Germany led by Prussia were worth the serious risks of an intra-German war against Austria or even the possibility of an European conflict. Eventually by December of 1850, Frederick William decided Prussian interests were not worth the risk of military defeat by Austria, and perhaps Russia.

The pressures upon the Prussian King to support the proposed policy against Vienna did not reach fulfillment until Radowitz was appointed Foreign Minister in April. Nevertheless, Prokesch-Osten had judged in late March that the anti-Austrian faction within the Berlin cabinet was gaining control. The Ambassador viewed Radowitz's program as obviously anti-Austrian and even anti-Russian—in the pre-1848 sense. He warned that the revolutionary program of Radowitz would lead only to disgrace and defeat for Prussia. The same general conclusions had been reached

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41 Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 210-211.

by Schwarzenberg. In the dispatch of 22 April, the Prime Minister agreed with Prokesch-Osten in Berlin, and took the opportunity to explain his own opinions. Schwarzenberg wrote that he believed Prussia sincerely viewed herself as the legitimate German leader due to her role in the struggle against Napoleon I, and because Austria had too many interests outside of Germany. Prussia appeared to be accusing Austria of trying to become dominant in the Balkans at the expense of German national interests. This Prussian assumption of the right to lead Germany and to question the Austrian position in Europe had to be ended at all costs.\(^{43}\)

By May, Schwarzenberg had decided Radowitz was in control of the new, aggressive Prussian foreign policy, and thus Austria had to increase her opposition to the Prussian attempts to gain a liberal reform of the Bund. This decision prompted the sending of Graf Bernhard Rechberg, the future Austrian foreign minister, to the Frankfort Assembly with instructions to push Austria's program of Bund reform through the Assembly, and to prevent Radowitz's program from being adopted. Schwarzenberg believed he had to send Rechberg, believing the original Austrian envoy, Schmerling, was unable to handle the increased diplomatic demands of stronger Austrian policies. With Radowitz as Foreign Minister, Vienna could expect the Prussian delegates at

\(^{43}\)Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 119.
Frankfort to increase their pressure for support of Berlin's policies. Therefore, Schwarzenberg wanted an envoy at the Assembly who would be fully capable of handling this pressure while protecting Austria's interests. Rechberg appeared to be able to fulfill this duty better than Schmerling. 43

Thus by June, Schwarzenberg was in direct conflict with Radowitz over Prussian ideas of German unification, over the use of nationalism to further Prussian interests, and over the legality of the Prussian Union. He had not expected, of course, that Berlin would have given up its ideas of unification, turned its back upon nationalism, or dissolved the Union; but Austria had to oppose these policies even if Vienna could not enforce its own position until a later date. However, the Prime Minister did have one last card to play against Prussia, and this involved the Habsburg Emperor. Francis Joseph was persuaded to write Frederick William on 21 May of 1849 in an effort to have the King withdraw his support of Radowitz and his radical programs. Francis Joseph informed Frederick William that Austria found the new aggressive foreign policies of Prussia very objectionable, and would oppose them. The Emperor argued that Radowitz's plans for a liberal and nationalistic settlement of the German question was an

43Srbik, Deutsche Einheit, p. 442.
utopian dream and completely in violation of the sovereign rights of the German rulers. In conclusion, Francis Joseph warned Berlin that Vienna might find it necessary to use force to prevent the fulfillment of Radowitz's programs. Thus, the diplomatic stage was set for the next developments in the Austro-Prussian struggle for supremacy in Germany—developments which would lead to Olmütz and Dresden and to Prussia's alleged defeat.

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Kiszling, p. 120. "Des weitem meinte der Könige, werden durch den Berliner Plan, die einheitstaatlichen Utopien von Gagern und Comp zu Grabe getragen und die Souveränität der Könige und Fürsten durch das Gesetz und meinen starken Arm gesichert."
CHAPTER III

FROM MAY, 1849 (THE PRUSSIAN UNION) TO MAY, 1850 (THE END OF THE INTERIM)

With the inauguration of the Prussian Union, Radowitz had won an important, but limited, victory over Schwarzenberg. Even though the Austrian Prime Minister had not believed Austria's opposition to the Union would cause its failure, the Union's rapid approval by many northern and central German states caught Schwarzenberg unprepared. Berlin continued to argue that Prussia was employing the German national sentiment solely to unify the German states, but Vienna continued to reject this argument. In Schwarzenberg's opinion, the linking of Prussia's vital interests with the national movement was but a continuation of the threats of 1848. The Revolutions had attacked Austria's primary role in the Bund, while the Prussian Union attempted to decrease Austria's power and status by establishing Prussian-Austrian equality. To Radowitz, however, this connection was not revolutionary as Schwarzenberg claimed, but realistic and progressive. The destiny of the German people demanded unity and a major national state. Austria, in opposing both unity and nationalism, appeared more
interested in conserving traditional institutions than in the future of the German people.\(^1\) Thus, Prussia could more easily claim to be the only progressive state, one which would fulfill "Germany's manifest destiny." At no point in the beginning of his ministry did Radowitz deny Austria an opportunity to help achieve this destiny. The Berlin cabinet desired that Prussia and Austria strive together to build a united Germany. However, since Austria appeared determined to oppose this unification simply because it required Austrian-Prussian equality, Berlin prepared to accomplish German unification in spite of Vienna.

If the Berlin cabinet sincerely desired Austro-Prussian co-operation, it appeared Gagern and supporting Prussian delegates at Frankfort wished to destroy any possibility of co-operation. The May reports from Graf Rechberg at Frankfort bristled with remarks against the pro-Prussian leader. Although Radowitz was softening momentarily his opposition to Austria— the Prussian Union notwithstanding— Gagern was engaged in attacking the Austrian Empire openly and continuously. On 1 May, Rechberg sent a copy of the Reichsversammlung (Protokoll no. 208) to Vienna. In this assembly report, Prussian delegates had called for the Austrian acceptance of a German-Austrian Bund and the

\(^1\)Heinrich Friedjung, Österreich von 1848 bis 1860 (Stuttgart, 1912), Vol. II, p. 4.
permanent separation of Austria from the German states. Awareness of this demand was not limited to the delegates; it was deliberately sent to the Frankfort newspapers for publication. The Prussian delegates' ploy in attempting to gain more public support was not new, but the insistent and obstinate language particularly irritated Vienna. Three days later Schwarzenberg received from Rechberg a copy of a Prussian pro-memorandum which again demanded complete separation of Austria from the Bund, sole leadership in the new Bund for Prussia, and a central executive authority for a German-Austrian confederation with the two major German states sharing power equally.\(^1\) Rechberg suggested that Gagern developed this latest diplomatic attack on his own initiative, but that his basis for the attack was Berlin's circular-note of 28 March.\(^2\)

This anti-Austrianism at Frankfort reached a temporary climax on 14 May when the Frankfort Assembly witnessed one of its most bitter, violent clashes between Prussian and Austrian supporters. Rechberg warned Schwarzenberg that a coalition of delegates organized by Gagern could be successful in its program given the strong feelings against

\(^2\)Deutsche Bund, #11, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1849), 1 May, 1849. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Bund, Staatsarchiv.

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^4\)Deutsche Bund #11, Staatsarchiv, 8 May, 1849.
Austria. In his 15 May dispatch, Rechberg also included a copy of Brandenburg's note which informed the Austrian envoy that Frederick William recently had approved paragraph one of the Assembly's 17 October proposal which called for the separation of the Austrian Empire from the Bund. In Rechberg's opinion, Radowitz was gradually winning over the Prussian King to his radical views. For further evidence, Rechberg referred to the Frankfurter Oberpostamts-Zeitung of 17 May, 1849, where it was noted that the Assembly had approved Prussia's leadership of the German national movement, and had accepted the 14 May mandate of Frederick William which called for the realization of German national unity under Prussian leadership. While Vienna prepared its response to Prussian actions at Frankfort, Berlin readied its next offensive--the Prussian "white book" of 26 May, 1849.

While Rechberg was confronted by Prussian diplomatic moves at Frankfort, Schwarzenberg was beseeched with reports from Prokesch-Osten in Berlin concerning the Prussian Union and Radowitz. Vienna had rejected Berlin's rights to form this alliance citing Article XI of the 1815 Bund laws, which Austria claimed prohibited any alliance directed

5 Ibid., 15 May, 1849.
6 Ibid., 17 May, 1849.
against another Bund member. Radowitz in turn rejected Austria's argument claiming the Bund laws had expired with the outbreak of revolutions in 1848. The Prussian Foreign Minister maintained Prussia had a right to safeguard her sovereignty by contracting any alliance designed to protect Prussian interests. This approach was also used by Prime Minister Brandenburg in his discussions with Prokesch-Osten. The Ambassador's reports of 4 and 11 June presented a clear, brief explanation of Berlin's interpretation of Article XI. In them Brandenburg firmly held that any German state, even Austria, had the sovereign right to form any alliance in protection of its interests; this was the expressed purpose of the State. Furthermore, the Prussian Prime Minister in a note to Ambassador Bernstorff argued that Berlin's authority to form the Union was derived directly from Prussia's sovereign status in 1849, and was not bound by the Bund laws prior to that date.

Berlin's determination was matched by Vienna's. Schwarzenberg, although preoccupied with the Hungarian rebellion, never lost sight of the Prussian position. One particular dispatch from Schwarzenberg to Prokesch-Osten took note of the Ambassador's discussions with Brandenburg.

7Preussia Archiv, III, #32, Haus-, Hof-, und Staats­archiv (Vienna, 1849), 4 and 11 June, 1849. Hereafter re­ferred to as Preussia Archiv, Staatsarchiv.

8Ibid.
regarding Article XI, but the Austrian Prime Minister re-
affirmed the validity of the Bund's laws and directed the
Ambassador to deliver another verbal protest to Berlin.
Prokesch-Osten did protest on 15 June, but was rewarded
with no change in Prussia's stand. None, however, was
really expected since the protest was more of a formality
than a serious attempt to change Berlin's views. During
a meeting with both Radowitz and Brandenburg, Prokesch-
Osten noticed that the Prime Minister showed a sincere
interest in explaining the legality of Berlin's position
while the Foreign Minister appeared unconcerned with
Vienna's protests over the legal points.

An elaborate explanation by Prussia of its position
on the Bund and the Prussian Union was published as the
Prussian "white book" of 26 May. Rechberg sent a copy
of this document to Schwarzenberg on 19 June. Signed by
both Brandenburg and Radowitz, it contained nine essential
parts. First came a brief discussion of Prussia's circular-
note of 28 April which had called for a continuation of
the German national movement of 1848, a new central
authority for the Bund, and Prussian leadership in the
"new Germany" and the Bund. Following this background to

9Ibid., 15 June, 1849 and Preussia Archiv, #34,
Staatsarchiv, 11 June, 1849.

10Ibid., 15 June, 1849.
the establishment of the Prussian Union, was the final protocol of 26 May by which the Union was formed. Berlin's arguments for it came next and were essentially the same as those Brandenburg expressed to Prokesch-Osten in early May. The Union founders then listed the powers and aims of the Prussian Union—the primary aim being the realization of German unity. The fifth and sixth parts of the document dealt entirely with Berlin's position regarding Austria's rights, the national movement, and Vienna's opposition to Prussia's reform suggestions. Prussia's public position was not different from her private explanations to Vienna, but special attention was given to answering each objection Vienna had made. The Prussian document was clearly intended to increase public support for the Prussian Union, rather than to change Vienna's views. It also served Radowitz well in opposing Vienna, and it drew more German states into the Union.

By the end of August, 1849, the Prussian Union had been accepted by a majority of German states, thereby putting Austria into conflict with the majority. Radowitz repeatedly stressed this point and suggested that if Austria remained determined to place her interests above

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11 Ibid., 19 June, 1849, pp. 1-45.
12 Ibid., pp. 71-105.
13 Ibid., pp. 109-117.
the common interests of the German states, then these sovereign states had the right to remove Austria's opposition—even if this required the use of military force.\textsuperscript{14} This argument was accepted by the moderate members of the Berlin cabinet and by the majority of delegates at Frankfort. For these it had been more important for the German states to be unified than it was for Austria to maintain her "historic rights." This argument was totally unacceptable to Schwarzenberg and Austria. Schwarzenberg was not primarily a "German" diplomat, but the Prime Minister of an Austrian Empire whose duty it was to protect the power, interests, and rights of that multinational State. Regardless of what Radowitz, the Prussian Union, and the national movement demanded, Schwarzenberg had to place Austria's vital interests before any others; to have done otherwise would have been unrealistic.

The formation of the Union did not end the conflict between Austria and Prussia any more than it ended the struggles within the Prussian cabinet. Although Radowitz and his policies were extremely popular with the liberals, some conservative government members viewed Radowitz as an irresponsible, radical Foreign Minister whose policies

would continue the 1848 Revolution and might even result in an Austro-Prussian war, which they believed Prussia would lose. This view was shared by many minor diplomats and Junkers— even by the future unifier of Germany, Otto von Bismarck. Since the conservatives in the government looked to Brandenburg as their defender, his position in the cabinet struggles was anything but enviable. As Minister-President (or Prime Minister), he was responsible for all cabinet policies although he had little actual control over formulating foreign policy. Basically, Brandenburg agreed with Radovitz on the need to increase Prussia's power and even on the desirability of a united Germany. However, he broke with his fellow minister over unification if that policy necessitated war against Austria. In Brandenburg's opinion, the unification of Germany by Prussia was not worth the risks to other Prussian interests. If Prussia were defeated—and the Prime Minister believed this could easily happen—then Prussia could lose everything she had accomplished since 1809.  

Brandenburg's opinion of Radovitz's program was well known outside Berlin government circles. Prokesch-Osten reported in late May that Brandenburg was quite sincere in his opposition to Radovitz because of the dangers inherent

16 Ibid., p. 15.
in his program. The Austrian Ambassador believed the Prussian Prime Minister was completely determined not to surrender his leadership of the cabinet to Radowitz, but to retain as much control over Prussian foreign policy as possible. In a meeting between Brandenburg and Prokesch-Osten, both diplomats agreed the movement for German unity should not be made the excuse for an armed conflict for Austro-Prussian leadership. Schwarzenberg was pleased with the Prime Minister's firm stand, but was fully aware that Brandenburg might be unable to prevent such a war if Frederick William fully supported Radowitz's program. Brandenburg's dilemma was also noted by the Russian Ambassador in Berlin. Meyendorff reported to St. Petersburg that the Prime Minister's role in the struggle could be viewed as that of restraining Radowitz. The conservatives hoped that Brandenburg could influence Frederick William enough to modify his policies and eventually to eliminate Radowitz. These cabinet struggles must also be viewed as a continuation of Berlin's inability to decide on one leader and policy—a weakness which had beset Prussia since 1848. This fact imperiled Radowitz's program, for


no time in his ministry was he ever free of strong opposition within the cabinet. His ultimate strength depended upon Frederick William's support, which was often uncertain due to the King's indecision.19

Although the disputes over the Prussian Union and related German problems were not forgotten during July and August, the immediate attention of both governments was directed toward other matters. Prussia was concerned with the short-lived Danish war and the occupation of Schleswig by Prussian troops, which Berlin portrayed as a noble response to the request of Schleswig Germans for Prussian protection. However, Prokesch-Osten in early July questioned the true motives of the Prussian action though Brandenburg denied any hidden motives behind the Prussian move.20 Meanwhile, the difficulties over Prussia's Schleswig occupation and the Danish War did not lessen Radowitz's hostility toward Austria, but rather increased the bitterness. During the last week of August Schwarzenberg received three separate reports concerning Radowitz's increasingly hostile attitude. The first came from Rechberg who had been in Berlin briefly to confer with Prokesch-Osten and Prussian cabinet members. Both Rechberg and Radowitz had assumed a hard line for their

20Preussia Archiv, #33, Staatsarchiv, 4 July, 1849.
respective governments on the full range of German problems. The Prussian Foreign Minister refused to accept Austria's objections to the Prussian Union, while Rechberg continued to protest that the Union was illegal and its aims revolutionary. Two further reports were sent by Prokesch-Osten, who recorded one of Radowitz's most violent attacks on Austria. Austria had forfeited, claimed Radowitz, any alleged "historic rights" when she failed to protect and free German states from Napoleon's tyranny. Moreover the popular and now legal Revolutions of 1848 had demonstrated the people's will to end the 1815 Bund and its laws. On another occasion Radowitz praised the German national movement, Prussia's ability to "save" the German states when Austria failed, Prussia's right to lead the "new Germany," and at the same time denounced Austria's opposition to the national movement. He ended his speech with a warning that war with Austria might be necessary.

While Radowitz was busy delivering his tirade against Austria and attempting to find diplomatic support for Prussia's actions in Schleswig, Schwarzenberg was occupied with ending the Hungarian Rebellion. Although the struggle against Prussia was one of the most important, if not the

21 Deutsche Bund, #11, Staatsarchiv, 22 August, 1849.
22 Preussia Archiv, #33, Staatsarchiv, 26 and 27 August, 1849.
primary diplomatic matter Schwarzenberg had to solve, his most vital and immediate concern was the military defeat of Hungarian rebel forces. When Vienna realized she required help in putting down the rebellion, she began to look for assistance. Since Austria, for diplomatic reasons, could not ask Prussia or the Bund for military aid, Schwarzenberg was compelled to request Russian aid. Tsar Nicholas I was quite willing to assist a fellow monarch in defeating the rebellion especially since it was in such dangerous proximity to Russia. The advance of these Russian troops settled the fate of the Hungarian Rebellion even though the rebels continued the struggle for a short time longer. Vienna took careful note of the advance and initial successes by Commanding General Paskieievich, and viewed the minor but regular victories as foretelling the demise of the rebellion and of Kossuth. A military convention between Austria and Russia was signed on 10 June permitting Russian military leaders to act as temporary agents of the Austrian government while they occupied large sections of Hungary; Schwarzenberg preferred that the Russian commanders enforce Austrian laws and not

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23 Ministiral Protokoll #1990, part 1, section 2058, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1849), Convention of 10 June, 1849. Hereafter referred to as Protokoll, Staatsarchiv.

24 Protokoll, #1990, Staatsarchiv, 15 June, 1849.
establish their own. Even with this precautionary convention, Vienna could not always depend on the generals to follow Austrian laws or the convention—Hungarian rebel leaders who surrendered, for example, were not always returned by the Russians.

With the Rebellion ended, Schwarzenberg once again turned his full attention toward problems with Prussia. On 9 September, Francis Joseph, Frederick William, and Frederick Augustus of Saxony met at Pillnitz to discuss the Austro-Prussian dispute. Radowitz reconfirmed Prussia's desire to reform the Bund and suggested that the Prussian Union was the best instrument to accomplish the needed reforms. Schwarzenberg reiterated his opposition and portrayed the Union as dangerous to the sovereignty of the small and middle German states. Though he seldom personally involved himself in these affairs, Francis Joseph entered the discussions strongly supporting the views of his Prime Minister. The Pillnitz meeting ended with no positions changed. It appeared another impasse had been reached, but a suggestion by the Prussian Ambassador in Vienna ended the stalemate and offered new

25 Protokoll, #2058, Staatsarchiv, 21 June, 1849.
hopes for a settlement.

On 30 September, Bernstorff suggested that a compromise was possible. Since the Pillnitz meeting had failed to settle anything, and since both Austria and Prussia wanted to prevent any further deterioration in their relations; Bernstorff suggested the two Great German Powers co-rule in the Bund during an Interim period while questions regarding Bund reform were taken up. Bernstorff in offering this suggestion, was perhaps influenced by a growing anti-Prussian attitude in Russia. Prokesch-Osten noted in his 13 September report that both Ambassador Meyendorff and Foreign Minister Count Nesselrode were becoming increasingly irritated with Radowitz and the Prussian Union. Both Russian diplomats objected to the public anti-Austrian policy of Radowitz which blocked any Austro-Prussian accord. The Austrian Ambassador believed Russia was beginning to view the Austrian position more favorably, but St. Petersburg officially remained silent.27

This compromise idea was certainly not original with Bernstorff since earlier delegates at Frankfort had formulated a similar plan. Prokesch-Osten's report of 7 August had contained a Reichs Commission's report which listed

27 Preussia Archiv, #33, Staatsarchiv, 13 September, 1849.
two possible compromises. The first solution, the "Frankfurter Projekt," called for Austria and Prussia to accept joint Interim rule until 26 May, 1850—the date when the Prussian Union was to expire. The new executive was to be entrusted with the powers of the Bund's presidency, to consider all reforms for the Bund, and to act jointly to enforce Bund laws. The second version, the "Preussischer Projekt," contained the same general provisions, but also Prussia's declaration that any agreement to an Interim did not deprive Prussia of her sovereign rights—i.e., that the Prussian Union would continue to function during the Interim period.²⁸ In his 30 September report, Prokesch-Osten noted a major softening in Prussia's attitude, and concluded that an Austro-Prussian agreement could now be reached quickly.²⁹

Berlin accepted the proposal since it would allow Radowitz the Prussian Union and the possibility to increase its membership. Schwarzenberg, also accepted the plan since it would afford him the necessary time to consolidate Austria's recent victories in Italy and Hungary. The Prime Minister did not view the sharing of any Bund authority during the Interim as signifying Austro-Prussian

²⁸Ibid., 7 August, 1849.
²⁹Preussia Archiv, #34, Staatsarchiv, 30 September, 1849.
equality. By mutual agreement, the Interim was to last from 30 September until 1 May, 1850. By that time, it was hoped, Austro-Prussian differences would be resolved.30

While Schwarzenberg was concerned with internal affairs of the Austrian Empire, Radowitz was preparing to strike another blow against Austria's "historic rights." On 12 October, the Prussian Foreign Minister proposed that the Prussian Union be renamed the Deutsche Union. Radowitz wanted the member states to ratify the new Union as the "holding organ" for the 1815 Bund until the final reforms of the Bund could be passed. Since Prussia and Austria had already agreed to share authority during the Interim period, Berlin proposed that Prussia represent the Prussian Union members while Austria represent the remaining Bund members.31 This diplomatic end-play caught Schwarzenberg unprepared, and he demanded that Bernstorff explain Radowitz's motives. The Ambassador, however, was unable to answer Schwarzenberg's charges for Berlin had not informed him of the proposal prior to its announcement. Schwarzenberg was upset at this latest Prussian action, since he had assumed that when Radowitz had accepted the Interim he would

31 Friedrich Meinecke, Radowitz und die deutsche Revolution (Berlin, 1913), pp. 334-335.
do nothing to endanger the temporary Austro-Prussian agreement. 32 With no explanation from Bernstorff, the Prime Minister informed Berlin that he viewed the new Prussian proposal as contrary to the spirit of the Interim accord. Austria also accused Berlin of being "arrogant and presumptuous" in assuming Prussia, rather than Austria, represented the German Volksgeist as Radowitz had claimed. 33

In a report of 29 October, Prokesch-Osten informed Schwarzenberg that Austria's accusations and objections had been rejected by Berlin. Radowitz moreover, told the Ambassador the Bund had to be divided in two in order that both Great Powers could safeguard their special interests. 34 He claimed a splitting of the Bund would entail only a minor decrease in Austria's power, but represented the best possible reform. As expected, Berlin's proposals were not accepted by Vienna.

The first major problem which arose after the Interim accord had been signed resulted from Austria's attempt to bring her entire Empire into the Bund. This involved the political-economic plan of Minister Bruck, which has already been discussed. 35 When Schwarzenberg first hinted of

32 Ibid., p. 334.
33 Ibid., p. 337.
34 Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, pp. 98-99.
35 See above, Chapter I.
Austria's intentions, the Interim accord had not yet been signed. The Prime Minister had informed Prussia unofficially on 6 August that Austria's future policy might encompass the establishment of an empire of seventy million. However, Schwarzenberg delayed declaring this policy until Prussia had signed the Interim agreement. In Schwarzenberg's opinion, Austria had made a sizeable concession to Berlin by agreeing to share the executive authority of the Bund during that Interim period. Consequently Schwarzenberg believed Berlin would concede to Bruck's plan for a Mittel-Europa. In discussions with Bernstorff the Prime Minister explained what benefits the plan would hold for both the Austrian Empire and the German states. He sought to gain Bernstorff's support and then to manoeuvre the Prussian cabinet into acceptance. Bernstorff, however, refused to approve the proposal, although he did inform Berlin of the Austrian plan. Radowitz, of course, was aware that Prussia's sharing of Bund authority during the Interim was only a temporary victory, worth far less to Berlin than implementation of the Bruck plan would be to Vienna. Berlin chose to ignore Schwarzenberg's overtures, in hope of delaying decision on the proposal until the Interim had elapsed.

Radowitz and the Berlin cabinet refused to discuss the Austrian plan also because Prussia was more concerned with problems of the Union. Since Schwarzenberg still refused to accept the Union's legality, Berlin felt obliged
to make another formal presentation of its views to Vienna hoping the Interim accord had modified Austrian objections. Bernstorff in early November was instructed to explain the Prussian position in personal talks with the Prime Minister. In these discussions and in those with Prokesch-Osten in Berlin, the Prussian Ambassador held to the argument that every sovereign state had certain vital rights in the Bund. In order to protect these rights, Prussia had found it necessary to form a defensive alliance directed against any state which threatened Prussia's interests. Bernstorff emphasized that the creation of the Prussian Union was a diplomatic, not a military, alliance, and therefore a legitimate act for any Bund member. In his reports, Prokesch-Osten wrote that he felt Bernstorff's arguments were justified, but also noted he believed them to be incomplete. The Austrian Ambassador also suggested that the Union's purpose was not primarily to protect Prussia's interests from any threat. Rather, it was to oppose Austria's authority and position within the Bund, and thus, in this sense, did violate Article XI of the Bund's laws.

Radowitz's primary foreign policy objective during the early months of the Interim was to persuade more Bund

37 Ibid., p. 103.
states to join the Union, thereby increasing the pressure on Vienna. The position of Bavaria was vital to the Prussian plan. Since Bavaria was generally regarded the most important middle-sized kingdom, the third strongest German state, and leader of the southern states, the inclusion of Bavaria in the Union would almost completely isolate Austria. If this were accomplished, then Austria might be forced to accept the Union and equality with Prussia as a permanent policy. If Austria refused, then Radowitz was prepared to use the enlarged Union to attain Kleindeutschland. To Radowitz's dismay, Bavaria steadfastly refused to join the Union because she feared, with good cause, that her own interests would be disregarded by Prussia. Consequently, Radowitz failed to advance the Union's goal of German unification. However, more serious trouble within the Union began in January when Radowitz called Union delegates to Erfurt to write a constitution for the member states. Hanover and Saxony decided that the Prussia Union had not accomplished its goals and had failed to persuade all the major German states to join; the two states withdrew from the Union in February. Both states were also under intense pressure from Austria to withdraw in order that they not become involved in an Austro-Prussian war on Berlin's side. Although Radowitz was able to have the remaining Erfurt delegates approve a constitution, the damage had been done with the withdrawal of Saxony and
Hanover. By the end of February, 1850, the Prussian Union had been reduced to Prussia and her close allies in northern Germany; Radowitz's diplomatic leverage vis-a-vis Schwarzenberg had also been reduced. 38

According to Radowitz's new plans a formal establishment of the Union as the northern half of the Bund was arranged for 15 June. Because of the withdrawal of the two states, and a further delay in the promulgation of the Union's constitution, and increased struggles within the Berlin cabinet; the desired establishment of the new Bund structure was postponed until 15 October. This delay did not change Schwarzenberg's attitude on the Union since he already viewed it as somewhat of a northern Bund. Any attempted transformation of the Prussian Union into a northern German Bund was a clear violation of the law even if the original Prussian Union could be viewed as a defensive alliance and not in violation of the law. The question unanswered in February was whether Radowitz would retreat if his policies threatened to produce war. 39 The answer was greatly dependent upon the outcome of the Brandenburg-Radowitz struggle and Frederick William's attitude as well as any action taken by Schwarzenberg and Austria. 40

39 Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, pp. 137-140.
40 See below, Chapter IV.
Long before Austria's demand for a full meeting of the Bund members was issued, cabinet conflicts in Berlin had been renewed with even greater intensity than before the Interim went into effect. It was this virtually permanent split within the Prussian government which played so important—if not the decisive—part in determining Prussia's response to the demand for the full Bund meeting. The moderate-conservative struggle for control of the government and Prussia's foreign policies had not ended when Radowitz was appointed Foreign Minister in April, 1849. Neither had the liberal-moderates attained a final victory when the Prussian Union was formed. Although it was true the liberals and moderates had won important battles over the conservatives and had increased their power and influence, Frederick William had not been fully converted to Radowitz's views, nor had Prime Minister Brandenburg been removed from his position of authority. However, it appeared that Radowitz's cabinet supporters were in the majority, and were determined to use their temporary superiority to accomplish their goals. In his reports to St. Petersburg, Meyendorff noted that the crisis within the cabinet was becoming more serious. Brandenburg and the conservatives were accusing Frederick William of weakness due to his support of Radowitz, while the Foreign Minister was demanding even more support from the King.
In another dispatch, the Ambassador wrote that the conservative forces were in the minority, but not yet close to defeat. The anti-Radowitz forces received an unexpected boost when the newest cabinet member, Otto von Manteuffel, joined the struggle. Manteuffel, soon to be Prime Minister, was fully prepared to protect Prussia's interests, but was unwilling to press for unification of Germany if this policy necessitated war against Austria.\textsuperscript{41}

This cabinet crisis increased after Hanover and Saxony withdrew from the Prussian Union, and after the proposed Union constitution was delayed due to demands for changes from rulers of the member states. The obvious failures of the Union produced an attack by conservatives upon Radowitz. They claimed his grandiose plans for using the Union to unify Germany and to increase Prussian power had failed, and they suggested it was necessary to end the radical program and to return to a policy of Austro-Prussian co-operation. This newest attack was led by Manteuffel, and ultimately allowed Brandenburg to withdraw from the front line of the struggles, assuming a position as mediator within the cabinet. Brandenburg had agreed with many of the Foreign Minister's ideas, such as


\textsuperscript{42}Ibid., p. 262.
increasing Prussian power and the desirability of uni-
ification, but had consistently opposed Radowitz's methods
out of fear they might produce war. Prokesch-Osten informed
Vienna of the King's call for a full cabinet meeting on
30 April to discuss the German problem. The Ambassador
reported the arguments of Radowitz and Manteuffel had not
changed anyone's opinion. However, Radowitz was still able
to persuade a majority to vote a limited approval of his
goals and methods and to ask the King to accept them. In
defiance of this majority, Brandenburg tabled the vote
and the request. The King was unable to decide which side
to support, so nothing was accomplished at the meeting. 43
With the Berlin cabinet once again in the midst of a major
struggle, Austria increased pressure on Prussia by issuing
a call for a full meeting of the Bund to consider Bund
reforms, the end of the Interim, and the future of the
Prussian Union.

The decisive attitude of Russia concerning the Austro-
Prussian struggle, the possibility of war, and the intra-
cabinet disputes in Berlin remained as an omnipresent factor
in the final solution to the German problem. With the two
German Great Powers unable to solve their problems, and with
the institutional conflict between the Interim and the

Prussian Union; Austria and Prussia steadily approached the reality of a totally needless war--this was especially true during the period from August to October. This danger of war forced the two states to conclude the Interim agreement and would also bring about the meetings at Olmütz and Dresden. The unwillingness of both sides to make meaningful policy concessions had forstalled any final settlement, and the same policies were continued because neither side was willing to suffer a diplomatic defeat and the associated loss of prestige. In the final analysis, war between the two states was avoided only when Prussia realized a diplomatic defeat--however distasteful--was more realistic a decision than a military defeat. The latter possibility appeared assured if Russia supported Austria as expected. However, before Olmütz occurred, the tortuous paths of failure had to be traveled.
CHAPTER IV

FROM THE END OF THE INTERIM (MAY, 1850) TO THE OLMÜTZ MEETING (NOVEMBER, 1850)

In September of 1849, Austria and Prussia had agreed to the Interim accord in hopes they could bury their differences and accomplish the necessary Bund reforms. Vienna had accepted the continuation of the Prussian Union during this period, while agreeing that Prussia should share executive authority of the Bund with Austria. Since Vienna's objections to the Union's continuation were well-known to Berlin, Bernstorff was instructed to meet with Schwarzenberg to discuss the various pertinent questions. On 12 April, the Prussian Ambassador tried to persuade Schwarzenberg that the Union was a legitimate alliance of German states necessary to protect the vital interests of Prussia. The Austrian Prime Minister informed Bernstorff that Austria was deeply concerned with the position of the small states under Prussian influence. Vienna feared the lesser states which had joined the Union would have no real part in decisions affecting their welfare. Schwarzenberg then suggested the two states invite all the Bund members to a special meeting of the plenum at Frankfort
to discuss problems of the Bund. Vienna wanted this assembly to last six months and to have the final authority in establishing the structure of a new Bund.\(^1\) Bernstorff rejected this suggestion which implied that Austria would remain the primary member. Instead, he proposed that Austria and Prussia form a new executive Interim to settle questions of Bund reform before a plenum was called. By this plan, Prussia would still enjoy the executive authority with Austria. Vienna, however, had decided to refuse any renewal of the Interim and to invite the Bund members to a plenum regardless of Berlin's objections.\(^2\)

After meeting with Bernstorff, Schwarzenberg wrote the Austrian Ambassador in Hamburg, Graf Kützow, that no agreement had been reached with Prussia. Austria remained opposed to Prussia's suggestion for a new executive authority or an extension of the Interim. However, Schwarzenberg did note that he was willing to allow a congress of Bund members to extend the Interim for a short period, but completely opposed to a bilateral agreement with Prussia to accomplish the same end. If Vienna could obtain a Diet composed of the German princes' representatives, then Austria would be assured of maintaining her sole position.

\(^1\)Friedrich Meinecke, Radowitz und die deutsche Revolution (Berlin, 1913), pp. 410-412.
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 412.
of authority in the executive. This line of thought matched the advice Schwarzenberg had received from the pre-1848 symbol of European conservatism, Prince Clemens von Metternich. It was the opinion of the former Austrian leader that Vienna had to block all Berlin's pretentions to power, but not to destroy the Bund in so doing. Metternich had advised Schwarzenberg not to renew the sharing of executive power with Berlin, but he also pointed out that a bad defeat for Prussia was also inadvisable, since her diplomatic and military support might be needed by Vienna in the future—much the same reasoning Bismarck used regarding Austria after 1866.

On 19 April Schwarzenberg sent a circular-note to the German states announcing a full meeting of the Diet at Frankfort. Since Austria still held the office of presidency, Vienna claimed she had the right to issue such a call. In the past such meetings had always been called only after agreement with Prussia, but on this occasion Prussia was not consulted. The Austrian historian, Frejdung, regarded this as a diplomatic power play by Schwarzenberg designed to force Prussia to accept Austria's dominant

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3Ibid., pp. 414-415.

position within the Bund and to accept her ideas for Bund reform. Certainly, Schwarzenberg was well aware of the continuing problem of leadership within the Berlin cabinet. It was entirely possible that the call for a plenum also was intended to force Prussia to dissolve the Prussian Union and renounce her ideas of German nationalism. If this reasoning was correct, then the divided leadership in Berlin played into Schwarzenberg's hands. Vienna believed Prussia to be incapable of strong resistance, and thus was willing to take advantage of this assumed weakness. When informed of the Austrian note, Bernstorff met with Schwarzenberg to explain Berlin's objections. The Ambassador contended that the 30 September Interim agreement required that both states corule, and that Austria had no right to call a Bund meeting without the prior approval of Prussia. Schwarzenberg countered with the argument that Austria had always had this power as sole president of the Bund and that the Interim accord did not deprive her of this right.

A different interpretation of the Austrian note was reached by Hans Holborn, who believed Austria was willing to allow Prussia a great degree of influence and authority.

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5 Friedjung's opinion as repeated by Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 411-415.
6 Ibid., p. 416.
in northern half of the Bund—how could Austria really prevent this—and was willing to co-operate with Berlin to establish a reformed Bund. Holborn contended that it was the refusal of Radowitz and Frederick William to renounce plans for unification and nationalism which forced Schwarzenberg to move against Prussia. The 19 April note can also be viewed both as a means to apply pressure upon Prussia to end the Union and as a method of gaining diplomatic support from Russia. Nicholas I did not support the "liberal and nationalistic" ideas of Radowitz, but certainly would support a return to the conservatism of the 1815 Bund. Because of Austria's policies and the problems between the Bund and Prussia over Holstein, Russia was becoming more impressed with the Austrian position. In a letter to the Prince of Prussia Schwarzenberg asked for Austro-Prussian co-operation in building a new conservative Bund. The Prime Minister wrote he could not discuss surrendering Austria's presidential rights, but might be willing to consider a continual sharing of the executive authority at the plenum. Schwarzenberg suggested that problems between the two states could be settled easily by agreements between Berlin and Vienna—assuming that Prussia drop Radowitz's programs. Since this letter was

9Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 433.
followed by an official four point proposal asking for the end of the Union, hope for an agreement collapsed since Berlin was not ready to surrender the Union. Berlin received the proposal of 2 July and rejected it without serious debate. Radowitz claimed Prussia's vital interests would be endangered by agreeing to the proposal; he feared his concepts of unification and nationalism would be lost. Berlin then extended the Prussian Union from 15 July, when it was to dissolve, until 15 October, 1850. Austria was left with no other realistic choice but to obtain Russia's active support and to renew support for the Bund through the plenum.

On three separate occasions thereafter Schwarzenberg complained about Radowitz and Berlin's attitude toward the Bund. In letters to Prokesch-Osten, the Prime Minister reviewed his brief discussions with Bernstorff, in which all the major problems confronting the two states had been touched upon. In the last letter Schwarzenberg was especially insistant that Prokesch-Osten repeat Austria's protests to Berlin regarding Berlin's refusal to negotiate seriously to attain Bund reforms before the Interim period expired. It appeared that Schwarzenberg, even at this early point, believed no reforms would be reached by the two states through negotiations, and thus was preparing his next diplomatic step—the calling for a Diet
meeting. A similar letter reached Prokesch-Osten on 26 April in which Schwarzenberg accused Berlin of instructing the Prussian delegates coming to Frankfort to prevent any Diet meeting by persuading member Bund and Union states to boycott the assembly. When Radowitz learned of the Austrian note of 19 April, he had refused to recognize Vienna's right to call such a meeting, and was prepared to have the Union members refuse to attend. However, both Brandenburg and Manteuffel believed Vienna did possess this right since she had used it in the past. With the Interim ending on 1 May, the summons for a Diet meeting to solve the reform questions was quite justifiable. For this reason, Brandenburg suggested the Union states attend and help determine the reforms. On 1 May, Frederick William instructed the cabinet to send Prussian delegates to Frankfort. However, as Prokesch-Osten noted, Radowitz insisted the delegates from the Union states be allowed to vote as a bloc--thus giving the Union a legal position within the Bund--but Vienna refused to allow this arrangement. The decision by Frederick William to send delegates represented a partial victory by Manteuffel over Radowitz, and the

10 Preussia Archiv, III, #36, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1850), 4, 9, and 15 March, 1850. Hereafter referred to as Preussia Archiv, Staatsarchiv.

11 Ibid., 26 April, 1850.
cabinet approved the king’s wishes on 2 May. Not ready to admit defeat so easily, Radowitz was able to persuade the king to allow him to instruct the delegates on their duties. In effect he simply instructed them to travel to Frankfort, demand the Union members vote as a bloc, and, when this was denied, to withdraw from the Diet.

Since Austria refused to allow the Union to sit and vote as a bloc within the Bund, the Union states withdrew with the result that only ten member states attended the Diet meetings. Austria’s failure to secure the participation of more states was not a great surprise. Schwarzenberg viewed the meetings as the first part of a new chapter in the Austro-Prussian struggle and planned to use the Diet in the future as a means to isolate Prussia from the rest of the Bund. Prokesch-Osten had informed the Prime Minister that Frederick William was reluctant to permit an assembly of Bund representatives who were anti-Prussian to decide what the vital interests of Prussia were. Meyendorff had also communicated the same to St. Petersburg, but predicted that if Austria could obtain strong support, then Prussia


would be in a most difficult situation. At a later date, Prussia would claim Vienna's calling of the Diet was illegal, since the 12 July acts of 1848 had dissolved the existing Diet. Austria's answer to this charge was that the authority of the Bund and Diet passed on to Archduke John when he accepted the caretaker's post—as provided for in Article VII of the Vienna Acts. The Archduke was Reichsverweser until a new Diet was called which Austria claimed Prussia accepted when it agreed to the Interim. Regardless of Prussia's opposition to the plenum meetings at Frankfort and the absence of a majority, Vienna acted as though the 1815 Bund had been revived. Vienna argued that the German rulers in 1848 had voted only to dissolve the Diet and not the Bund itself. The legal existence of the Bund was intact, while the Diet's existence had been placed in the person of Archduke John. This view, Austria claimed, was accepted by Prussia when the Interim was approved. If Prussia believed the Bund defunct, why bother to share the executive authority of this body with Austria? Furthermore, since Austria had never been replaced as president of the Bund, Vienna still had the authority to

15 Deutsche Bund, #20, Haus-, Hof, und Staatsarchiv, Deutsche Bund (Vienna, 1850), 5 May, 1850 and Deutsche Bund, #18, 15 July, 1850. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Bund, Staatsarchiv.
call for a Diet meeting for 10 May. It was of no legal importance to Austria how many Bund members attended, but only that the Diet and the Bund were active once again.

Since the majority of the member states would eventually agree to Austria's right to call the meeting, Prussia was forced to change her line of opposition. Berlin began to deny the competence of the plenum on the grounds that no minority of members had the authority to overturn the decision of the Diet's majority in 1848—to revive the Bund. Therefore, Prussia claimed, any decisions reached at the plenum were illegal and not binding on the members. This change in Prussian policy placed Bernstorff in a most difficult position. The Ambassador believed in the Diet's legality and implored Berlin to reach a final settlement with Austria before war resulted from the struggle. Bernstorff was supported in this desire by both Brandenburg and Manteuffel, but also drew unexpected support from the Minister of War, General von Stockhaufen. The General was less interested in the legality of the problem than he was in the probability of a Prussian defeat in the event of a war with Austria. Radowitz, on the other hand, wanted the Union states to join the revived Bund without

16 Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 460.
surrendering the alliance or any special rights. Both he and Frederick William wrote to Vienna in September claiming the Union was not an instrument of opposition to Austria, but a Prussian method to obtain equality with Austria. Schwarzenberg rejected this contention and continued to demand the Union's end. In 1851, Bernstorff wrote that had Prussia dissolved the Union when Austria demanded it, then Prussia would have saved herself the diplomatic defeat at Olmütz. 18

The most important intangible in both the Austrian and Prussian policies was the attitude of Russia. Since the power balance between the two states was fairly equal, Russia's role would be decisive if the struggle dissolved into war. Therefore each side sought Russian support. Austrian success in persuading the Tsar to back Vienna will be discussed below, but the earlier Prussian attempt--though a failure--was no less important. In May of 1850 Frederick William sent the Prince of Prussia and Otto von Manteuffel to Warsaw to explain Prussian policies to the Tsar. The Prussian goal was to obtain Russia's approval of Radovitz's programs, or at least, Russia's neutrality in the event of an Austro-Prussian war. Austria attended the meeting in order to prevent Russia from giving any diplomatic

18 Ringhoffer, Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, pp. 134-136.
support to Berlin; perhaps she could even shift St. Petersburg toward Vienna's position. Tsar Nicholas I had been informed of the two states' aims by Ambassador Meyendorff, but was not pleased with the prospect of being the mediator in this struggle. The Tsar informed both states that it was the honest desire of Russia not to witness armed conflict between Austria and Prussia, and hoped that a settlement to end the 1848 Revolutions and to restore the 1815 Bund could be attained quickly. With regard to Prussia, he refused to accept Radowitz's programs or to promise neutrality in the event of a war. While this attitude was certainly a defeat for Berlin, it was also not a great victory for Vienna. Nicholas informed Schwarzenberg that Russia was not prepared at that time to promise any military aid to Austria. Rather, Russia's position would be determined by which state's policies most closely approximated the principles of the Congress of Vienna's. He further refused to act as official mediator, but did instruct Meyendorff to lend his offices to both sides in an effort to reach a settlement. Thus, the position of Russia was still that of an interested observer, but Radowitz's use of the Union and Prussia's attitude toward the Bund and Hesse would alter this position.

The Russian attitude toward any Bund reform was influenced to a great degree by the fact that Tsar Alexander I had guaranteed the existence of the conservative 1815 Bund. The Russian government had believed, and still did, that the Bund established a necessary balance-of-power between Austria and Prussia and was an European necessity to preserve peace. The Foreign Minister of Russia, Count Nesselrode, informed the Prussian Ambassador in St. Petersburg, Count von Rochow, that while Berlin was justified in appealing to her rights as a sovereign state in order to protect her vital interests, Prussia should be most careful not to consider using military force to disrupt European peace in any foolish attempt to increase her power. Although the Minister's remarks were directly concerned with the conflict between Prussia and Denmark over Schleswig-Holstein, it was also to apply to any Prussian attempt to gain sole leadership among the German states by virtue of a war. Berlin's official response to this Russian advice was given, not to Russia, but to Austria. Prokesch-Osten informed Schwarzenberg in September that Berlin supported the idea that, since Prussia was a sovereign state, Berlin had the right to oppose Austria or the Bund in defense of her vital interests.  

Meinecke, Radowitz, p. 432.

main problem with this approach was what Prussia might consider vital interests and therefore defensible by the use of force could be judged by Austria and Russia as aggressive policies—such as Radowitz's program.

Russian concern over the German question was increased when on 26 September Frederick William authorized almost full foreign policy control to Radowitz, and declared his general support for Radowitz's programs. The king had decided this step was necessary to protect Prussia's interests even though he had been informed that the Russian government would consider it a declaration of war against the policies of Austria and the Bund. For the moment it appeared that Radowitz had finally obtained the king's full support for his policies and thus had defeated the moderate faction led by Brandenburg and Manteuffel. In response to suggestions that European Congress was needed to settle the German question or that his policies could only lead to war, Radowitz declared that no non-German state had the right to interfere in German affairs and that his progressive program could not endanger Prussia or involve her in a war. All rhetoric aside however, Radowitz was concerned enough with the war dangers to request possible war plans to be made. The Foreign Minister proposed a full concentration of forces against Austria;

22Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 452, 461.
he seemed to believe Russia would remain an observer. For a Foreign Minister to prepare for war believing it could become necessary in the near future, while at the same time declaring there was no danger of war, was not a new departure in diplomacy. It did nothing, however, to inspire confidence in the Minister among other members of the cabinet, which was still split into contesting groups.

Even before Radowitz received the additional control over Prussian foreign policy, the struggle against Austria had become more bitter with the publication by Prussia of a "blue book," Archiv für das öffentliche Recht des deutschen Bundes. This document dealt with the powers of the Bund, the Interim accord, and the Prussian Union. Its first article concerned the definitive nature of the Bund and the Frankfort Assembly. Here Prussia argued that the Bund had the power to accept any executive arrangement as legal without a full meeting of the Diet—thus the Interim accord between Austria and Prussia was legal. Austria, Berlin claimed, had accepted this view when she signed the accord without demanding a prior meeting of the Diet. Since approval of both states had been necessary to create the Interim, Austria did not have the power to change the executive authority without Prussian approval unless a majority of the Diet agreed to support the change—or in this case the end of the Interim accord. Concerning the nature of the Assembly, Prussia argued that Austria had
accepted the legality of the Frankfort Assembly when Vienna sent her representatives to the meetings, where they not only sat but also voted. Berlin claimed the 12 July acts of 1848 had created the Assembly as the legal replacement for the Diet. The rights of the 1848 Revolutions to alter, but not to dissolve, the Bund's structure derived from the Article LIII of the Vienna Congress Acts and Article VI of the Paris Treaty of 30 May, 1814. These articles, Prussia maintained, called for the permanence of the Bund, but allowed the states to change the structure of the organization, such as replacing the Diet with the Frankfort Assembly.\(^{23}\)

The second article in the "blue book" contained an elaboration of Prussian arguments concerning the Diet and those powers transferred to the Frankfort Assembly by the 12 July acts. The most important section of this article was Prussia's interpretation of the Austrian viewpoint as expressed in the circular-note of 21 April. This note argued that the original Vienna acts denied the German people the power to change the Bund, and provided that only the states' rulers could alter the structure or approve a new executive authority. Vienna claimed that the states' freedom of decision had been denied them because

\(^{23}\)Deutsche Bund, #19, Staatsarchiv, 28 August, 1850, pp. 1-19.
of the illegal rebellions within the states. Thus the 12 July acts did not replace the Diet with the Frankfort Assembly, but only placed its authority in the person of Archduke John who in turn surrendered it to the Interim. As for the Prussian claim that a majority of the member states had to approve any change in the executive structure, Vienna agreed, but pointed out that the Interim accord did not alter the structure but merely added another state to its authority. Therefore, the accord was a sharing of its legal constituted authority by Austria with Prussia for a limited time, and a renewal could be denied by Austria without any Prussian approval.\(^2^4\)

The final section of the Prussian document gave its attention to the enforcement of existing Bund rules and it considered the nature of any special laws passed by a Diet meeting. Berlin had always maintained that the member Bund states were bound to obey the laws passed by a majority of members, but had insisted that the Diet as called by Austria was composed of a minority whose decisions were not binding on the Bund. This position would soon produce serious problems for Berlin when a majority of members did participate and demanded Prussia withdraw her troops from Hesse.\(^2^5\) Given the Prussian position, it was

natural for Radowitz to reject both the Austrian protests and his own state's legal arguments when faced with the conflict over the troops in Hesse and Austria's determination to remove them. Prokesch-Osten reported to Schwarzenberg that Radowitz remained adamant even when confronted with possible Russian intervention. Radowitz continued to claim that the 1848 Revolutions had ended the 1815 Bund according to the wishes of the German people. The Ambassador's curt reply to this claim was complete rejection of the arguments as false; he moreover informed the Foreign Minister that he had no right to speak for the German people.  

After Austria's success in re-establishing the Diet at Frankfort had been countered by Prussia's six month extension of the Union, Schwarzenberg increased his efforts against the Union. Indeed, the continued meetings of the Diet can be viewed as one more attack against Berlin's opposition to Austria's claim of sole leadership within the Bund. Prussia feared that Schwarzenberg intended to use the Bund's legal authority to restore and increase Vienna's influence among the Bund members at Berlin's expense. Since traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation had ended, Schwarzenberg was prepared to end another traditional support of the Bund—the unwritten alliance

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26Preussia Archiv, #36, Staatsarchiv, 29 September and 8 October, 1850.
between Austria, Russia, and Prussia. This unofficial agreement had been one of the mainstays of the Bund, but Schwarzenberg now believed its end was necessary. The "Dreikaiserbund" had to be replaced with an Austro-Russia accord which would restore Austria's primary position in the Bund and destroy Berlin's ideas of nationalism and unification. 27

On 3 September, Schwarzenberg summoned Bernstorff for a brief, but highly emotional, discussion. The Prime Minister informed the Ambassador why the Diet had been re-established, and demanded the Union be ended or Prussia would suffer the consequences of her anti-Austrian attitude. Bernstorff reported to Berlin that he believed this threat, while sincere, was made by Schwarzenberg without any Russian knowledge or approval. However, even when announcing his demand, Schwarzenberg insisted Vienna remained willing to discuss all reasonable proposals—such as Austria's four-point plan—if Prussia responded in the proper manner by dissolving the Union. 28 While Schwarzenberg was threatening Berlin, Prokesch-Osten was conducting talks with Brandenburg. The Prussian Prime Minister had recently returned from Vienna, and informed

28 Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, pp. 130-131.
the Ambassador that Berlin was willing to consider ending the Union if this step would restore friendly relations with Vienna and lead to the correct Bund reforms. Prussia was not willing, however, to surrender the Union without receiving prior agreement from Vienna on continued sharing of authority within the Bund. Prokesch-Osten noted that the Berlin cabinet, Brandenburg's attitude notwithstanding, had been unable to reach a final decision regarding the Union. In fact, Berlin's hostile stance increased when Frederick William delegated greater control over foreign policy to Radowitz. Since Radowitz was persona non grata in St. Petersburg and his program was anathema to the Tsar, his additional authority only served to strain Prussian-Russian relations even more. This was a highly unrealistic action on Berlin's part since Prussia needed the good will of Russia if it hoped to defeat Vienna's claims.

In this Austro-Prussian struggle, it appears clear that Schwarzenberg maintained a more realistic understanding of Russia's position. From the beginning, Vienna's policy had been to maintain Russia's support, since it was absolutely necessary if Austria desired to regain her pre-1848 position in the Bund. Tsar Nicholas I was certainly opposed to Radowitz's program but also opposed to Austria's threat of force to regain her former status.

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29 Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, p. 162.
unless this force was necessary and approved by the Bund.

While these general sentiments were known both in Berlin and Vienna, it was Schwarzenberg who was able to use them for Austria's benefit. The two most important factors which persuaded Nicholas to abandon Russia's position of neutrality and to enter the struggle on Austria's side were the continuation of Radowitz's radical program (especially the Union) and the Prussian policy regarding the Bund and Hesse-Kassel. Meyendorff expressed this attitude of St. Petersburg when he wrote to the Russian envoy in Vienna, Baron Budberg. Meyendorff noted that Schwarzenberg was opposed to Prussia's policy of interference in Hesse, and was prepared to use Austrian and Bund troops, if necessary, against Berlin. The Russian Ambassador believed Austria was upholding conservative principles of the Bund—as well as her own interests—and that Russia should support Vienna. This change in Meyendorff's attitude was quite important considering he had maintained a neutral position for almost two years although leaning toward the Austrian side. Now it appeared he was prepared to offer this advice to St. Petersburg as the basis for a change in Russian policy.

30 Friedjung, Österreich, p. 52.

In the midst of the struggle between the Bund and Prussia over the revolt in Hesse (see below), Austria answered Prussia's persistent denials of the Diet's legality in the form of a protokoll passed on 10 October. The language of this document was simple but direct. The members rejected all Prussian arguments and stated that the acts of 12 July, 1848, did not remove the provisions of the Vienna Acts which called for prior approval of the Great Powers before the Bund could be dissolved. Since this never happened, the 12 July acts were only a temporary restraint upon the Bund until the Diet could be reformed after the revolutions ended. Letters pertaining to the acts and the protokoll were sent to St. Petersburg by Vienna in an effort to convince Russia that Austria was upholding treaty obligations and was due Russian support. After the protokoll was passed, both Schwarzenberg and Prokesch-Osten believed Russia had no real choice but to give Austria the requested support.

The test case concerning the Bund's authority and Prussia's refusal to accept the legality of the Diet developed after a revolt in the small kingdom of Hesse-Kassel. Although there were other reasons for the revolt, increased

32 Deutsche Bund, #19, Staatsarchiv, 10 October, 1850.
33 Preussia Archiv, #38, Staatsarchiv, 30 October, 1850 and Preussia Archiv, #39, Staatsarchiv, 23 October, 1850.
taxation was the immediate cause. The legitimate government was unable to defeat the rebels, so the Elector asked for military aid from the Diet. Led by Austria, the Diet approved sending Austrian and Bavarian troops to the Elector's aid, but Prussia intervened. Berlin claimed the Diet had no right to interfere in the internal affairs of the state—Berlin supported the rebel cause—and sent troops of her own into the state on the excuse of protecting the state's population. The conflict which would greatly influence events leading to Olmütz was now joined between Prussia and the Bund. 34

Austrian reaction to Berlin's refusal to accept the Bund's authority and the intervention in Hesse was most decisive diplomatically. Schwarzenberg was determined to demonstrate the Bund's usefulness in defending treaty rights and the right of legitimate rulers to Tsar Nicholas. On 28 September, Schwarzenberg and Nesselrode reached agreement on a note presented by Vienna to Meyendorff which requested clarification of Russia's position concerning the revolt and its position in the event of an armed conflict between Prussia and the Bund. Nesselrode replied that Russia would certainly honor her moral and treaty obligations to the Bund and would support any legal action voted by the

Diet against Prussia. Although this was not the desired pledge of military support Vienna wanted, it was enough to enable Schwarzenberg to increase pressure on Berlin. Bernstorff, of course, knew nothing of the note's contents, but was correct when he assumed that some general agreement had been reached regarding action against Prussia. This assumption and his warnings to Berlin against continued support of Radowitz failed to move Prussia. The warnings were strong enough that Berlin made another effort to obtain Russia's neutrality.

On 12 October Austria obtained formal pledges of military aid from Bavaria and Württemburg in opposing Prussia if the Bund voted military sanctions against Berlin. All efforts by Vienna and Frankfort to persuade Berlin to withdraw her troops were useless. Confronted by the increasing possibility of war, Austria proceeded to round up her support among Bund members. The reconvened Diet ordered Prussia to accept the Bund's authority and withdraw her troops, but Radowitz once again rejected Bund authority and ordered Prussian forces to prevent any Austrian or Bavarian troops from entering Hesse. When St. Petersburg was informed of this latest Prussian decision, a special envoy was named to travel to Frankfort

to represent the Tsar's position. Austria expected Russia to abandon her neutral position in face of Prussia's adamant stand. This assumption appeared correct for Prince Gortschakoff, the Vice-Foreign Minister, was the envoy named to present Tsar Nicholas' views to Prussia. Thun reported to Schwarzenberg in early November that Gortschakoff had arrived and presented his letter of credit as "l'envoyé extraordinaire et ministre plénipotentiaire" of Russia to Frankfort. Later Schwarzenberg claimed Austria had been promised active Russian support if Prussia opposed the Bund troops. Gortschakoff was to have informed the Prime Minister that Prussia's actual opposition would be considered a casus belli by the Tsar. This Austrian claim, however, appears to have been slightly exaggerated. While it was true that Russia would have supported the Bund if war did occur, St. Petersburg made this position clear to Berlin only during the Warsaw meetings.

The immediate possibility of war lessened when, on 15 October, Berlin announced that Brandenburg was going to Warsaw for important discussions with Nicholas I. The purpose of the Prime Minister's visit was obvious--Prussia had to explain her policies to Russia in order to prevent

37 Preussia Archiv, #39, Staatsarchiv, 6 November, 1850.
38 Deutsche Bund, #19, Staatsarchiv, 11 November, 1850.
39 Holborn, A History of Modern Germany, p. 96.
Russian military support of Austria. To counter Prussia, Vienna decided to send Schwarzenberg to Warsaw to present the Austrian view. Unfortunately, once again, Brandenburg was not empowered to arrange a compromise with Austria if Russia demanded it. Prokesch-Osten was correct when he wrote that Frederick William should have gone to Warsaw with Brandenburg and without Radowitz. If the king had attended the discussions, he could have made the necessary decisions and might have avoided the more unfortunate Olmütz and Dresden meetings. Brandenburg arrived in Warsaw on 19 October; Schwarzenberg came on 25 October.\(^{40}\)

The position of the Prussian Prime Minister was very uncertain. In discussions at Berlin, he had remained technically neutral while Radowitz and Manteuffel had debated Prussia's course of action. The Prime Minister believed the meetings with Nicholas were necessary to counter the anti-Prussian information the Tsar had been receiving from Count Buol the Austrian Ambassador in St. Petersburg. The Ambassador claimed Berlin's aims were radically liberal and nationalistic. Brandenburg, on the other hand, informed the Tsar that Prussia was willing to withdraw its troops from Hesse, but wanted Russia to influence a moderation of the Austrian four-point plan.

\(^{40}\) Meinecke, _Radowitz_, p. 471.
Prussia also agreed it should accept the Bund's authority, but suggested that this acceptance should depend upon Austria's agreement to change the executive authority by sharing power with Prussia. Brandenburg was attempting to fulfill Berlin's policy goals without surrendering any advantage to Vienna. While Brandenburg was defending Prussia's actions, Schwarzenberg tried to show that Prussia had deviated from her treaty obligations and moral commitments, and thus should be denied any Russian support. Schwarzenberg accused Berlin of attempting to implement radical programs by opposing the Bund's legal authority and by interfering in the internal affairs of another state. Schwarzenberg informed Prokesch-Osten in a dispatch that if peace were to be maintained, then the Tsar had to abandon his neutral position and decide which program for the Bund—the Austrian or the Prussian—was correct. The Prime Minister wrote he believed Brandenburg was sincerely opposed to the unnecessary risks inherent in Radowitz's program, but that the Prime Minister lacked the support from Frederick William and the cabinet to defeat Radowitz and achieve an understanding with Vienna.\textsuperscript{41}

Brandenburg's willingness to trade the existence of the Union for a sharing of executive authority with Austria

\textsuperscript{41}Prokesch von Osten, \textit{Aus den Briefen}, pp. 170-172.
represented no loss to Prussia. Brandenburg had correctly evaluated the Union as unable to accomplish its goals fully; for him the Union was a thorn in the side of Vienna which was determined to remove it at any costs. On the other hand Brandenburg believed that Schwarzenberg was unwilling to surrender Austria's sole leadership role in the Bund just for the demise of the Union, which he believed he could obtain without any loss to Austria. On this point the Prime Minister was as adamant as he had been since he took office—to recover Austria's position as sole leader in the Bund and to end Prussia's claims to an equal post. Brandenburg's requests were refused as was the request for Russian neutrality. Nicholas informed Brandenburg that Russia supported the Austrian position on Hesse and would do nothing to protect Berlin until Prussian troops were withdrawn from Hesse. St. Petersburg suggested that Prussia should first withdraw her troops, not oppose Bund forces, and accept the Bund's authority before demanding equality with Austria. This Russian attitude had been hinted at by Meyendorff when he informed his government Brandenburg was prepared to make the necessary concessions in order to avoid war. When the Prussian Prime Minister learned Russia was prepared to support Austria and the Bund with military force if war broke out, he decided to pledge Prussia's withdrawal of troops before any agreement on
Band reform had been reached with Austria. However, in return for this Prussian pledge, the Tsar then decided to refuse Austria's request to sign a formal military treaty pledging Russian troops if and when war occurred between Austria and Prussia over Bund problems. Prussia had failed to obtain her aims at Warsaw, but the meetings did provide Berlin with an accurate idea of the weakness of her position and the dangers contained in continuing Radowitz's Union and radical program.

Brandenburg returned to Berlin on 31 October, having agreed to withdraw Prussian troops from Hesse and to meet with Austria in the near future to work out the full details regarding Austrian demands with respect to the Union and the Bund reforms. The Prime Minister soon discovered his immediate problems were to obtain Frederick William's approval to the agreements and to prevent Radowitz from precipitating a war. The "war speeches" by Radowitz had produced fears in Berlin that the Foreign Minister was prepared to create a war to protect his radical ideas and the Union. In his speeches Radowitz had repeated his opinion that the Prussian troops should remain in Hesse and prevent any Austrian and Bund troops from entering the state. In addition he expressed his willingness to use the entire

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42 Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 477-482.
Prussian army to end the "dictatorial policies of Austria." Prokesch-Osten reported that when the Russian charge d' affairs, Blumberg, had questioned Radowitz, the Minister vowed to begin war against Austria, that moreover Frederick William supported him. The Austrian Ambassador wrote that he believed Radowitz, but doubted the king was prepared for war since no mobilization orders had been issued. Although the king was waiting for Brandenburg to return to Berlin, before making any decisions, pressures from Radowitz to mobilize the army increased when Bernstorff reported that one hundred thousand Austrian troops had been ordered to the Bohemian border.

Frederick William, on Brandenburg's return, called for a full meeting of the Crown Council for 1 and 2 November. Brandenburg and Manteuffel argued that Radowitz and his program had to be ended lest Prussia become involved in war on issues not vital to her security. Radowitz demanded Union troops be called up and that the honor of Prussia required war against illegal Austrian claims of leadership. The Foreign Minister argued Union troops would outnumber Austria's, and that Vienna would be forced to retreat from her aggressive position and agree to Berlin's

43 Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, p. 140.
44 Ibid., p. 140 and Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, p. 137.
demands. In his desperate attempt to maintain control over foreign policy, Radowitz compared Prussia of 1850 with her position in 1809-1813 when the very existence of Prussia was threatened. Prussia had had the courage and resolve to battle Napoleon in those years, and thus had recovered her Great Power status. What Radowitz asked of Prussia in 1850 was to show the same courage to fight not only for Prussian interests but also for German unification.

Against this emotional appeal, Brandenburg countered with fact. He informed the Council that though Russia would not begin war against Prussia, St. Petersburg would certainly enter a war on Vienna's side. In essence that was the message which Nicholas had given Brandenburg to deliver to Berlin. The advisability of war was reduced to the question of Prussia's chances for victory. The Prime Minister's opinion that Prussia could not hope to win such a war against both Austria and Russia was shared by the War Minister, General von Stockhausen. The Council however was still unable to reach a final decision and called for another meeting the following evening. Prior to this meeting, Brandenburg sent a note to Vienna promising Prussian approval of the Warsaw agreements if Austria

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45 Friedjung, Österreich, p. 84.
46 Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 491-492.
pledged not to use troops to "punish" Berlin for her opposition to the Bund. On 3 November, Frederick William was informed that the one hundred thousand Austrian troops had been ordered to be prepared for war by 6 November. When he asked what was to be done, Radowitz answered "mobilmachen," but the king had at last decided that Radowitz's advice and policies were too dangerous. He instructed Brandenburg and Manteuffel to reach a quick settlement with Austria. On 6 November Frederick William ordered the mobilization of the Prussian army, but informed the War party and Radowitz that his action was designed only to save some Prussian honor and that he had no intention of opposing the Bund troops in war. Radowitz resigned immediately since he no longer enjoyed the confidence and support of Frederick William. As Brandenburg was seriously ill (he would soon die), Manteuffel was placed in temporary control of the cabinet. This future Prime Minister was destined to represent Prussia at Olmütz and Dresden.

Radowitz's fall was interpreted by many Austrian newspapers as the final defeat for the Prussian Union, and

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48 Friedjung, Österreich, p. 90.
49 Meinecke, Radowitz, pp. 486-487.
50 Ibid., p. 501.
they referred to 6 November as "das Jena der Union." For Schwarzenberg the resignation represented the removal of his major opponent in Berlin; therefore he assumed that Berlin was prepared to carry out the general agreements reached at Warsaw. This assumption proved somewhat premature since Frederick William had not yet ordered the Prussian troops to withdraw from Hesse. On 11 November, a minor encounter occurred between Prussian and Bavarian forces. When, on 15 November, Prussia formally agreed to dissolve the Union, Russia informed Berlin that this was not enough and demanded the prompt evacuation of troops from Hesse. Frederick William responded to this demand with a strong, war-like speech on 21 November pledging to uphold Prussia's honor. The Russian response was swift and absolutely clear. St. Petersburg informed Berlin that any further Prussian opposition or interference with the Bund's troops would be considered a casus belli. Meyendorff received instructions to leave Berlin immediately if Berlin refused to evacuate Hesse at once. Thus, Frederick William was faced with the choice of fighting Austria and Russia or withdrawing Prussian troops. General Stockhausen reconfirmed his opinion that the Prussian army was no match

51 Ibid., p. 502.
52 Mosse, The European Powers, pp. 36-38.
for the veterans of Marshall Radetzky and the huge Russian army. While Berlin was preparing to order the immediate evacuation of Hesse, an ultimatum arrived from Vienna which demanded, among other points, that Berlin again agree to a meeting at Olmütz to reach final settlement of the German question.

With the promise of Russian support and the Bund's decision to send troops into Hesse regardless of Prussian opposition, Schwarzenberg opted for an immediate confrontation with Berlin. On 24 November, Vienna sent orders to its four army corps in Bohemia to be prepared to join Bavarian and Saxon troops (a total of nearly two hundred and ten thousand) within three days. The following day, Schwarzenberg presented Berlin with a forty-eight hour ultimatum. Prussia was to allow Bund troops free passage to Hesse, to withdraw all Prussian troops, and to follow future Bund decisions. Due to his determination to effect a final confrontation Schwarzenberg might have been happier had Berlin rejected the ultimatum and thus forced a military conclusion to the Austro-Prussian struggle. Berlin received the ultimatum and judged that she had no real choice but to accept the terms. Manteuffel drafted the

letter for Frederick William which was to serve as Prussia's answer. Berlin agreed to the passage of Bund troops, the withdrawal of Prussian troops, and suggested the Olmütz meeting begin as soon as possible. Vienna agreed and announced that Schwarzenberg would confer with Manteuffel and with Ambassador Meyendorff who would represent Russia's interests. The only condition Berlin placed on its agreement to the ultimatum was a demand that the integrity of Prussia and Union members would not be threatened. Prokesch-Osten reported Vienna's agreement to this point and then accepted Prussia's agreement to Austria's demands. Since Brandenburg died before Olmütz, Manteuffel represented Prussia as the Prime Minister apparent. Berlin sent her diplomats to Olmütz in hope that Prussia could avoid any great loss of influence and prestige and perhaps without completely surrendering her idea of equality within the Bund. Schwarzenberg, however, was determined to end Prussian aspirations for equality and to restore Austria to the primary position of authority. At Olmütz, and later at Dresden, both states were to be disappointed— but Austria more than Prussia.

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55 Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, pp. 154-156.
56 Preussia Archiv, #37, Staatsarchiv, 25 and 26 November, 1850.
CHAPTER V

THE OLMÜTZ AND DRESDEN CONFERENCES AND THEIR RESULTS
(NOVEMBER, 1850-APRIL, 1851)

With profound relief among Bund members and especially in Berlin, Prussia's acceptance of Vienna's ultimatum seemingly had ended the danger of war between Austria and Prussia. Berlin had accepted Austria's demands while surrendering little by agreeing to confer at Olmütz to conclude a final settlement of German problems.¹ Schwarzenberg had assumed, with good reason, that Berlin was prepared to fulfill the terms of Austria's ultimatum and not to oppose future Austrian predominance within the Bund. At first glance, this assumption appeared correct. With Russian support Vienna had forced Berlin to agree to withdraw its troops from Hesse, to dissolve the Union, and to meet with Vienna. Schwarzenberg had readily accepted Prussia's pledge to fulfill the demands, and had assumed Berlin would submit to Austria's increased demands at Olmütz. The Prime Minister had prepared possible solutions

to outstanding German problems, including the question of joining the Austrian Empire with the Bund. He had not seriously considered the possibility that Prussia would refuse to adhere to these solutions. He had correctly judged Prussia's response to Vienna's ultimatum and Russia's pledge of support. Why then would Berlin refuse further Austrian demands and renew the possibility of war? If Schwarzenberg had correctly judged Berlin's initial reaction, he had pre-judged very badly her response at Olmütz. Prussian delegates arrived at the conference table humbled, but not defeated—and quite prepared to recover from Prussia's temporary setback. Olmütz soon developed into a stalemate which necessitated the second conference at Dresden.

The two German Great Powers came to Olmütz with completely different purposes and policies. Since Schwarzenberg's ultimatum had forced the meeting, Austria assumed the dominant position at its beginning. Vienna considered the demise of the Prussian Union as having ended Berlin's attempts to gain equality of leadership with Austria. Vienna retained Bund support and the pledged Russian aid. Schwarzenberg appeared to view Olmütz as little more than a normal conference with Prussia playing the secondary role. He planned to obtain Berlin's acceptance of detailed plans for settlement of the Hesse revolt, to solve major Bund reform questions, and to force Prussia's agreement to the
merger of the Bund and the Austrian Empire, thereby realizing Bruck's concept of the "empire of seventy million." When these things had been accomplished, Austria could then enjoy the power and influence of her unrivaled position. In predicting the policies' successes, Schwarzenberg made three incorrect assumptions. He believed Prussia was too weak and divided in her leadership to offer strong resistance, that Austria would maintain a majority in the Bund, and lastly he counted upon continued Russian support. The first assumption was dispelled at Olmütz, while the other two disappeared at Dresden.

Prussia's position was considerably different from Austria's. Berlin did not entertain detailed plans for increasing its power. Rather, Manteuffel hoped that he would be able to prevent a further reduction in Prussian prestige and prevent any real loss of influence and power. Schwarzenberg had prepared detailed plans, but Manteuffel's instructions were flexible. Since Prussia did not know exactly what to expect at Olmütz, its inability to furnish Manteuffel with precise instructions was no surprise. Berlin was prepared to settle the Hesse problem and not to oppose Bund resolutions concerning the rebellion. On the question of equality with Austria, Prussia appeared willing to remain tacit for the moment, but also she did not wish to declare publicly renunciation of her claims. Manteuffel's task was made easier than expected because of Schwarzenberg's
appraisal of his previous attitudes during the struggle. In a letter to Prokesch-Osten, Schwarzenberg expressed his belief that Manteuffel would be able to control the pro-Radowitz forces within the government and be prepared to conclude a fair settlement. This belief was strengthened by Manteuffel's actions before and immediately following the ultimatum. The Prussian diplomat showed the courage to support realistic policy regardless of Prussia's prestige. Schwarzenberg's evaluation of Manteuffel came very near the mark with one exception—he underestimated the Prussian Prime Minister's (actually Minister-President and Foreign Minister) ability to rescue Prussia's prestige and influence. Even before Olmütz, Schwarzenberg had decided Manteuffel was neither a liberal nor an ultra-conservative, but rather a cautious diplomat who worked within the established system. Since he was not connected to Radowitz's policies but actually opposed to them, Schwarzenberg decided that Manteuffel could be trusted to negotiate honestly and to implement agreements reached during the conference. He believed Manteuffel would not surrender further Prussian influence or prestige, but would compromise where superior Austrian power demanded.\footnote{Prokesch von Osten, \textit{Aus den Briefen des Grafen Prokesch von Osten} (Vienna, 1849-1855), p. 183. \textit{Letter of 20 November, 1850.}}\footnote{Heinrich Friedjung, \textit{Österreich von 1848 bis 1860} (Stuttgart, 1912), II, p. 123.
this view, Schwarzenberg was correct.

The Olmütz conference began on 28 November, 1850, in the Hotel Zur Krone. Manteuffel, at the last moment, had received a general "plan of attack" from Frederick William. The king wanted Schwarzenberg's acceptance of the program formulated at Warsaw by the three Great Powers, and convocation of a general congress of the Bund to decide the settlement of the Hesse rebellion.\footnote{Adolph Schwarzenberg, Prince Felix zu Schwarzenberg: Prime Minister of Austria: 1848-1852 (New York, 1946), p. 156.} It was no surprise that Manteuffel was unable to obtain Schwarzenberg's consent to Prussia's requests. Berlin, being clearly in the weaker position, had little chance to move Austria from its planned policies. By the third day, Manteuffel had correctly judged that Prussia's position was hopeless if he insisted on the king's requests. If he continued total opposition to Vienna, Prussia would be faced with the renewed possibility of war. Prussia still remained opposed by the forces of the Bund, Austria, and Russia as it had before accepting the ultimatum. It made little sense, after having agreed to the conference, to return to Berlin without any agreement if war would follow. Manteuffel wisely decided to set aside the king's wishes and to accede to Schwarzenberg's demands regarding Hesse. The Austrian Prime Minister agreed a small number of Prussian
troops could remain in Kassel for "defensive purposes," but required Manteuffel to pledge that the forty thousand Prussian soldiers would be withdrawn at once. While it is true that the retreat of these troops involved a prestige loss for Berlin, Manteuffel was completely unable to prevent this.

With settlement of the Hesse problem, Schwarzenberg and Manteuffel turned their attention to Bund reforms. Berlin did not attempt to demand equality with Austria, while Vienna assumed the demise of the Union had ended the Prussian claims. However, the conference was unable to produce any solutions to reform questions. Manteuffel refused to surrender Prussian influence and possible future gains on reform questions simply because Schwarzenberg demanded a settlement. Prussia, counting on future support from the Bund, decided that a full conference of members should decide what reforms were necessary since the reforms affected the entire Bund and not just Austria and Prussia. Since Schwarzenberg had, at Warsaw, pledged that reforms should be acceptable to the Bund majority, he was in a weak position to deny Berlin's insistence on a general congress. In this regard, he was reminded of a note which Nesselrode had presented him at Warsaw. St. Petersburg notified

\[5\text{Ibid., p. 158.}\]
Vienna that it was not prepared to accept the competence of anything less than a Bund conference to decide reform. Manteuffel seemed aware of Russia's position when he made the Prussian suggestion. Schwarzenberg, while upset at being unable to solve reform questions to Austria's advantage, did agree to the conference and accepted Berlin's proposal that Dresden be the conference site. Because of Berlin's refusal to settle Bund reform and constitutional problems without a general conference, Schwarzenberg did not insist on Prussia's approval of Bruck's plan. The Austrian Prime Minister correctly foresaw that if Berlin steadfastly refused to settle reform questions at Olmütz, then there was no hope that Berlin could be pressured into allowing the merger of the Bund and the Austrian Empire.

Comparing Austria's pre-conference plans and Olmütz's results, what exactly did the conference accomplish? Events leading to the meeting certainly were a defeat for Radowitz's program and a partial victory for Schwarzenberg. However, Olmütz was not a complete success for Austria, especially not for Bruck's merger plan. Actually, Prussia lost very little at Olmütz and surrendered few policies. Austria had

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6Ibid., p. 158.
7Ibid., pp. 158-159.
defended the "honor" of the Elector of Hesse and his legitimate right to rule, but the benefits of such an achievement were minimal. Schwarzenberg had failed to settle the constitutional issues and failed to force Berlin to accept Bruck's plan. Austria still remained the primary Bund state but Berlin refused to renounce its claims to equality of leadership. Prussia's strong opposition to Vienna's policies called for continued aggressive action, but the Prime Minister failed to enforce Austria's superiority. In view of Prussia's position at Olmütz, Manteuffel had defended Berlin's interests very well—he would do even better at Dresden. Count Beust defended Schwarzenberg's actions at Olmütz by claiming the Prime Minister did not press Vienna's advantage because of two reasons: Schwarzenberg did not want to force Prussia to oppose Austria's demands by war since Franz Joseph's immaturity under such conditions could endanger recent solutions to Austria's internal problems. He also excused Schwarzenberg on the grounds that he failed to realize the importance of this opportunity—fated to be Austria's last to settle the German question in its favor. Beust

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argued that few people realized this fact at the time.\textsuperscript{10} Even Meyendorff was surprised at Schwarzenberg's generosity. He informed Manteuffel that he had never expected Vienna to concede so much at Olmütz by not pressing its advantage to force Prussia to accept more Austrian policies. Certainly Meyendorff appeared not to consider Olmütz a great Prussian defeat.\textsuperscript{11}

Manteuffel returned to Berlin to face strong opposition within the cabinet to the Olmütz accord. In addition to general opposition from the old Radovitz forces, he found his actions attacked by three ministers—Ladenberg, Hendt, and Simons—but this attack was unable to prevent Prussia's acceptance of the agreement. Although Manteuffel had been unable to fulfill Frederick William's "instructions," the king supported his Prime Minister. When one remembers how Brandenburg's unfortunate position against Radovitz was partly the result of the king's lack of support, then the support Manteuffel received was most welcome and important. By early December, Frederick William had realized the probable dangers inherent in an anti-Austrian foreign policy. The king was willing to make the necessary concessions if no vital Prussian interests

\textsuperscript{10}Worms, Memoirs of Beust, pp. 100-101.

\textsuperscript{11}Friedjung, Österreich, II, p. 121, . . . . "Schwarzenberg werde so viel zugestehen."
were threatened to reach a settlement. Frederick William accepted the Olmütz accord after Manteuffel explained the terms and how they were reached. With the official ratification and demobilization of Prussia's forces on 10 December, Manteuffel's position was greatly strengthened. The king had been consistent in supporting a foreign policy designed to reach an Austro-Prussian agreement by first removing Radowitz and then approving Manteuffel's efforts at Olmütz. Prokesch-Osten noted this support and the Prime Minister's stronger position in his dispatches to Schwarzenberg. The Ambassador assumed Manteuffel and the cabinet would decide which Prussian policies to follow at Dresden and then issue precise instructions to the delegates. Prokesch-Osten was correct. Both delegates arrived at Dresden with policies to be implemented, but Austria soon found its policies blocked and unfulfilled.

After failing to accomplish his three part program at Olmütz, Schwarzenberg had to revise his plans if he was to succeed in regaining Austria's predominance over Prussia. Considering Berlin's opposition which Schwarzenberg had received regarding settlement of the Bund's

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constitutional questions, it is strange that he did not expect even stronger Prussian resistance and a possible united stand by Prussia and its allies. The Austrian Prime Minister realized he had done little to reduce Prussia's influence within the Bund, but felt Austria remained strong enough to defeat Prussian objections at Dresden and to persuade the Bund to accept Bruck's merger plan. At Olmütz, Schwarzenberg had adopted a "superior attitude" toward Prussia, but yet was unable to enforce Austria's solutions to the reform questions. At Dresden Schwarzenberg knew he would face opposition from the northern states, but believed Austria could "command" a majority of the Bund. This Austrian trait of using a "dictatorial tone" in relations with small Bund states had been a common occurrence since 1830. Count Beust believed that Schwarzenberg made a major error in assuming Austria could pressure Bund members into accepting reforms which were not in their interests. The Austria of 1850-1851 simply did not possess the necessary power and influence to use such a Metternichian policy. An attitude of superiority had failed at Olmütz when Austria faced only one state, but at Dresden it had to confront the entire Bund in a "free conference."


15 Worms, Memoirs of Beust, p. 121.
If Austrian policies were to succeed, then Schwarzenberg would have to make the necessary concessions to the smaller states to accomplish Austria's "new order." Even after the partial victory at Olmütz, Schwarzenberg seemed to believe that Austria could force the Bund to accept its merger with the Austrian Empire. In May of 1850, Tsar Nicholas I and Nesselrode had given Russia's general approval to the plan. Schwarzenberg intended to use this Russian approval as the means to prevent Prussia from blocking the plan. However, unknown to Schwarzenberg, Russia had changed its position, and by early 1851 believed Russian interests could be endangered by such a large "empire." Nevertheless, Schwarzenberg had agreed to the Dresden conference with the explicit purpose of introducing the merger plan to the Bund, expecting moreover, to outvote Prussia's opposition.

While Prussia and Austria were developing their respective policies for Dresden, both states were also selecting their déléguations. It had been assumed that Schwarzenberg and Manteuffel would lead their respective déléguations, and this assumption gained support in early

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17 Ibid., pp. 158-159.
December. Prokesch-Osten informed Schwarzenberg on 6 December that Manteuffel was the logical person to lead the Prussian delegation, at least in the beginning. On 12 December, he notified Vienna that Berlin had accepted 23 December as the opening of the conference and indeed Manteuffel would attend.¹⁸ He was joined by the former Prussian Minister of Finance, Count Alvensleben, who would eventually assume the delegation's leadership when Manteuffel returned to Berlin. On the Austrian side, Schwarzenberg was accompanied by Ambassador Prokesch-Osten and Count Buol, Ambassador at Stuttgart, who had twenty years of diplomatic experience in German affairs. Buol would be appointed head of Austria's delegation when Schwarzenberg returned to Vienna in February. Meyendorff informed St. Petersburg of these appointments and was selected to represent Russia.¹⁹ It was unfortunate that both Prime Ministers withdrew during the conference, and even more so when Alvensleben blocked all of Buol's sincere attempts to have the conference accomplish the needed reforms.²⁰ Two dispatches just before the conference's beginning gave dramatic evidence of what Schwarzenberg could expect from

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 358.
²⁰ Worms, Memoirs of Beust, pp. 104-105.
Prussia. Prokesch-Osten noted that one possible conflict might very well be over the Bund presidency. Berlin had not surrendered its claims to equality of leadership at Olmütz and certainly did not appear ready to do so at Dresden. On 14 December, Prussia had sent a circular-note to Bund members explaining why Austria and Prussia had agreed the Dresden conference was necessary. Manteuffel argued that unsettled constitutional questions and reform needs demanded such a meeting, but that Prussia had not been forced by Austria to attend. Rather, Berlin claimed it had suggested the meeting, and that no prior decisions had been made by Austria and Prussia--Dresden therefore was truly a "free conference."

As the conference began, Schwarzenberg's formula was quite simple. Austria had to retain full power of the Bund's executive while defeating another Prussian attempt to attain equality of leadership. Having done this, Schwarzenberg was prepared to announce Bruck's commercial-political plan as the best possible constitutional reform for the Bund. The Austrian Prime Minister expected opposition from Prussia and its allies, but also expected the small Bund states to give Austria its majority and accept the merger. Schwarzenberg's hopes were based on two assumptions: That Prussia had suffered a diplomatic defeat

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21 Prussia Archiv, #38, Staatsarchiv, 11 and 14 December, 1850.
at Olmütz great enough to cause a decline in its influence, and that Austria had enough prestige to command the small states to follow its lead. Both assumptions proved false. Since the conference considered different arguments and proposals each day, a chronological approach to Dresden appears best.

The opening days were devoted to the conference format and observing the holidays. On 29 December Austria opened her diplomatic attack by making a formal presentation of Bruck's plan. Vienna asked the Bund to allow the entire Austrian Empire to merge with the Bund to form a middle-European state of seventy million. Vienna also proposed a multi-state Zollverein be established concurrently.²² This presentation was the culmination of almost three years' work by Bruck to persuade Schwarzenberg to make his plan official Austrian policy. Although Schwarzenberg had expected Prussia's opposition, he was unprepared for the strong objections from the small states and the means by which Berlin "tabled" the plan. These small states proved determined not to surrender their sovereignty to this large Austrian dominated "empire." Nevertheless, Schwarzenberg continued to believe Austria could pressure a majority into accepting the merger plan.²³ However, Prussia was quick to

²² Friedjung, Österreich, II, p. 128.
²³ Ibid., II, p. 129.
take advantage of this strong opposition by renewing its demand for equality with Austria and by questioning the competence of the conference to decide constitutional or reform proposals.

Bernstorff had written Prokesch-Osten before Dresden questioning just how "dead" the idea of dualism was. Austria, of course, assumed the demise of the Prussian Union had buried the question, but Berlin's Ambassador warned that the Olmütz accord had not settled Prussia's claims. Berlin was completely free to chart whatever course it desired or renew any or all previous policies, except opposition to Bund resolutions. Schwarzenberg was aware of this possibility and was prepared to make minor concessions to reduce the degree of opposition from Prussia. Vienna suggested the creation of an enlarged Zollverein modeled after the successful Prussian one, and even hinted that Austria would not be adverse to allowing Prussia equal leadership. Austria's purpose was twofold: It would provide sharing of economic power and authority with Prussia, and would insure Prussia's loyalty to the new state by giving Prussia special interests to protect. However, Manteuffel refused to be "bought off" so cheaply and


rejected any Austrian proposal which did not permit Prussia to share political authority equally with Austria. Although Berlin was interested in economic leadership, it realized that an inferior political position would negate most of the benefits gained from its leadership of the enlarged Zollverein.

Austria's realization that Olmütz had done little to "humiliate" Prussia or reduce her influence was expressed by Schwarzenberg himself in a letter of 7 January, 1851, to Prokesch-Osten. The Prime Minister admitted that the Dresden conference had been called to settle points of disagreement which remained after Olmütz, but the position of Austria vis-à-vis Prussia had changed so quickly as to threaten Austria's interpretation of the conference's purpose.26 With Dresden immersed in the question of its competence to approve reforms, Austria and Prussia were holding separate talks discussing the rights and organization of the executive. Prokesch-Osten informed Schwarzenberg on 9 January that Frederick William had expressed a desire to divide the Bund into its four historic areas, but the Ambassador had rejected this idea by arguing that Vienna wanted a collective Bund not a divided one.27 Two

26Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, pp. 197-198.
27Ibid., pp. 198-199.
days later, Manteuffel offered a suggestion that both states agree to a change in the executive. Berlin proposed a return to the Interim system, or if this was unacceptable to Vienna, addition of a third state to form a three member executive council.  

This Prussian plan was met with the same opposition from Schwarzenberg as it had received when first suggested in 1849. Austria refused to share its authority with Prussia or any other Bund state. Generally, the small states supported Austria's stand. They were opposed to allowing a middle kingdom to share authority fearing their small degree of influence in the Bund would disappear.

Another development which arose from Berlin's suggestion was the active opposition of both France and England. These two Great Powers argued that the 1815 treaties had been approved by all the Powers, and therefore any Bund constitutional reforms such as a dualistic executive would require prior approval of the Powers. This argument would later be answered, but the conference would reject it as being illegal interference in Bund affairs.  

Actually, Austria did not experience a great degree of difficulty in defeating Prussia's attempts to obtain

28 Kiszling, Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg, p. 162.  
29 Friedjung, Österreich, II, p. 130.
equality, but the many discussions did accomplish one Prussian goal—to delay consideration of Bruck's plan until Berlin had the votes needed to defeat it. Berlin's persistence in claiming equality of leadership even after the Union had been dissolved shows how little she had surrendered at Olmütz and how shaky the Austrian "victory" was.

While the leadership question was being debated, further complications for Austria's policies developed when the conference's competence to arrange constitutional reforms was challenged by Prussia. Berlin had refused to accept resolutions of the minority Diet called by Austria when the Interim lapsed in 1850, arguing that a majority of Bund states was not present to renew the existence of the Diet. At Dresden Berlin argued that only a full Diet meeting could authorize constitutional changes—a mere conference did not possess legal authority to alter the constitution. Prussia sought to prevent Vienna from pressuring the Bund into accepting the merger by denying the conference its authority to make such a decision. Prussia's delegation reviewed the Bund's actions prior to the 1848 Revolutions and referred to resolutions passed by the Frankfort Assembly. Berlin was repeating the same arguments it had used in May of 1850. At that time, a majority of states had rejected the Prussian position. However, Prussia's objections were important enough to
occupy much of the conference's attention for nearly one month. Buol informed Schwarzenberg of his conversations with other delegates, and especially with Ludwig von Pfordten, Minister of Internal Affairs and later Foreign Minister of Saxony, who believed the revolutions had done nothing to alter the Bund's authority. In the opinion of these delegates, both the Diet and the Dresden conference were legal and fully empowered to make constitutional reforms. Another letter followed in which Buol repeated that Prussia was maintaining her position that the conference had no power to alter the Bund structure or to approve new members such as the Austrian Empire. Berlin insisted the merger would completely revise the Bund, and therefore needed the full Diet's approval. Schwarzenberg responded that Vienna was prepared for such Prussian objections, and expressed his faith that the conference would reject Prussia's arguments—it did.

On 19 January, Austria presented a plan to change the voting system for the Bund. Vienna claimed the old system was too cumbersome and weighed too heavily in favor of the small states. In an effort to "modernize" the Bund, Schwarzenberg proposed reducing the Bund into nine voting

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30 Deutsche Bund, #90, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1851), 15 January, 1851. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Bund, Staatsarchiv.

31 Ibid., 16 January, 1851; and Deutsche Bund, #92, Staatsarchiv, 29 January, 1851.
blocs comprising a total of eleven votes. Prussia and Austria would receive two votes each, while the four major middle kingdoms of Bavaria, Saxony, Hanover, and Württemberg would receive one vote apiece. The remaining members would be grouped in three divisions each having one vote. By this arrangement, the power of the small states was reduced while the middle kingdoms gained. Austria and Prussia would remain equal in voting strength as they had been since 1815. Vienna assumed it could rely on three of the four kingdoms to vote in her favor, and thus control the Bund.²² While the conference was considering this Austrian plan, Schwarzenberg forwarded a letter to Buol for the conference's use. The letter presented Austria's position on the 1848 Revolutions and the Frankfort Assembly. Vienna repeated its earlier arguments that the revolutions had been illegal, and thus the Assembly's resolutions had no legal effect on the Bund. Vienna reminded the states that the Bund had placed the Diet's authority in the person of Archduke John who had surrendered it to the Austro-Prussian Interim. Using its powers as president, Vienna then had reconvened the Diet in 1850 to the approval of a majority of members. In further answer to Berlin's charges, Austria noted that it had sent delegates to the Assembly, not because it accepted the Assembly's legality, but because Vienna had to work with the realities of the revolutions

²²Deutsche Bund, #90, Staatsarchiv, 19 January, 1851.
until they could be ended. Schwarzenberg asked the conference to reject Prussia's objections, and to decide constitutional questions such as the merger plan. When Berlin realized its objections were defeated, Prussia changed tactics.

On 28 January, Schwarzenberg wrote Buol expressing his opinion on Prussia's demand for equality. Included was a copy of a Manteuffel to Bernstorff letter of 21 January given to Schwarzenberg by the Ambassador. Manteuffel argued that the 1848 Revolutions, legal or illegal, had produced major changes within the Bund which needed modification to reflect those new political realities— one of which was equality of leadership for Prussia. Manteuffel offered his opinion that the Olmütz agreement was signed with the purpose to recreate Austro-Prussian co-operation, and to create some form of collective leadership in the Bund executive even if equality was not accepted by Vienna. Schwarzenberg, of course, rejected Manteuffel's interpretation of the accord and the revolutions' changes. He denied that the accord had assumed Vienna would permit any sharing of its presidential authority, and concluded that Prussia had indeed accepted

33Deutsche Bund, #92, Staatsarchiv, 25 January, 1851.
34Ibid., 26 January, 1851.
Austria's primary position by virtue of her signature at Olmutz. Vienna believed an increase in the Bund central authority was necessary to prevent further revolts.35 A few days earlier Schwarzenberg had written Buol elaborating on Vienna's position regarding the conference's competence, but also concerning voting arrangements and constitutional questions. The Prime Minister referred to article XXIV of the 1820 Acts which provided the authority for the Bund to alter its structure. Schwarzenberg questioned whether this article allowed a simple majority to pass constitutional reforms or if a two-thirds majority was needed.36 In his questioning, Schwarzenberg had previewed Berlin's newest tactic of delay.

Prussia now contended that if the Dresden conference decided it did have the legal authority to pass constitutional reforms, then such changes had to be approved by either a two-thirds or three-fourths majority. Berlin interpreted article XXIV as providing that all constitutional questions were "important or priority" matters which demanded more than a simple majority to pass. Alvensleben expressed this opinion after confering with Manteuffel who had returned to Berlin. On 1 February, Prussia presented its arguments on this article to the conference, and

36Deutsche Bund, #90, Staatsarchiv, 26 January, 1851.
suggested the size of the vote depended upon the Bund's interpretation of Articles IV and VI of the 1815 Treaty. Berlin did not presume to decide for the Bund which percentage was correct, but did argue that all three articles made it clear that a simple majority was not enough. At this meeting Prussia also offered its counter-proposal to Austria's voting system. Berlin claimed that the reductions contained in Vienna's plan would deprive the small states of any independent role in the Bund. Therefore, Berlin suggested the voting system be based on seventy-nine votes. Prussia and Austria would be equal with each having ten votes, while the four major middle kingdoms would have four each. The remaining forty-three votes would be divided among the Bund with no member having less than one vote. This plan would also end split voting. This Prussian proposal was designed to win over the small states who were in danger of losing what little influence they would hold in the Bund if the Austrian plan passed. While it appears strange that Schwarzenberg would make such a proposal since Austria needed the votes of the small states to pass Bruck's plan, two motives were possible. Schwarzenberg believed Austria could have a majority in the new system, and may have wanted this system accepted by the conference before any vote was

37Ibid., 1 February, 1851.
38Ibid., 1 February, 1851.
taken on the merger plan. Austria would thereby achieve its aims and increase its power. Or, the Prime Minister may have feared the small states which held the deciding votes were leaning toward the Prussian position, and thus wanted the voting system changed in Austria's favor before the merger vote.

Concurrent with Austria's rejection of Prussia's proposals, Berlin was considering a revision of its original voting plan. Vienna had attacked this plan as unacceptable because it allowed too many votes, which Vienna maintained would make the system even more cumbersome and slow than it already was. After a brief break in the discussions to allow the delegates to consult their respective governments, Prussian delegates returned to Dresden with the revised plan. On Manteuffel's instructions, Alvensleben proposed a new voting project in which Austria and Prussia would receive three votes each, Bavaria two votes, and the other three middle kingdoms one each. The six remaining votes out of the total of seventeen would be divided among the other Bund members, and thus would re-create split voting again. Prussia favored this system since it tended to believe Bavaria would be independent of Austria's pressures and perhaps even oppose Vienna.39

39 Ibid., 26 February, 1851.
Prussia's timing was quite good since Schwarzenberg notified the conference on 1 March that the first Prussian plan was rejected by Austria. The Prime Minister wrote Buol maintaining that Prussia was adopting delaying tactics and was not interested in the discussions producing reforms. This opinion Schwarzenberg had reached in early February. In fact, the Prime Minister had become so discouraged at the lack of progress due to Prussia's demands that he had left Dresden on 4 February and returned to Vienna. Buol was placed in charge of the Austrian delegation while Alvensleben became his counterpart when Manteuffel left the conference. Although the official reason for Schwarzenberg's departure was to consult with Francis Joseph on Prussia's demand for equality of the presidency, the real reason was simply that Schwarzenberg had lost faith in the conference ever accomplishing constitutional reforms. On 21 February, he informed Francis Joseph that the political manoeuvrings of Prussia had ruined any opportunity for settlement of the German question coming out of Dresden. He feared Prussia's delegates had ended the possibility of Bund reforms as well as his proposal to merge the Austrian Empire and the Bund. Manteuffel had

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40 Deutscher Bund, #92, Staatsarchiv, 1 March, 1851.
written Schwarzenberg on 27 February concerning Bruck's plan and the question of equality. Manteuffel had suggested that one possible area of agreement might be reached if Austria agreed to grant Prussia equality of leadership in return for Prussia's not opposing the merger plan—but this suggestion assumed Prussia would be able to vote down the merger by insisting on a two-thirds majority which Austria could not hope to attain. 42 Schwarzenberg, after receiving the letter, wrote Prokesch-Osten complaining about Prussia's demands and delays. He accused Berlin of delaying vital decisions on reforms for over two months, and finally expressed the belief that the only thing Austria might salvage from the conference was the reconstruction of the 1815 Bund. In reply, the Ambassador agreed that the Bund would probably vote this reconstruction and perhaps vital reform questions could be settled later. Prokesch-Osten viewed Prussia's tactics as the means by which Berlin was attempting to prolong a type of dualism within the Bund. Until some permanent Bund organization was established, Austria and Prussia remained the two leaders. If, however, the 1815 Bund were renewed, then Austria would assume sole leadership again. 43 The Ambassador sent a second letter on 6 March in which he expressed

42 Ringhoffer, Bernstorff, Im Kampfe, p. 159.
his fear that this dualism might become permanent reality if Austria failed to persuade the conference to renew the 1815 Bund before Dresden broke up over the Austro-Prussian struggle.\textsuperscript{44}

In hope of breaking the Dresden deadlock, Schwarzenberg notified Buol on 6 March of Manteuffel's arguments, and instructed the Austrian delegate to redouble his efforts at attaining a vote on Bruck's merger plan. If this was not possible, then Buol was to push for the renewal of the 1815 Bund structure. On 4 March, Schwarzenberg had answered Manteuffel by accusing Berlin of not following the Olmütz accord. Vienna claimed Prussia had agreed to co-operate on Bund reforms, but at Dresden had reneged on this pledge and had promoted disruptive delays.\textsuperscript{45} The next round of indecisive letters began on 10 March when Manteuffel informed Schwarzenberg of Berlin's view on the Olmütz accord. Berlin claimed no formal pledge of co-operation had been made by Prussia, and that it had never agreed to surrender its vital interests just to satisfy Austrian policies. Manteuffel further argued that Brandenburg had never agreed that Prussia should assume a secondary role— even at the Warsaw meeting— as Schwarzenberg had claimed.

\textsuperscript{44}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 204. Letter of 6 March, 1851.
\textsuperscript{45}\textit{Deutsche Bund}, #92, Staatsarchiv, 6 March, 1851.
The long Austrian answer came in the form of a policy letter to Buol in which Schwarzenberg reviewed the problem of leadership and claimed that Russia had supported Vienna's right to sole leadership at Warsaw and had continued to support it. Schwarzenberg's views were communicated to Berlin by Buol.46

The final struggle at Dresden over Bund reforms and voting plans came in April. Buol had relayed Manteuffel's 27 March letter to Schwarzenberg to which was added a copy of an article from Preussische Zeitung of 30 March. The article compared the Austro-Prussian voting plans and inferred that Berlin might accept Bund reform at Dresden, but not at the cost of surrendering any vital interests to Austria. Manteuffel's letter gave the reasons for the policy. Berlin had decided that Austrian policies would fail at Dresden because Russia was no longer supporting Vienna and because Prussia had gained a majority in the Bund to enable it to defeat Austria's plans.47 This latter assumption was supported by Buol in two dispatches which warned Vienna that Prussia wanted to decrease the authority of the presidency since Austria refused to share it with Berlin.48 On 9 April, Schwarzenberg replied by

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46Ibid., 10 and 20 March, 1851.
47Deutsche Bund, #91, Staatsarchiv, 2 April, 1851.
48Ibid., 12 and 24 April, 1851.
rejecting Prussia's revised voting plan, and claimed the only purpose for both plans had been to delay reform and to split the Bund. Schwarzenberg informed Buol that Austria also had opposed them because they gave too much voting strength to Prussia's allies. Warnings that Prussia had the necessary votes to obtain a resolution providing for a two-thirds majority to pass constitutional issues appeared accurate. On 26 April, Buol predicted that Berlin would have a clear majority when a vote was taken on its resolution. A preliminary Diet report of 27 December, 1850, which suggested a three-fourths majority was needed was replaced when the conference accepted Prussia's two-thirds majority resolution in early May.

Even after the inability of the Dresden delegates to attain solutions to the major Bund problems, Austria did not abandon its attempts to win reforms or approval of Bruck's plan. Since Schwarzenberg was still determined to regain Austria's position as primary Bund state, Bruck's merger plan remained a means to reach the goal. If its political implications had been the main reason why Schwarzenberg had supported the plan, then the same implications caused the plan's defeat at Dresden and later at Frankfort.

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49 Deutsche Bund, #92, Staatsarchiv, 9 April, 1851.
50 Deutsche Bund, #91, Staatsarchiv, 26 April, 1851.
51 Golo Mann, Deutsche Geschichte des 19 und 20 Jahrhunderts (Frankfurt am Main, 1958), p. 125.
Although failure to obtain Bund approval was the immediate reason for the plan's defeat at Dresden, opposition from the other Great Powers had an influence on its defeat in 1851 and even later when Austria attempted its revival at Frankfort. Schwarzenberg had assumed after the Warsaw meetings that St. Petersburg would continue supporting Vienna's efforts to reduce Berlin's opposition and regain its dominant Bund position. While this assumption was correct, Schwarzenberg was in error when he attempted to expand upon Russia's support by promoting Bruck's merger plan, disregarding its threats to Russia's vital interests. The final phases of the discussions at Dresden had raised the international implications of the plan to an acute stage. Palmerston, speaking for the British cabinet, viewed the Bund as the result of the 1815 Vienna settlement, and was not prepared to accept such a far-reaching revision unless England was a participant in the talks. 52 The British envoy to the Bund presented London's objections in July. London viewed the Bund's existence as part of the post-Napoleonic treaties which implied that it was subject to Great Power veto regarding any constitutional changes. London further claimed that Vienna had interpreted article XXIV of the 1820 acts in a "permissive" manner which meant a legal majority of the Bund was enough to

pass constitutional reforms. However, London argued that this article was "restrictive" in nature and thus permitted changes only after the unanimous approval of the five Great Power signators to the original 1815 treaty. Therefore, Vienna's attempts to create Bruck's empire of seventy million was subject to London's veto if the plan was passed by the Bund. France's reasons for its opposition were easier to understand. Paris supported London's arguments, but was more concerned that this "empire" would be a direct threat to French interests and perhaps even to France itself. Paris was not prepared to accept such a unification of Central and Eastern Europe by Austria or Prussia. \(^{53}\)

Important as the opposition from Paris and London was, the attitude of St. Petersburg was decisive.

Because Russia had supported Vienna's policies at Warsaw and Olmütz and had not officially altered its position, Schwarzenberg naturally had assumed Vienna still enjoyed Russia's support. Initially Tsar Nicholas I had approved Bruck's plan. At Warsaw he had implied that this "empire" would be an excellent bulwark against revolution and liberalism. Russia also had supported Austria's contention that Bund reform was an internal matter, and therefore outside legitimate British and French foreign

\(^{53}\) Deutsche Bund, #21, Staatsarchiv, 25 July, 1851.
interests or rights of interference. Content in the belief Russia still held to these opinions, Schwarzenberg had attempted to force Prussia's submission at Dresden by asking the Bund to accept the merger plan. Schwarzenberg seemed to have no second thoughts concerning Russia's support for the merger, but St. Petersburg did. Opposition from Paris and London awakened Russia to the plan's dangers, but St. Petersburg re-evaluated its position on the basis of its own self-interests. Foreign Minister Nesselrode expressed his concern when he realized the merger would encounter major internal and external opposition. The plan had lost its practicality in view of the strong feelings of Prussia, England, and France. Russia realized that such a vast state would certainly threaten its interests in the Balkans. The possibility that Austria might use the "empire's" strength in the future to block Russia's advance into the Balkans in quest for the long-sought warm-water seaport was, perhaps, the major reason for Russia's shift in policy. Meyendorff had informed Schwarzenberg in March not to count on Russian aid in the event of a Franco-Austrian war over the merger. The official reversal in Russian policy came in April when Meyendorff notified Vienna that Russia no longer approved of Bruck's plan. The excuse

offered was the hostility of London and Paris, but the underlying reason was Russia's concern for its vital interests and future policies of expansion. With this Russian declaration, Bruck's plan was dead at Dresden, but not forgotten.

With the failure of the Dresden conference, Schwarzenberg was faced with defeat of his policies. He had planned that Olmütz and Dresden would regain full Bund control for Austria, decrease Prussian influence and end its claims to equality, and approve the merger of the Bund and the Austrian Empire. However, the balance sheet for the two meetings were not in Austria's favor. Vienna did not regain its predominance in the Bund even though Austria remained the sole president. Berlin's demands for equality of leadership were defeated but certainly not buried. Prussian influence, in spite of the "humiliation" at Olmütz, was not greatly reduced. This fact was made painfully evident to Schwarzenberg by Prussia's success in delaying Austrian proposals and preventing the merger. Russia's opposition to the merger was the final blow against it at Dresden, but the plan would be revived in a different form at Frankfort. At Dresden Schwarzenberg had met the opposition not only of Prussia but also from the small states which he had assumed would support Austria. Therefore, Schwarzenberg had failed to accomplish his policies at the two conferences. Nothing was left except to return to the 1815 Bund structure and
try once more. However, Schwarzenberg had little faith in this Bund with its outmoded Diet of which he had said:

the Diet is a cumbersome, outworn instrument, totally unadapted to present circumstances; I think indeed that, at the first shock, from within or without, the shaky structure will collapse altogether.56

CHAPTER VI

CONTINUATION OF SCHWARZENBERG'S POLICIES AT FRANKFURT;
MAY, 1851 TO MAY, 1852

The Dresden conference had ended with the general stalemate between Austria and Prussia, thus defeating Schwarzenberg's proposed plans. Vienna was forced to revise its policies and prepare for upcoming Bund meetings where Prussia was certain to continue opposing Austria. At Dresden Berlin had defeated Vienna's attempts to merge the Bund and the Austrian Empire to create the seventy million "empire," but Vienna had not renounced the merger concept. Schwarzenberg's expressed goal remained that of regaining Austria's dominance in the Bund and reducing Prussian influence. The problem at Frankfort became not what policies to pursue, but how to accomplish them after the failures at Olmütz and Dresden. Since Austria retained its position as the sole Bund president--ratification in July had re-established the 1815 structure--its posture at Frankfort appeared stronger than Prussia's. How Vienna used its presidential authority to influence the Bund

majority and to win adoption of its policies depended to a great degree on who the Austrian and Prussian Ambassadors were. Austria's official policies were formulated by Schwarzenberg, to be sure, but the task of persuading the Bund to support those Austrian policies rather than Prussia's was the Ambassador's difficult assignment. The person chosen by Schwarzenberg for this important post was Graf Thun.

However, before sending Thun to Frankfort, Schwarzenberg undertook a revision of Austrian policies. The attempt to create the political merger necessary to Bruck's plan was put aside until Prussia's opposition could be overcome. The Austrian Prime Minister decided that the first task was to reassert Vienna's claim to predominance by obtaining majority support in the Bundesrat. After accomplishing this goal, Schwarzenberg was then prepared to win Bundesrat approval for establishing the economic half of Bruck's plan—creation of an all-Bund Zollverein. With this policy, Schwarzenberg hoped to wrest economic leadership from Berlin, combining it with Austria's political leadership already accomplished; thus once again making Austria the dominant state in the Bundesrat and Eastern Europe. The goal which the Prime Minister had set for Austria on becoming its chief minister in 1848 would finally be

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attained. The only realistic alternative to this policy was to put aside Austro-Prussian differences and create a lasting Bund settlement by allowing Prussia a large measure of political equality. Such a policy would provide for constructive co-operation between the two Great Powers rather than a continuation of the divisive struggle. In view of the recent conflicts, such a policy represented a great statesmanlike solution to the German problem, but Schwarzenberg was too deeply involved in the struggle to accept anything less than total victory. Austria, the Prime Minister decided, would continue to press for its policies regardless of Prussia's opposition, and therefore prevented any chance for Austro-Prussian co-operation. Schwarzenberg viewed the struggle not only as a political contest for predominance, but also as a struggle for political survival. To the extent Schwarzenberg succeeded in obtaining his goal of Austria's Bund dominance can be measured in the degree of his ultimate success or failure.

While Vienna revised its policies before the Frankfort meetings, Prussian policies did not undergo such a major revision. Berlin's actions at Dresden had been designed to prevent the Austrian Empire-Bund merger because of its obvious dangers to Prussia's vital interests. Prussia had

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been unsuccessful in obtaining equality of leadership with Austria or in decreasing Austria's authority as Bund president. Since Berlin assumed Schwarzenberg would continue to threaten Prussian influence and perhaps even renew Austria's pressure to win Bund approval of the merger, Prussian interests necessitated the same type of opposition as employed at Dresden. Berlin was prepared to oppose Austrian policies if, in Berlin's judgment, they entailed any reduction in Prussian influence. However, Berlin also was willing to adopt a policy of co-operation with Vienna if Austria did not insist on treating Prussia as a subservient state. The Berlin cabinet decided that Prussia should attempt to revive traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation, but be ready to defend its interests if Austria resumed anti-Prussian policies. Berlin prepared to offer Vienna the choice of working with Prussia or opposing Prussia. Unfortunately, Vienna opted for the latter course. When Schwarzenberg refused any sharing of Bund executive authority with Prussia as the price for Prussia ending its opposition, Berlin was left with no realistic policy other than continuing the struggle. The Dresden stalemate which had demonstrated Berlin's influence in the Bund provided both Great Powers with another opportunity for co-operation. Manteuffel, believing that such a

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\(^4\)Arnold O. Meyer, Bismarcks Kampf mit Österreich am Bundestag zu Frankfort, 1851 bis 1859 (Berlin, 1927), p. 35.
policy was the best long-range course for Prussia, decided to pursue a moderate position at Frankfort until Vienna showed its plans. He instructed Prussia's Ambassador, Otto von Bismarck, to seek out traditional means by which to end the struggle and solve necessary Bund problems. Such an Austro-Prussian understanding was necessary if peace was to be maintained, but hopes for this agreement were destroyed by Schwarzenberg's policies and by the actions of Prussia's Ambassador when faced with Vienna's aggressive plans.

After Schwarzenberg had determined how policies were to be implemented at Frankfort, his next task was the appointment of Austria's Ambassador to the Bund. The Prime Minister selected Graf Thun whom Schwarzenberg believed possessed the necessary ability to guide Vienna's plans through Prussian opposition. In choosing Thun, Schwarzenberg had picked a diplomat who had extensive experience in German and Bund affairs. As former Ambassador to Stuttgart, Thun had received his fundamental training in Bund politics, and was quite knowledgeable on the major issues. During the earlier stages of the Austro-Prussian struggle, Schwarzenberg had employed Thun both in Berlin and at the Frankfort Assembly. He was aware of Prussia's

position on all important Bund questions, and knew how its opposition to Vienna's plans had caused their failure. Under normal conditions of the pre-1848 Bund, Thun would have been an excellent choice for the post at Frankfort, but conditions in 1851 were anything but normal.

The Ambassador's performance at Frankfort prompted much criticism, but even Thun's critics, Bismarck included, gave him credit for his vast knowledge of Bund problems and his general diplomatic ability. However, when confronted by such an unique diplomat as Bismarck, Thun was unable to defend Austria's position strongly enough. This inability does not place the major blame for Austria's failures at Frankfort on Thun. It remains doubtful that any Austrian diplomat, except Prime Minister Schwarzenberg, could have successfully defended Austrian policies while defeating Bismarck's tactics. If Thun appears more as an unfortunate victim, he bears a large measure of responsibility for this appearance because of failings in his temperament and nature. When Thun was sent to Frankfort, Vienna assumed that a Bund majority composed largely of small states would support its plans. Austria, because of its vast empire, did not face any major threats to its vital interests. Schwarzenberg presumed that Thun would meet Prussia's opposition, and maintain the assumed Bund majority to increase Austria's presidential authority. 6

Much of the criticism Thun's reputation has received derives from Bismarck's attacks, justified or not. In a letter to Manteuffel, Bismarck gave his impressions of Austria's delegation at Frankfort. Count Thun was described as a person who danced and drank until late hours, who played cards too often, and who neglected his proper duties. While Thun's behavior was excessive even for a Habsburg diplomat, it was not wholly unusual or unexpected. However, such behavior was generally unacceptable to the Prussian diplomatic corps, and was especially repugnant to Bismarck. Another reason Bismarck portrayed Thun unfavorably can be attributed to the conflict over Austria's special Bund position. After Prussia repeated its demand for equality, Thun's attitude toward Prussia and Bismarck hardened. The Austrian Ambassador considered Prussia's demands "out of place," and responded by adopting a hostile attitude. Somewhat unfriendly and even cranky at times, Thun often became arrogant toward Bismarck when describing Austria's rights and downgrading Prussia's importance. Opposed to Thun's life style, Bismarck accepted Thun's arrogance even less, and thus undertook to revile him whenever possible. At a later date, Bismarck noted

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his objections of Thun to Prokesch-Osten. He accused Thun of conducting Austria's diplomatic business in the traditional manner of the Habsburgs—with great arrogance. Many historians would later accuse Bismarck of the same trait.

Regardless of Bismarck's opinion of Thun, the Ambassador remained at his post in Frankfort until after Schwarzenberg's death. It remains a mute question whether Schwarzenberg approved of Thun's style, or allowed him to remain at his post for lack of a better replacement. The possibility certainly existed that Schwarzenberg would have replaced Thun had not the Prime Minister's death prevented it. The best explanation why Thun was not removed is the most simple one—lack of someone better and available. The one major diplomat who had more experience in Bund problems than Thun was Austria's Ambassador to Berlin, Prokesch-Osten. Since Schwarzenberg remained in full command of Austria's foreign policy from Vienna, the most important diplomatic post was Berlin. The situation demanded the selection for Berlin of the diplomat who best understood the workings of the Prussian government. Since Schwarzenberg obviously trusted Prokesch-Osten's ability to handle the Berlin post, there was no reason to transfer

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9 Meyer, Bismarcks Kampf, p. 54.
10 Ibid., pp. 49-50.
him to Frankfort just to replace Thun who was quite adequate in his duties. Schwarzenberg believed the position in Frankfort did not demand a dynamic Ambassador who could implement new policies since all policies were directed from Vienna. However, Austria did need exactly such a diplomat to protect Austrian interests against Bismarck. Buol later did replace Thun after Schwarzenberg died, but Austria had lost too much influence by then to recover its Bund leadership.\textsuperscript{11}

As important as Thun's appointment was for Austria, the choice of Prussia's Ambassador to Frankfort was more so. Austria was prepared to make new attempts to attain Schwarzenberg's goals, but Berlin could select one of two possible policies. If Vienna persisted in its aggressive plans as at Dresden, then Berlin was determined to resist. However, if Austria did desire to renew traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation at Frankfort, Prussia should be willing to agree. The task, therefore, was to determine a flexible foreign policy and to appoint an Ambassador who could react properly to either Austrian policy. With the Dresden stalemate forcing Austria to accept renewal of the 1815 Bund instead of approving the merger plan, Berlin's prestige had recovered from the diplomatic setback at Olmütz. The political influence of Manteuffel certainly

\textsuperscript{11}Ibid., p. 50.
had increased with the success of Prussia's tactics at Dresden, and the Prime Minister leaned toward a policy designed to promote co-operation with Austria without endangering vital interests. Berlin decided that Prussia should pursue a co-operative policy at least until Austria had demonstrated its intentions. Berlin did not desire the continuation of the Austro-Prussian confrontation, but remained determined not to surrender its claims of equality in face of hostile Austrian pressures. Prussia's Ambassador, therefore, would be required to support Berlin's policy while being prepared to resist any Austrian encroachment against Prussian influence or interests. With such general instructions in mind, the Prussian government undertook to select its chief delegate—a selection fated to decide the course of future Austro-Prussian relations.

The person appointed by Frederick William to be Prussia's minister and plenipotentiary at Frankfort was Otto von Bismarck. Although this choice was somewhat of a surprise in Berlin, it was fully unexpected in Vienna. Bismarck appealed to the king not only because of his conservative Junker background, but also due to his attitudes expressed during the revolutions and the conflict with Austria. It is not the purpose of this paper to indulge in a lengthy explanation of the many reasons why Bismarck was appointed to his position, but only to discuss his opposition to Austrian policies.
the Reichstag that the Olmütz retreat by Prussia was acceptable because of Berlin's attempt to fight for policies (German unity) which were not then in its vital interests. This statement was not a denial that Prussia should not work toward unification, but rather that Radowitz's program had been defeated by Schwarzenberg for the moment and this fact had to be accepted by Prussia. Frederick William appeared pleased with such a defense of Prussia's diplomacy at Olmütz, and of Radowitz's general goals. Partly as the result of this attitude, Bismarck was rewarded with the important post at Frankfort. Given Berlin's declared policy of seeking cooperation with Austria, it would have been a most difficult task for any diplomat to fulfill, but Bismarck's tactics made it easier for a complete rift to develop. This is not to deny that Austria's policies and Thun's high-handed manners did not contribute much to this split, but certainly a person of milder disposition and more flexible ways than Bismarck might have protected Prussia's interests and avoided worsening the Austro-Prussian conflict.

Bismarck arrived in Frankfort on 11 May, 1861, to assume his new duties as Ambassador to the Bund. Although

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Berlin professed its policy was to co-operate with Austria, there was little chance that such a policy would actually develop. The revolutions of 1848 and the Austro-Prussian struggle had destroyed much of the good will between Berlin and Vienna. Radowitz and the Prussian Union had confronted Vienna with what Vienna believed was a major threat to Austria's interests, and thus forced Schwarzenberg to oppose the Union. The result was its demise and the agreement at Olmütz. If anything concrete remained of traditional Austro-Prussian co-operation, Bismarck would quickly destroy it. The two German Great Powers were antagonistic and each determined not to show weakness in its policies at Frankfort. Bismarck had been sent to the Bund because Berlin assumed he supported the policy of attempting co-operation. However, Bismarck soon developed his own opinion of Austria's role at Frankfort as well as what Prussia's should be.

The Ambassador often viewed the Bund more as an instrument of Austrian policies than an independent organization. Prussia could protect its interests and perhaps even increase its influence through alliance with the northern Bund states and through the Zollverein. Bismarck believed this was possible only through hard work because of Austria's anti-Prussian policies.\textsuperscript{15} If Austria

\textsuperscript{15}Reiners, \textit{Bismarck}, pp. 194-195.
was the menacing power as Bismarck believed, then his belief that Prussia had to denounce Vienna and its Bund position was justified. In August Bismarck wrote to Manteuffel complaining of Thun's attempts to use his position as Bund president to decide matters which were beyond his powers. Bismarck denounced Austria's claim that Vienna enjoyed special powers simply because of its historic position as president. Prussia's Ambassador believed that Vienna was willing to use its presidency to gain decisive control over the Bund and especially over Prussia. This was clearly a direct threat to Prussia's interests and had to be prevented. Bismarck repeated this basic assumption to Manteuffel when he wrote that in the future Prussia had to unite, in some degree, the German states against Austria to protect Prussia. It was Bismarck's defense of these interests against the assumed Austrian threats which finalized the struggle between the two states.

With the re-convening of the Bund Diet, Vienna was presented another opportunity to pursue its policies which

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17 Petersdorff, Bismarck; Die gesammelten Werke, p. 29. Letter of 29 August, 1851.

had been refused at Dresden. The delegates at Frankfort, of course, debated many questions but the two which concerned Vienna most were: The extent of Austria's presidential authority and its attempt to create an all-Bund Zollverein. The first was but a continuation of the lengthy struggle for leadership. Prussia's desire for equality had not been reduced at Olmütz or Dresden, and with Bismarck as Prussia's Ambassador, it remained a major obstacle to any Austro-Prussian co-operation. The Zollverein question concerned Austria's renewed attempt to revive Bruck's merger plan. Thwarted at Dresden, Schwarzenberg decided to take a different approach. Instead of reviving the proposal for the Austrian Empire-Bund merger and then creation of the all-Bund Zollverein, Schwarzenberg decided to attempt creation of the economic half of Bruck's plan first. In so doing, Vienna came face to face with one of Berlin's most important self-interests. While Prussia was perhaps unequal to Austria in political influence, Berlin surely had more economic influence among Bund members than did Vienna. Austria hoped to avoid the external opposition of Russia and France by proposing only the Zollverein, but fully expected the solid opposition of Prussia. The progress that Austria made on both these problems was dependent to a large degree on Bismarck's ability to protect Prussia's interests and Schwarzenberg's failure to overcome Prussia's disruptive tactics.
In September, Prokesch-Osten wrote Schwarzenberg that many old Prussian tactics used at Dresden had reappeared at Frankfort. The Ambassador predicted Bismarck would use Prussia's right as a Great Power to question decisions of Thun as Bund president, even on minor points. The Prussian plan was to demonstrate to Austria its (Prussia's) power and to convince Vienna that its policies could not be pushed through the Bund without Berlin's support. Thun gave support to Prokesch-Osten's prediction when he informed Schwarzenberg of Prussia's position of military questions. In a letter of 21 September, Thun reported the friendly attitude of Bismarck, but also noted that the Ambassador was quite offensive in his diplomatic duties. It appeared to Thun that Bismarck was trying too hard to protect Prussian interests from imaginary Austrian threats. Thun accused Bismarck of attempting to gain a type of equality with Austria by demanding Prussian approval of every decision, and of making the Austro-Prussian struggle almost a personal contest over who had the strongest will. Bismarck continued to insist on Prussia's right to be consulted on every issue. He threatened Austria with constant delays over each decision, and refused to allow Thun to use his presidential authority to decide minor points.

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20 Moyer, Bismarcks Kampf, pp. 44-45 and 58.
Bismarck's insistence on using Prussia's right to be consulted produced the first major conflict between Austria and Prussia at Frankfort. Involved was more than just the normal exercise of the president's powers by Austria. Bismarck viewed Vienna's position as president as unearned, and thus was determined to prove Prussia's equality at every point. While Thun spoke of the necessity to increase the authority of the Bund executive to decide minor points if the Bund was to avoid unnecessary delays and devote its attention to solving problems, Bismarck denied that the Dresden conference had ever agreed to such an increase in the president's authority. In Bismarck's opinion, Dresden approved this change only with the prior agreement of both major states, and Prussia refused to accept the proposed increase. Therefore, Thun's insistence on his enlarged powers was illegal, and Bismarck was determined to prevent it. 21

The actual crisis developed over the question of minority and majority rights and what constituted procedural matters. Bismarck had indicated his position when he wrote Manteuffel on 21 September. The Ambassador argued that changes in the Bund executive had to be approved by all members, and this revision was a procedural matter. Thus, he denied Austria's contention that a simple majority

21Ibid., pp. 68-69.
could decide the issue. The immediate cause of the conflict involved the selection of membership to a military commission and its authority. Bismarck was concerned less with the commission itself than with the precedent of Austria's using a majority vote to decide the question. Bismarck communicated his views to Berlin while announcing to the Bund that Prussia would not consider itself bound by a simple majority vote on procedural questions. The Ambassador maintained that such questions were of vital concern to the two Great Powers, and therefore had to be approved by both Austria and Prussia. This would give Berlin a veto over decisions to which it strongly objected.

In the Bund debate of 20 December, 1851, Bismarck again took the opportunity to deny that the Dresden conference had given Austria any authority to alter the president's power. This debate also revolved around Austria's request that the Bund create the enlarged Zollverein. This policy, if successful, would clearly decrease Prussian influence and thus was a major threat to its interests. Bismarck claimed that such a Bund resolution which endangered Prussia's economic welfare required its approval regardless

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22 Deutsche Bund, #21, Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv (Vienna, 1851), letter of 21 September, 1851. Hereafter referred to as Deutsche Bund, Staatsarchiv.

23 Ibid., Letter of 13 October, 1851 and Meyer, Bismarcks Kampf, p. 66.
of any decision voted by the Bund. Bismarck refused
to change his position even after Austria pledged to
respect the special rights of Prussia and the minority
states. Thun reported to Schwarzenberg on 8 January,
1852, that Bismarck continued to argue that majority
decisions were not binding if they endangered vital
interests of the minority and especially if Prussia
objected. It appeared to Thun that Bismarck was for­
getting the pledge to respect Bund resolutions which
Prussia had made at Olmütz.

In his determination to protect Prussian interests,
Bismarck had demonstrated Prussia's refusal to accept
Austria's dominance in the Bund. The Ambassador had also
shown his ability to thwart Austrian policies. Thun
reported that Bismarck seemed much stronger in his ob­
jections to Austrian policies than was Berlin, at least
he assumed a more vital stand. In the reports to Man­
teuffel of 22 December, 1851, Bismarck gave special
attention to the majority voting system. He warned Berlin
of the political dangers in Austria's attempt to persuade
the Bund that changing the president's authority was not a
procedural question and thus could be adopted by a

24 Meyer, Bismarcks Kampf, p. 69.
25 Deutsche Bund, #23, Staatsarchiv, Letter of 8
January, 1852.
26 Ibid., Letter of 29 January, 1852.
majority vote. Bismarck rejected this argument by predicting future dangers to Berlin if such an Austrian policy were approved. Vienna, by virtue of a slim majority, could then proceed to major revisions of the Bund such as creation of the enlarged Zollverein. Although Vienna had given Berlin guarantees of respecting minority rights, Bismarck was unwilling to accept such promises and determined to continue his demands for a Prussian veto on important issues. 27

Confronted by Bismarck's repeated assertions of Prussia's veto rights, Thun constantly had to defend Vienna's position that the Bund had the needed authority and responsibility to decide major questions by a majority vote. The Austrian Ambassador made it clear that Vienna believed the Bund also had the authority to enforce its majority resolutions even over the objections of some of its members—i.e. Prussia. Thun again reminded Bismarck of the Prussian pledge at Olmütz not to oppose Bund resolutions. Prussia's position had greatly improved since the meeting, and Berlin was reluctant to fulfill the pledge. Thun informed Schwarzenberg in January that Bismarck had answered his letter by protesting Bund authority to assume such


illegal powers. Bismarck continued to assert Prussia's position even in the face of possible Bund threats to use military force. Bismarck knew that these were empty threats since neither the Bund nor Russia would support this Austrian idea. Thun made no attempt to persuade the Bund to vote military sanctions against Prussia since Vienna was defeated on the one issue which might have produced an open conflict—the Bund refused to create the enlarged Zollverein.

Regardless of Thun's attempts to persuade Bismarck that Austria was not threatening Prussian interests and therefore Bismarck need not adopt such an uncompromising, hostile attitude toward Vienna, his efforts failed to move the Prussian Ambassador from his self-appointed position. Prussia, with general support from its commercial-political allies, remained steadfast in its opposition. Schwarzenberg decided Vienna could do very little to change Bismarck's attitude by arguments. Since Austria was not prepared to challenge Prussia's rights to protect its political interests, the Prime Minister opted to challenge Prussia's commercial interests instead. The hostility of England and France when added to Russia's opposition had temporarily halted Austria's effort to promote Bruck's merger plan, but Schwarzenberg decided to attempt the establishment of the

29Ibid., Letter of 16 January, 1852.
all-Bund Zollverein. If such a policy succeeded, then Austria would have accomplished a significant reduction in Prussian influence within the Bund, while preparing the foundation for the Austrian Empire-Bund merger at a future date. Because Prussia could not be persuaded to reduce its political opposition to Vienna, Schwarzenberg hoped that by attacking its economic position Vienna could force Berlin to lessen its objections. The Zollverein proposal did threaten Prussia with reduction in its influence and perhaps eventual isolation. Austria had to demonstrate to the southern Bund states that they would receive major economic benefits, while promising to protect the interests of the northern states. If this were possible, then Austria might be able to separate the commercial-political ties binding Prussia's allies to Berlin.

Vienna's obvious intentions in proposing such a Zollverein were not missed on Bismarck. The Prussian Ambassador viewed Austria's renewed attempts to create part of Bruck's plan as an open attack on Prussia's economic welfare, which it was. The political struggle between Austria and Prussia being stalemated, Vienna had to turn toward aggressive commercial policies. If Vienna could gain major economic power within the Bund, then Austria would surely use this power to attack Prussia's political

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30 Helmut Böhme, Deutschlands Weg zur Grossmacht (Köln, 1966), p. 23.
position. Bismarck realized that the Austrian proposal was nothing more than the prelude in establishing Bund hegemony. It was natural that Schwarzenberg desired the enlarged Zollverein to be the basis for a future merger. Prussia had successfully prevented the policy at Olmütz and Dresden, and Bismarck was determined to prevent Vienna's economic attack at Frankfort. With most of the Bund states either members of the Prussian-led Zollverein or indirectly connected to it by economic agreements, Prussia viewed the Zollverein as the germ cell (Keimzelle) of future Prussian Bund leadership. Its influence was certainly greater since Austria was not a member, but Prussia stood to lose its special position if an all-Bund Zollverein were established.³¹ In November, 1851, Bismarck held a private conference with Thun concerning the Zollverein. Bismarck informed his Austrian counterpart that Vienna's attacks on Prussian economic interests and the Zollverein were not welcomed by Berlin. Thun responded that the Prussian-led organization was an instrument designed to oppose Austria's primary position within the Bund—much like the Prussian Union had been—and that Vienna had every right to remove this opposition. Thun told Bismarck that Vienna would rather change the Zollverein by making it an inclusive Bund organization, but would not hesitate to destroy it if

³¹Reiners, Bismarck, p. 204.
Prussia refused to compromise. It was quite clear to both Berlin and Bismarck that Schwarzenberg's attempt to create the enlarged *Zollverein* was designed primarily to reduce Prussian opposition while increasing Austrian influence. Prussia responded accordingly by using economic pressures to keep its allies in line.

In addition to basic political implications of Prussia's opposition to Austria's *Zollverein* proposal, there were also important, fundamental economic reasons. The 1834 *Zollverein* was primarily constructed to promote major industrial growth while allowing a large degree of free trade among its members for protection of non-industrial products. To be sure, Prussia enjoyed greater economic benefits from the *Zollverein* than did other members, but this resulted largely from Prussia's more advanced state of industrialism. The high degree of interconnection between Prussia's heavy industries—especially iron and steel—and the light manufacturing industries of the other members often made the latter dependent on Prussia's industrial production. Schwarzenberg's proposal was geared more for the southern *Bund* states and Austria whose economic systems were less advanced and in which agricultural products comprised a larger percentage of their economic growth than among the *Zollverein* members. The protection of food products from Austria's non-German areas required high tariffs which
were incompatible to the Zollverein free trade arrangements. However, Schwarzenberg hoped to break the connections between Prussian industries and northern member's economy as well as providing for the necessary protection for Austria's food products. If the Bund agreed to create the enlarged Zollverein, then Austria would naturally demand special tariff privileges. Vienna considered that its agricultural products should enjoy high tariff protection against the importation of competing products from other areas of Europe. The result of this protection would be higher costs for the food stuffs for the Zollverein since production costs in the Austrian Empire were higher than those in more advanced states. If such protection was given to Austria's food stuffs, similar products from East Prussia would be placed in a disadvantageous position. Because of the free trade system and certain Zollverein tariffs against food products, food stuffs from the Austrian Empire were usually excluded from importation, but any change in the arrangement would surely affect Prussian productions adversely.

Prussia's position was clearly expressed by Minister Delbrück when he argued that Austria's system of special tariffs would endanger the Zollverein concept of free trade.

32 Böhme, Deutschlands, p. 15.
33 Ibid., p. 23.
If Austria could demand and receive special treatment for some of its products, then every member of the customs union could insist on the same privilege. Only if the entire Austrian Empire were incorporated within the enlarged Zollverein would the necessity for special tariff protection be greatly reduced. However, Schwarzenberg realized that such an enlargement of the Austrian proposal to include its empire would have little chance for success. Vienna believed it easier to persuade the Bund to create the all-Bund Zollverein first, and then to seek special protection. Austria's immediate objective was to convince the southern states that the Austrian proposal would enable them to enjoy economic benefits and growth as the Zollverein had experienced since 1834. Vienna also had to convince Prussia's commercial allies that their economic interests would not suffer while the political ties to Berlin could be reduced or removed if the states wished. Thus, Bund members would enjoy increased economic growth and prosperity, while only Prussia stood to suffer a loss in economic power.

Berlin's plan for opposition was quite clear. It had to persuade its allies that the Austrian system was meant to benefit Austria, and that their interests would indeed be reduced while Austria increased both its economic

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31 Ibid., p. 27.
and political influence within the Bund—a danger to all states. On 6 September, 1851, Bismarck wrote Manteuffel informing him that Minister Bruck had discussed the Austrian proposal for the enlarged Zollverein.\textsuperscript{35} Bruck attempted to head off major opposition from Bismarck by explaining why Austria believed the proposal was necessary. The Minister noted the success of the 1834 Zollverein and the benefits enjoyed by its members. Bruck attempted to persuade Bismarck that such a successful organization should be enlarged to allow economic prosperity for all Bund members. Although Bismarck could hardly disagree that the Zollverein had been successful and had increased Prussian influence, he disagreed that Austria's plan would provide for a general increase of economic prosperity. Bismarck informed Berlin that he believed Prussia should oppose the Austrian plan to protect its dominant economic position. He admitted that the proposal was a legitimate Austrian policy since the plan would certainly provide economic benefits for Austria, but claimed it was only logical that Berlin oppose the proposal since it endangered Prussian vital interests.\textsuperscript{36} Bismarck predicted that Schwarzenberg would be unable, because of internal problems, to devote

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Petersdorff, Bismarck; Die gesammelten Werke}, p. 43.

\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 70. Letter of 9 October, 1851.
Vienna's full attention and influence toward persuading the Bund to accept the plan. However, even if Vienna could, Bismarck assumed Prussia would be able to defeat the proposal by making concessions to its Zollverein allies. The concessions to which Bismarck was referring concerned the recently approved convention between Prussia and Hanover, signed on 7 September. Vienna had hoped to win Hanover's support for its proposal by offering this state special rights within the enlarged Zollverein. Berlin, attempting to prevent any defection of its allies, undertook negotiations with this major Bund state. By the terms of the 7 September convention, Hanover agreed to join the tariff association with Prussia in return for an advantageous system of revenue sharing and considerable reductions in import duties on its manufactured products. Hanover, which had been dissatisfied with its economic position and perhaps willing to support Austria's proposal, now tied its economic growth to the Prussian system, with the additional result that Vienna turned its attention toward creating a Zollverein for the southern Bund states. 37

This new Austrian attempt involved Schwarzenberg's decision that Prussia was too firmly entrenched in the Bund because of the 1834 Zollverein to allow the Austrian

proposal to pass. Therefore, Vienna attempted to create an alternative to the Prussian-led Zollverein. By separating Prussia and the southern Bund states indirectly connected to the Zollverein, Schwarzenberg would reduce Prussian economic influence and perhaps then force Prussia to accept the joining of the two customs unions to form the one Bund Zollverein. Bismarck learned of Schwarzenberg's newest effort in November. If Vienna could arrange the inclusion in its plan of Bavaria and Württemburg, along with the small states, then Austria would indeed have a strong bargaining position against Prussia. Schwarzenberg hoped that after creating this southern Zollverein, Vienna could entice Hesse and Frankfort from the Prussian system by offering these members special tariff considerations—much like the concessions Prussia made to Hanover. Bismarck wrote Manteuffel on 22 November explaining the reasons for this newest Austrian proposal. Not only did Bismarck warn of the obvious economic dangers to Prussia of such an organization, he was especially firm in noting the political implications. He feared that Austria wanted to use the economic union to create a political union of southern Bund members similar to the ties which had developed between Prussia and its Zollverein allies. If such an economic-political union could be developed and

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38 Pöschinger, Preussen im Bundestag, p. 45.
then joined with the Austrian Empire, Prussian interests and its Bund position would be greatly jeopardized. Therefore, Bismarck insisted that Berlin use its economic and political influence and pressures on the Bund states to prevent such a possibility. 39

In its attempt to form the southern Zollverein, Austria had the support of several small states, but the vital agreements with Bavaria and Württemburg failed to develop. This failure had two major causes: The southern states feared that such an economic arrangement with Vienna would not match the benefits enjoyed by their connections to the Prussian system. Austria certainly would be the dominant state within the new customs union, and appeared prepared to use this union for Austria's political goals regardless of the economic interests of its member states. More important, however, was that Prussia as able to exert significant pressure by threatening to end the Zollverein treaties with the southern states before the Austrian organization could be established to a point to provide economic growth. The result was that the southern Bund states opted for continuing their economic connections with Prussia rather than seeking possible, but

40 Prokesch von Osten, Aus den Briefen, p. 251.
uncertain, benefits from Austria's organization. The
economic necessities for the southern states won out over
any Habsburg sympathies that might have existed. 41

With the sudden and unexpected death of Prime Minister
Schwarzenberg in April, 1852, Austria was deprived of its
only major statesman. The policies which Schwarzenberg
had planned for Frankfort—especially the creation of a
Zollverein—were still being debated in the Bund at the
time of his death. Bismarck remained adamant in his
refusal to accept Austria's proposal for the Bund Zollverein,
and persisted in his efforts to prevent any possibility of
a southern Bund union. Austria, for its part, maintained
Schwarzenberg's policies but was unable to generate the
necessary support from the middle kingdoms to make its
proposal a reality. On several occasions in June, Bismarck
reported to Manteuffel that Vienna, now led by Graf Buol,
was continuing Schwarzenberg's policies with little success.
He repeated his opinion that Austria's policies were obvious
attempts to attain political dominance. 42 Buol insisted,
quite correctly, that Austria wanted either to create the
Bund Zollverein or join the Prussian one because it was
simply in Austria's economic interests. Bismarck could
hardly deny this reasoning, but maintained that Vienna's


42 Petersdorff, Bismarck; Die gesammelten Werke,
interest in the Zollverein transcended economic reasons. He saw Austria's attempts for what they had always been—Schwarzenberg's program to reduce Prussian Bund influence and regain Austrian predominance. The policies formulated by the late Prime Minister in December, 1848, were still being attempted in 1852. The difference was that Buol now directed Austria's policies, but would meet with the same failures as had Schwarzenberg.
CONCLUSION

When Felix zu Schwarzenberg became Prime Minister of the Austrian Empire in November, 1848, he faced difficult internal and external problems which threatened to dismember the Empire and destroy Habsburg leadership in Eastern Europe. Austria was in danger of being defeated militarily in Italy, of losing to the Kossuth-led revolt in Hungary, and of being replaced by Prussia as the dominant state in the German Bund. Austria desperately needed a diplomat who could bring new vigor to its foreign and internal policies and rescue the sagging fortunes of Vienna. None of the three major problems was simple, but the Prime Minister's tasks were made more difficult by the lack of a strong central government in Vienna. Since he was denied the stability and strength which he needed to deal with the three major problems simultaneously, Schwarzenberg was forced to construct his responses in accordance with the power and authority he possessed at the moment. It was necessary for the Prime Minister to decide which problem was the most dangerous, and then to plan his actions against other threats for a later date. Schwarzenberg, therefore, decided that the military conflict in Italy could be successfully fought by the forces of Marshal
Radetzky without massive aid from Vienna. The revolt in Hungary confronted Vienna with the most serious threat to its authority and the survival of the Empire, and thus had to be crushed as soon as possible. The struggle for leadership in the Bund against Prussia's claim of equality did not pose any threat to the Empire's existence and therefore could be turned to after Austria's more important problems were solved. This is not to imply that Schwarzenberg believed the Austro-Prussian struggle was not a vital issue, but only that he felt Austria had enough influence in the Bund to defend Vienna's position until Austria could bring its full power to bear against Prussia.

Schwarzenberg had complete confidence in Marshal Radetzky's ability to defeat the forces of Charles Albert. This belief became a reality in 1849 when Piedmont surrendered and Austria regained its territories in Italy—thus freeing the Prime Minister of one problem. After Austria had proved itself unable to defeat Kossuth's rebels, Vienna asked and received military aid from Tsar Nicholas I. The result was the collapse of the rebellion by the end of the summer of 1849. With the end of the Hungarian rebellion and the promulgation of an Austrian constitution, Schwarzenberg had restored strong central authority to Vienna and solved two major foreign problems. Austria now possessed the internal and external power to move against Prussia and regain its Bund leadership which had been lost in 1848.
However, even before the conclusion of the Italian and Hungarian problems, Schwarzenberg had announced his policies regarding Prussia and the Bund. In December, 1848, the Prime Minister had declared that Prussia's claims to equality were unwarranted attempts to deprive Austria of its historic rights. Schwarzenberg put Austria on record as determined to reduce the influence of Prussia and to recover its predominance in the Bund. As the first step in this policy, Vienna rejected the 19 October proposal of the Frankfort Assembly which called for the separation of Austria from the non-German areas of the Empire. Schwarzenberg warned that Austria would continue to oppose any solution which denied Vienna its historic leadership or threatened the existence of its Empire.

Prussia then proposed creation of a dualistic authority to rule the Bund, but this plan was rejected by Vienna since it required that Prussia and Austria be equal in authority. Berlin refused to acknowledge Austria's special rights, while Vienna continued to reject Prussia's claims to equality. In the midst of the Austro-Prussian struggle, Radowitz was appointed Foreign Minister for Prussia. Radowitz appeared determined to use the upsurge in nationalism to increase Prussia's influence in the Bund. With the goal of future unification, Radowitz organized the Prussian Union as the instrument to accomplish this goal and to oppose Austria. Schwarzenberg objected to the
Union on the ground that it violated Bund laws which forbade such intra-Bund alliances. Radowitz contended that such laws had lapsed when the 1848 Revolutions had replaced the Diet with the Frankfort Assembly. Schwarzenberg denied the right of a popular revolution to overthrow an organization guaranteed by Great Power treaties, and warned of Austria's decision to destroy the Union and its program.

With neither Austria nor Prussia being able to defeat the other, a compromise was reached in September, 1849. Berlin and Vienna agreed to the establishment of an Interim in which both states would share authority until May, 1850. Vienna hoped that the outstanding Bund problems could be solved before the Interim period ended, but this hope was ruined by Radowitz. The Foreign Minister wished to use the Interim's sharing of authority to increase the membership of the Union. He planned to use this increased membership to confront Austria with the demand that Prussia be allowed to share Bund authority with Austria on a permanent basis. Schwarzenberg had agreed to the accord on the assumption that Prussia would work to settle Bund problems, not to take advantage of Vienna by increasing Union membership. However, Radowitz's hopes were upset when Saxony and Hanover withdrew from the Union in early 1850. Because of Berlin's hostile attitude, Vienna refused to extend the Interim past May, and used its presidential powers to re-establish the
The Prime Minister was determined to use the Diet and Austria's powers as Bund president to end Prussia's claims to equality and Radowitz's Union. The minor crisis which furnished Schwarzenberg with his opportunity was the rebellion in Hesse-Kassel. Prussia sent its troops to support the rebels, while disregarding Bund resolutions ordering withdrawal. The meetings at Warsaw between Prussia, Austria, and Russia provided Schwarzenberg with a Russian pledge of military aid if war between the Bund and Prussia became necessary. Frederick William, receiving advise from Brandenburg and Manteuffel, decided to retreat. Radowitz resigned, and Berlin agreed to withdraw and to meet with Austria at Olmütz. Prussia had suffered a serious, but not irreversible, diplomatic defeat.

The conference between Austria and Prussia had certainly been forced by Austria's use of Bund and Russian support to confront Berlin with superior power. The different historical interpretations of the Olmütz meeting derive not from the events causing the meeting, but what the results were. While it is true that Prussia did lose prestige by being compelled to attend, interpretations such as Hans Kohn's are not completely correct. Kohn wrote that the conference at Olmütz forced the Prussian government, partly because of Russian pressure, to accept continuation of the Bund. Schwarzenberg, through his vigorous leadership, had re-established Austria's leading position by the end of
1850. Such belief that Prussia was "humiliated" and reduced to a secondary position in the Bund is not consistent with Berlin's actions at Dresden and at Frankfort. Faced with superior military power, Berlin chose the correct course, but investigation of the conference's agreement reveals that Prussia lost very little. Aside from solutions to the Hesse-Kassel problem, Berlin did not surrender any vital interests or policies. Schwarzenberg's demands that Prussia accept Vienna's reform solutions and the merger of the Bund-Austrian Empire were rejected by Manteuffel. Prussia agreed only to accept future Bund resolutions and the necessity of Bund reform which was to be considered at the Dresden conference. Schwarzenberg, despite Austria's stronger position at Olmütz, was unable to force Berlin to succumb to Vienna's demands. Manteuffel did not introduce the question of equality since Prussia's position was weak, and Schwarzenberg avoided the issue since he believed Prussia had dropped its claims. A more balanced appraisal of Olmütz was reached by L.C.B. Seaman when he wrote that Prussia had decided to postpone the struggle (for leadership), not to abandon it. Prussia held its hand and Austria did also. The later restoration of the Bund meant that Prussia was still in a position to

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fight for its claims on another day.²

The Olmütz accord did permit Prussia to continue the struggle, not only at Frankfort, but also at Dresden. The free conference had been called to decide Bund reforms after Prussia had refused to accept Vienna's solutions. Schwarzenberg again attempted to enforce his policies on Bund reform and the merger plan—as he had tried to accomplish since 1848. He failed because a majority of the Bund states feared Austrian proposals would increase the political authority of Vienna at the expense of the member states. If successful the plan would have ended Prussia's claims to equality, and would have established Austria as the predominant state in the Bund and in Eastern Europe. Neither state was prepared to compromise its interests, but neither was able to defeat the other's policies permanently. Prussia was able to defeat Schwarzenberg's proposal to increase the president's authority, but Vienna would renew this plan at Frankfort. The same result was reached concerning the merger plan. Backed by Russia's decision to oppose the concept, Berlin succeeded in blocking the acceptance of the merger proposal. Schwarzenberg realized that a further attempt at Frankfort to propose the merger would meet with rejection.

but Austria did not abandon the concept. Austria's partial victory at Olmütz had been balanced by its partial defeat at Dresden. Some of Austria's policies had been defeated, but the questions of Bund reform and leadership remained unsolved. Even though the two states resumed friendly relations in May, 1851, the Austro-Prussian struggle was renewed at Frankfort. ³

Interpretations of Bismarck's successes at Frankfort are greatly dependent on the author's view of Prussian diplomacy at Olmütz and Dresden. If the two conferences are judged as Austrian victories, then Bismarck's performance assumes even greater importance. If, however, the conferences are judged correctly as only partial victories for both Austria and Prussia, then one does receive a more somber view of Bismarck's diplomacy. This is not to deny that Bismarck's actions at Frankfort were not of major importance, but to place Prussia's position at Frankfort in a realistic light. Berlin's offers for co-operation were rejected by Schwarzenberg in attempt to fulfill policies designed to regain Austria's Bund dominance. Bismarck was supported by Berlin in insisting on Prussia's right to be consulted before decisions were announced by Thun. Arnold Meyer pictured Bismarck as the representative of a humbled state which had failed in all its German policies; Austria

was presented as the victorious state which had surmounted great difficulties. Bismarck's mission to defend Prussian interests was, as Meyer suggests, a most responsible one, but to portray Prussia as a complete failure overlooks its successes at Dresden and Olmütz. If Schwarzenberg had been able to attain Bund reforms on Vienna's terms and accomplish the merger, then it would be correct to view Prussia's diplomacy a failure. However the Prime Minister fell short in his accomplishment. Austria had been unable to win the acceptance of its policies because of Prussia's determined opposition. Meyer was incorrect in his portrayal of Prussia's weakness and of Bismarck's successes. Bismarck was able to defeat Austria's policies but this was due mainly to Prussia's renewed influence.

After the failure to attain the political merger of the Bund and the Austrian Empire at Dresden, Schwarzenberg revised his policies, since he realized that Prussia and Russia would continue to oppose the concept. His new policy was novel in that it concentrated more heavily on economic matters. Thun was instructed to promote Austria's proposal to create an all-Bund Zollverein which would become the nucleus for Austrian leadership. The Austrian Prime Minister was careful to stress that this Zollverein would

be the instrument by which Austria would reduce Prussia's influence and attain complete Bund dominance. Tariff restrictions would be passed to protect the agricultural products of the Austrian Empire, while Vienna developed close political ties to the member states—as Prussia had in the 1834 Zollverein. Schwarzenberg hoped that the enlarged Zollverein would furnish Vienna with the means to accomplish the goals he had set for Austria in 1848.  

However, Schwarzenberg's hopes were not realized either before or after his sudden death in April, 1852. Prussia was able to maintain its control over its commercial-political allies. By making concessions to Hanover and by exerting great economic pressure on the southern Bund states, Berlin deprived Vienna of the necessary support to make the proposed Zollverein a reality. The southern states were confronted with the choice of remaining under Prussian influence but with dependable economic growth, or of siding with Austria for possible greater economic benefits with increased political controls from Vienna. Bismarck's success in persuading the states to remain with Prussia was aided by Berlin's economic and political pressures. Without such assistance, Bismarck's efforts might have failed. Schwarzenberg's

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policies had been defeated by Bismarck's diplomacy and Berlin's influence.

It is regretful that Prussia's successes in blocking Schwarzenberg's policies at Olmütz, Dresden, and Frankfort have not received proper recognition. Schwarzenberg's ministry is usually portrayed as a great success, both in internal and foreign policies. This author does not wish to deny or detract from Schwarzenberg's well-earned plaudits concerning solution of the rebellions in Italy and Hungary. Schwarzenberg, indeed, was the person most responsible for saving the Austrian Empire from collapse, but to attribute success to his German policies is incorrect. Given the desire to reduce Prussian influence, to merge the Bund with the Austrian Empire, and to regain Austria's predominance; Schwarzenberg failed. Prussia's influence was not reduced to any degree, as witnessed by Bismarck's efforts at Frankfort. The merger concept broke upon opposition from Prussia and Russia; together with added pressure from Berlin. The Austrian failures in 1851-52, when combined with those after 1853, demonstrate that Austria did not regain its dominant Bund position. Schwarzenberg's policies which were formulated in December of 1848 were never implemented. Granted that Austria had won some minor victories against Prussia in 1850 with the fall of Radowitz, the demise of the Prussian Union, and the
limited successes at Olmütz. However, such victories were inconsequential when compared to the defeats of Schwarzenberg’s major policy goals. Perhaps the best evaluation of Schwarzenberg’s policies was reached by Minister Beust: "Olmütz was not a Prussian humiliation, but an Austrian weakness . . . and when Benedek thought it better not to accept the battle of Königgrätz, he wanted to retreat with his army to Olmütz. But the merciless logic of history had long ago decreed that the road from Olmütz must lead to Königgrätz."  

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